

# **EMPOWERMENT OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS**

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
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**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**IN**

**WOMEN'S STUDIES**

**NISHA. P**

Under the Guidance of  
**Prof. (Dr.) Moly Kuruvilla**



**DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN'S STUDIES  
UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**

**2017**

## **DECLARATION**

I, **NISHA.P**, Research Scholar, Department of Women' Studies, certify that the work embodied in this Ph.D. thesis entitled "**Empowerment of Adolescent Girls: Challenges and Prospects**" is my own bonafide work carried out by me under the supervision of Dr. Moly Kuruvilla, Professor and Head, Department of Women's Studies, University of Calicut. The matter embodied in this Ph.D. thesis has not been submitted elsewhere for the award of any Degree/ Diploma/Certificate.

I declare that I have faithfully acknowledged, given credit to and referred to the research workers wherever their works have been cited in the text and the body of the thesis.

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**CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**Empowerment of Adolescent Girls: Challenges and Prospects**” is a record of bonafide research work carried out by **NISHA.P**, during the period of her study under my guidance and supervision. The thesis has reached the standard of fulfilling the requirements of the regulations relating to the Ph.D Degree of the University of Calicut. The contents of the thesis, in full or in parts, have not been submitted to any other institute or university for the award of any Degree or Diploma.

Place: C.U. Campus  
28 July 2017

**Dr. Moly Kuruvilla**  
Supervising Teacher

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CHAPTER 1

**INTRODUCTION**

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## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Across the globe, girls and women face a multitude of discriminatory practices. From the moment of birth or even before it, discrimination and violence embark on and continue throughout her life. Under the spectrum of discrimination and violence are malnutrition, poor health, lack of education, mistreatment, overwork, deprivation of decision making power, poverty, early marriage, dowry, female infanticide, eve teasing, molestation, sexual abuse, domestic violence, trafficking, cybercrimes and many more. Patterns of socialization that ascertain the subordinate status of the female sex as well as the objectification of women's bodies are often reported as the major causes of violence and discrimination against women.

When compared to other stages in life, 'adolescence' is a crucial time for girls, as discrimination and violence attains its peak during this stage. Anxieties surrounding sexual maturation, restrictive social norms, establishment of stringent social boundaries, restrictions on mobility, confusions regarding gender roles, mounting domestic burdens, pressure for marriage, sexual violence, lack of voice in decision making and economic dependency create special challenges for young girls. Some of the girls are forced to drop out of the school as well, which results in added pressure. Ignorance about and indifference towards the special needs of adolescent girls would primarily affect the health outcomes, economic growth, economic

stability, technological progress and eventually, the sustainable development of country as a whole. This would ultimately impede the well-being of future generations. Hence a special focus is needed on adolescent girl's empowerment that would enable them to discover, express and develop their abilities and talents and make their voices heard.

### **1.1.1 Adolescence**

The word 'Adolescence' originated from the Latin word *adolescere*, meaning "to grow up". Adolescence represents one of the critical transition phases of life between childhood and adulthood. It is characterized by tremendous physical, social, psychological, emotional and cognitive growth and change. Adolescence is difficult to define in precise terms, for several reasons. First, it is widely acknowledged that each individual experiences this period differently depending on her or his physical, emotional and cognitive maturation as well as other contingencies. Reference to the onset of puberty, which might be seen as a clear line of demarcation between childhood and adolescence, cannot resolve the difficulty of definition (UNICEF, 2011).

According to Lerner and Spanier (1980) adolescence is the period within the life span when most of a person's biological, cognitive, psychological, and social characteristics change from what is typically considered child-like to what is considered adult-like. Petersen (1988) refers adolescence as a phase of life beginning in biology and ending in society.

Human development occurs through a series of stages each of which has its distinctive features or characteristics. These stages are Infancy, Childhood, Adolescence, Adulthood, Aged or the old age. Among them, adolescence is even more crucial and imperative, because of the sudden and rapid growth and changes in body and mind. Ayyash-Abdo (2003) reveals that adolescence is a period of dramatic challenges requiring adjustment to changes in the self, in the family and in the peer group.

Today, adolescents constitute quarter of the world's population. They are shaping social and economic development, challenging social norms and values, and building the foundation of the world's future. For millions of young people around the world, puberty – the biological onset of adolescence – brings not only changes to their bodies but also new vulnerabilities to human rights abuses, particularly in the arenas of sexuality, marriage and child bearing (UNFPA, 2014).

Adolescence, on one side, is an age of vulnerability while it is an age of opportunity on the other hand as it is a period of excitement, anxiety, happiness, challenges, discovery and breaks with the past and yet of links with the future. From this time onwards, they face numerous developmental tasks like search for identity, accepting the bodily changes, balancing nutrition and growth, finding answers to the curiosities regarding sex and sexuality, achieving a balance with the conflicting emotions and peer



pressures etc. In addition to the common developmental tasks of adolescents, the adolescent girls face some specific challenges also. If the developmental tasks and challenges are managed positively with understanding to navigate risks and vulnerabilities, new opportunities will arise for fulfilling their potentials.

### **1.1.2 Adolescent Girls: World Context**

In July 2015, world population reached 7.3 billion. In 2015, 50.4 per cent of the world was male and 49.6 per cent was female (UN, 2015). UNFPA (2014) highlights that the world is the home of 1.8 billion young people between the ages of 10 and 24, and the youth population is growing fastest in the poorest nations. Within this generation there are 600 million adolescent girls with specific needs, challenges and aspirations for the future.

Adolescent girls throughout the world, often struggle with gender discrimination, restrictions on education and mobility, difficulties related to onset of menstruation and breast growth, lack of voice in decision making, low self esteem, early marriage and pregnancy, eve-teasing, trafficking for sexual exploitation, sexual harassment and violence, cybercrime, etc. UN report (2015) indicates that every day in developing countries, 20,000 girls under age 18 give birth. This amounts to 7.3 million births a year. And if all the pregnancies are included, the number of adolescent pregnancies will be much higher. Adolescent childbearing, which can have important health and

social consequences both for adolescent girls and for the children they bear, has fallen in most countries.

Studies from different parts of the globe report increasing trends of drug addiction and suicide rates among girl students (Pirkis & Blood, 2010; Steffenak, 2014). Body image is significant to adolescent girls' self-definition, because they have been socialized to believe that appearance is an important basis for self-evaluation and for evaluation by others (Thompson, Heinberg, Altabe & Tantleff-Dunn, 1999). Distorted ideas on body image acquired from peers, media and society in general result in poor self esteem among adolescents. Failure to keep oneself up with the unrealistic standards of beauty projected by the society thus becomes a major reason for low self esteem (Clay, Vignoles & Dittmar, 2005) and depression (Kaur, Javed & Singh, 2003) of girls.

Studies have proven that teenage body image is greatly influenced by what they see on television and in movies and magazines (Brandon, 2011; Gilmartin, 2009; Olson, 2008). Nowadays, a vast array of technological devices viz. computer, internet and mobile phones are helping adolescent girls to improve their information access, entertainment, shopping, communication and wellbeing. Even though the internet and mobile have consistent positive impacts on modern society, they have also created various problems related to privacy, security, pornography and cybercrime. Younger girls become victims

of cybercrime more often than women of older age groups (Kuruvilla & Nisha, 2015). According to Chandrakant (2012) mobile phone is the technological device which is cheaply available in the market and plays prominent role in the harassment of adolescent girls.

Despite the increasing acceptance of sexual violence as a crime under both national and international law, many victims still encounter great difficulty in obtaining justice (Seelinger, Silverberg & Mejia, 2011). Every 10 minutes, somewhere in the world, an adolescent girl dies as a result of violence. Yet these deaths represent only the most extreme and irrevocable assaults in a long continuum of violence faced by adolescent girls on a daily basis, usually at the hands of people closest to them – caregivers, peers and intimate partners (UNICEF, 2014). Most of the adolescent girls are uninformed about their rights and that would be one of the major reasons for the escalating rate of violence (Kuruvilla & Nisha, 2015).

Every day, thousands of adolescent girls are trafficked from different parts of the globe for sexual exploitation and it is one of the most severe forms of human rights violations, globally. Victims of sex trafficking often face several social, physical and psychological problems. Deshpande and Nour(2013) found that there are approximately 800,000 people trafficked across international borders annually and, of these, 80% are women or girls

and 50% are minors. Global sex trade is the fastest growing form of commerce, worth \$32 billion annually.

Dropping out from the educational system and inability to access good education are among other issues faced by adolescent girls in most of the developing countries. A growing body of literature addresses adolescent girls and young women's experiences of poverty in terms of allocation of resources especially education (Hossain & Eyben, 2009; Rose & Dyer, 2008). Studies have reported how parents have differential attitudes and aspirations regarding the education of their boys and girls and invest differently among their children for reasons of gender difference (Anitha & Rama, 2014; NCERT, 2006; Ramachandran, 2004; Velaskar, 2004). Fontana and Paciello (2009) opine that restricted access to education hinders capability development and women face continued discrimination in the labour market, where they are subject to an enduring gendered wage gap, relegation to low-quality jobs and a double burden with domestic duties.

Gender discrimination and gender based double standards for girls/women can be seen all over the world. Negative attitudes, brutal violence, unjust cultural norms and improper perceptions, are some of the most binding constraints to the development of adolescent girls. Egan & Perry (2001) found that many girls who feel pressures to conform to gender-typed norms may remain unsatisfied with narrow traditional gender roles. Bird and

Higgins (2011) suggest that limited resource rights and entitlements are manifested through women and girls having inadequate access to and control over land, microfinance, property and natural resources. These combine with segmented labour forces, lower wages, poor access to financial services and tensions between reproductive and productive work to damage women's ability to accumulate wealth and achieve economic empowerment.

In many countries, marriage systems based on dowry is one of the discriminatory practices, often reducing girls as commodities. Such practices in turn, limit the opportunities of adolescent girls for higher education. In Bangladesh, the incentive to educate a girl is reduced because her natal household not only will not benefit from the returns to her education but also may have to find a higher dowry in order to find her a husband (Davis & Baulch, 2009).

### **1.1.3 Adolescent Girls in India**

India has the largest population of adolescents in the world. In India, 236.5 million individuals are aged between 10-19 years. With 113 million adolescent girls – this is nearly 10% of its population. The adolescent and the youth population constitute critical segments, as the future demographic, social, economic and political development depend on them. Therefore, proper understanding of the challenges and prospects of this critical segment of population is essential for the progress and development of

the nation. In order to accomplish their potential to the fullest, both adolescent girls and boys must be healthy, educated, gender sensitised and able to work together for contributing to the country's socio-economic growth.

On analysing the Indian context, it is clear that despite the myriad of government programmes and policies for adolescent girls, they still remain isolated in their households and societies. It is common to read news on wrongs or violations committed on adolescent girls every day. High rates of sexual violence, deeply rooted cultural concerns, improper attitude towards girls' education/ career, lesser privileges as compared to a male child, under nutrition, poverty, early marriage etc. block the empowerment of girls.

Since India's independence, equal educational opportunities for women are available under the law. As per Population Census of India 2011, male literacy rate is 82.14% and female literacy rate is 65.46%. Girls' school enrolment has increased but girls' enrolment in higher levels of education is still very low. In rural parts of the country, dropout rates of girls from the education system are very high due to household responsibilities and early marriage.

Gender bias existing in the very fabric of Indian society can be traced in the school curricula as well. A study on gender bias in textbooks conducted by Kuruvilla and Thasniya (2015) reveals that most of the images portrayed in text books are masculine ones. There exists gender bias in the depiction of

jobs, roles, household responsibilities, dressing pattern, play as well as spaces allotted for men and women characters. When children go through these textbooks, their gendered notions get strengthened that females are inferior, males and females are unequal and have separate roles and responsibilities. The mental horizons of girls get narrowed, career aspirations become limited and life goals become unrealistic.

Studies conducted on adolescent girls of India reveal that girls are facing different types of problems such as poor knowledge of sex and reproduction (Majumdar & Ganguli, 2000), girls having the sole responsibility of many household chores (Singh, 1999) and high prevalence of anaemia among adolescent girls, which was higher in low socio-economic strata (Siddharam, Venketesh & Thejeshwari, 2011).

Besides this, menstruation is still regarded unclean, impure or dirty all over India (Shanbhag et al., 2012). Generally, girls/women have lofty restrictions during menstrual periods (Kamaljit, Arora, Singh & Neki, 2012). In some of the communities, women and girls are not allowed to touch or use the sources of water during their menstruation. Among certain communities in Gujarat, 91% of girls reported staying away from flowing water (House, Mahon & Cavill, 2012).

In general, preparation for dowry begins right from the birth of the girls in India, which in turn makes her feel like a burden on the family. It

grows into a hurdle to her education, career and freedom. Studies show that dowry related violence and bride-burning (dowry-death) are peculiar to the country (Haveripeth, 2013). The demand for dowry is present in all religions, in all types of marriages and in all types of families (Singh, 2013).

Fear of violence is a major reason that calls back girls from going out from home for pursuing education and employment. Parents are also reluctant to send their daughters to distant places for continuing their education. The study conducted by Patel (2015) shows that 53% women agree that they do not go out that much because they are scared to be teased and attacked and 57% women agree that they are more careful on the streets during the evening.

There are numerous education packages and programmes that are introduced for adolescent girls in India. However, the situation of adolescent girls has not changed significantly. The girl who excels in studies may turn out to be failure in the real life because of the lacunae present in our education system. Our education system fails on one side to enable the girls to discover their identity and on the other side enable boys to respect the individuality of girls.

#### **1.1.4 Adolescent Girls in the Kerala Context**

Despite having enviable literacy rates and soaring gender development indices, traditional views and stereotypes regarding gender roles are still very



prevalent in the Kerala society. Research findings of Scaria (2014) also highlight the fact that in Kerala, remarkable achievements measured by conventional indicators have failed to elevate women from their subordinate status within a household. She found that irrespective of the strata women belong to, they are governed by the patriarchal ideology according to which women's primary duty is tied to the domestic space.

With respect to education, the proportion of girls is satisfactory in primary and higher classes in schools. Their proportion is much higher at the graduate and postgraduate levels in both Arts and Science colleges. Nevertheless in the professional, technical and vocational courses, the representation of girls is comparatively low. Besides this, there are many schools in Kerala where practices like assigning specific dress codes to girls and women teachers, separate timings and gates for boys and girls for entry and exit to school, compulsory veiling for girls etc. are practised. Such practices in turn strengthen the gender role perceptions which highlight the differences between genders and the secrecy and vulnerability of the female body (Kuruville & Nisha, 2015).

Adolescent marriages are practised in different parts of the state. Especially in Malabar region, a disturbing number of girls are getting married at the age of 18 years and less. Usually, the girls who are married off at younger ages have no voice upon their marital choices. The parents collect

and save money for the marriage of their wards right from their childhood itself and regard them as a burden to the family. Dowry can be considered as a major reason for son preference in Kerala (Kuruville, 2011).

In economically backward families parents often fail to meet the expenses of education and marriage of their daughters. In some cases parents would opt inter- state marriages like Mysore Kalyanam with lesser or no dowry demands and which often leads to suffering of the girls. Valasseri (2014) explains the prevalence of low marriage age (14-18) in the specific area of Malappuram district as the reason for the interstate marriages wherein the subjects of Mysore Kalyanam were over aged for marriage within the locality. Parents with low socioeconomic conditions who are unable to pay high amounts as dowry fail to find a suitable alliance from the neighbourhood once their daughter crosses 18 years. In her study all the respondents transferred their residence to Mysore where they had the bitter experiences of starvation, lack of basic amenities, lack of personal freedom, barrier of language and brutal domestic violence. The over importance of marriage in women's lives plays a crucial role in the issue.

There are numerous instances of molestation and trafficking of adolescent girls' promoted by their own parents, which often go unreported. There occur a greater number of girl child abuses than is reported by media (Raj & Manikandan, 2013). Also, in majority of these cases, the perpetrator of

abuse is an immediate family member (nearly in 36% cases, the father) where the ages of victims vary from 4 to 16 years.

Though there are many legal provisions aimed at protecting girls and women, most of them are either unaware of these provisions or are unable to use them effectively. Usually girls/women, for whom these provisions are created, are totally unaware of their own legal rights.

## **1.2 NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

In the present study, the researcher focuses on the problems of adolescent girls in Malappuram district. Malappuram finds its place among the least developed and highly populated districts in the state. In this region, occurrence of early marriages is high in contrast with other districts, because of a variety of sociological and cultural reasons. Besides this, practice of polygamy, adolescent pregnancy, divorces without mutual consent, son preference etc. exist in this district (Kuruvilla, 2011).

Due to the inappropriate gender role perceptions existing in the society as a whole, girls/women are forced to obey the traditional reproductive roles of a wife and/or a mother. Even if women go out for work, their career options are narrowed down and jobs like teaching and nursing are preferred for them. Girls and women who break the stereotypes are susceptible to much resistance, very often in the form of ridicule and violence.

In the midst of adversities, our girls must be enabled to ensure their own safety and progress whereby their self-empowerment is facilitated. The statistics on crimes against girls and women of the year 2016, 2015, 2014 prepared by the State Crime Records Bureau (SCRB) shows the highest number of crimes in Malappuram District of Kerala State. The impacts of such crimes on growing minds are so severe that girls develop a sense of helplessness, incorrect body image, low self esteem, feelings of insecurity and dependency.

Girls if trained to develop a positive image along with a sense of security instilled in them when young, goes a long way in molding them into a strong woman who can deal with the world in her own terms. Studies done on adolescents highlight their developmental challenges related to physical, emotional, intellectual and academic achievement. Questions related to social security, safety needs, life goal and gender role perception are rare in the Indian context. Such studies on adolescent girls in the Kerala society are to be taken up to address the increasing rate of violence for which adolescent girls fall easy victims. The specific issues of girls and women in the patriarchal society, especially with regard to the restrictions on mobility, denial of quality higher education and sexual and reproductive rights, lack of ownership rights and decision making power even with regard to the very personal matters, economic dependency, sexual exploitation and over emphasis of men and marriage in girls' lives etc need to be explored in detail.

Hence a study of the present type to understand the challenges specifically addressing adolescent girls of Kerala is quite relevant.

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Adolescent girls need to be equipped with all the knowledge and skills required to face the challenges of the globalized society. Despite the high enrolment rates in schools and colleges, adolescent girls of Kerala face some specific issues and challenges need to be explored with a gender perspective. The condition of adolescent girls especially with regard to their self esteem, gender role perception, various challenges in the areas of conflict of emotions, safety issues, lack of role models, peer pressures, confusions regarding inter personal relationship, accepting bodily changes, menstrual hygiene and reproductive health, curiosity regarding sex and sexuality, choice of career, educational aspirations, gender discrimination, gender role perception and usage of ICT are studied in detail. An analysis of the coping strategies presently adopted by adolescent girls to combat the challenges is also subjected to in depth study as to whether they are effective enough to facilitate their empowerment through development of full potentials.

### **1.4 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS**

**Empowerment of Girls** : According to UNFPA (1994) Women's empowerment has five components : women's sense of self-worth; their right to have and to determine choices; their right to have access to opportunities

and resources; their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home; and their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally. In the present study empowerment is defined as the process by which girls discover their identity and fulfil their needs by enhanced confidence, awareness, mobility, choice, control over resources and decision making power.

**Adolescent girls:** The United Nations and other UN agencies like WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, etc. consider adolescents as individuals between 10-19 years of age. Adolescence is a transitional stage between childhood and adulthood. In the present study the term ‘adolescent girls’ denotes girls in the age group of 10 to 19 years in accordance with the UN agencies categorisation.

**Challenges:** The situation of being faced with something that needs great mental or physical effort in order to be done successfully and therefore tests a person's ability (Cambridge English Dictionary). The term refers to the various problems that adolescent girls face such as challenges related to gender role perception, conflict of emotions, safety issues, lack of role models, peer pressures, confusions regarding inter personal relationship, accepting bodily changes, menstrual hygiene and reproductive health,

curiosity regarding sex and sexuality, choice of career, educational aspirations, gender discrimination and usage of ICT.

**Prospects:** The term ‘prospects’ denotes the increased opportunities/ conditions and positive factors that facilitate the empowerment of girls. It may include opportunities for higher education and employment, educational loans, scholarships and other supportive mechanisms, credit facilities for women entrepreneurs, the supportive role of ICT, improved transportation facilities, Government policies and programmes for women empowerment and various protective legislations and safety mechanisms implemented by the Government of Kerala for girls and women.

## **1.5 SELECTED CONCEPTS OF THE STUDY**

In the present study, the following concepts are studied in detail:

- Self esteem of adolescent girls
- Issues and challenges of adolescent girls
- Gender role perception of adolescent girls

The following classificatory variables are selected for the present study:

- Type of management of school- Government, Aided and Unaided
- Religion of students- Hindu, Muslim and Christian
- Locality of school- Rural and Urban

## **1.6 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The study has been designed to attain the following objectives:

1. To assess the self esteem of adolescent girls
2. To analyze the challenges faced by adolescent girls in the present society
3. To assess the gender role perception of adolescent girls
4. To study the response patterns adopted by adolescent girls to combat the challenges.
5. To compile the existing programmes and policies at the state and national levels related to the development of adolescent girls.

## **1.7 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

The following hypotheses were formulated to realize the objectives of the present study:

1. Adolescent girls will be having low levels of self esteem.
2. There will be significant difference in the self esteem of adolescent girls belonging to the different classificatory variables.
3. Adolescent girls will be having inappropriate gender role perceptions.



4. There will be significant difference in the gender role perception of adolescent girls belonging to the various classificatory variables.
5. Adolescent girls will be facing several challenges which they fail to combat effectively.

## **1.8 METHODOLOGY**

### **Sample**

The present study was conducted on a sample of 600 girl students from 15 schools of Malappuram district at plus one level. Due representation was given to the type of management and locality of schools and religion of students.

### **Tools**

The following tools were used for data collection in the present study:

1. Self esteem inventory (Battle, 2000) with modifications.
2. Inventory on Challenges faced by adolescent girls in the areas gender role perception, conflict of emotions, safety issues, lack of role models, peer pressures, confusions regarding inter personal relationship, accepting bodily changes, menstrual hygiene and reproductive health, curiosity regarding sex and sexuality, choice of career, educational

aspirations, gender discrimination and usage of ICT which was developed by the investigator.

3. Inventory on gender role perception (Kuruville, 2011)
4. Inventory on coping strategies adopted by adolescent girls which was developed by the investigator.

### **Analysis**

Both qualitative and quantitative analyses were used for the conduct of the study. The analysis of data was done by using the following statistical techniques.

Percentage analysis, test of significance of mean difference and chi-square test

### **1.9 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The present study is intended to expose the challenges and prospects for empowerment of adolescent girls. This study is very significant in the present situation as on one side the prospects for development of adolescent girls are amounting while on the other side new forms of challenges spring up each day.

The age old notions of parenting and socialisation need to change as per the changing needs and challenges. The grooming of adolescent girls as

burden of the family and society that often seems to initiate a sense of insecurity and helplessness in the minds of girls needs to be corrected. We need to think about long term action plans for addressing these challenges from a feminist perspective with cooperation from every segment of the society.

Crimes against girls are, however, not limited only to rape and physical intimidation. The subjectivity of girls to eve teasing, early marriage, adolescent pregnancy, traps of immoral trafficking, pornography, cyber-crimes etc. are all crimes against girls, which need to be studied more scientifically from a feminist perspective.

Appropriate components that facilitate the self-empowerment of adolescent girls, especially related to ensuring safety and dignity have been suggested as an outcome of the study.

The study was conducted on 600 plus one (+1 or grade 11) students in Malappuram district from the categories of Government, Aided and Unaided schools. The sample consisted of girls belonging to Hindu, Muslim, and Christian religions in the urban and rural areas. The analysis of data was done with utmost care. Hence, the findings are expected to have generalizability across locale and religious affiliations.

Despite the efforts to conduct an in-depth comprehensive study, certain limitations were identified by the investigator. It was not viable for the

investigator to cover all the districts in Kerala due to the profound nature of the study. The study was to be limited to the sample selected from Malappuram district only. The sample size has been limited to 600. More generalized results could be obtained if the sample was selected from other districts also.

In spite of these limitations, the investigator feels that a sincere effort has been made to study all the salient features of the problem as far as possible. Also, the findings of the present study will be useful for SCERT and NCERT for preparing packages for educational interventions and State and Central governments for preparing policies for adolescent girls.

### **1.10 ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS**

The present thesis is organized into six chapters. The details of each chapter are as follows:

#### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

The chapter provides information related to the phase of 'Adolescence', Adolescent girls: World context, Adolescent girls in India, Situation of adolescent girls in Kerala, Need and significance of the study, Statement of the problem, Definition of key terms, Selected concepts of the study, Objectives of the study, Hypothesis of the study, Methodology, Limitations of the study and Organization of the thesis.

## **Chapter 2: Review of Related Literature**

This chapter contains the Theoretical Overview on Adolescent Development and Challenges Faced by Adolescent Girls along with the Conclusion.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

This chapter presents the Design of the study, Tools used for collection of data, Sample of the study, Data collection procedure, Scoring and consolidation of data and Statistical techniques used for analysis.

## **Chapter 4: Analysis and Discussion**

This chapter contains the Findings of the analysis, Discussion on the findings, Tenability of Hypotheses and the Case studies.

## **Chapter 5: Prospects for Adolescent Development**

In this chapter the various Prospects for the Development of Adolescent Girls including Government Policies and Programmes facilitating the development and empowerment of adolescent girls is presented.

## **Chapter 6: Findings, Conclusions and Suggestions**

This chapter presents the Overview of the study, Restatement of the problem, Objectives of the study, Hypotheses of the study, Variables of the study, Methodology, Major findings, Conclusions, Educational implications and Suggestions for further research.

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CHAPTER 2

**REVIEW OF RELATED  
LITERATURE**

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## **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Review of related literature is an integral part of any research work. This chapter helps the researcher to enhance her/his existing knowledge base and to integrate the findings with the existing body of knowledge. It establishes the framework or background for the field of study and thus, provides a setting in which the new study is reported. It avoids replication of the findings of the previous study.

According to Good (1959) "A Survey of related literature is necessary for proper planning, execution and right conceptualisation of the problems and solutions. It provides a guiding hypothesis, suggestive methods of investigation and comparative data for interpretative purpose."

In this chapter, some of the important and relevant works related to empowerment of adolescent girls and the issues that are so far addressed by researchers are reviewed. This provides valuable findings and major lacunae in the field of adolescent girls' empowerment. The literature that was collected for this purpose is arranged in two sections i.e. Theoretical Overview on Adolescent Development and Challenges Faced by Adolescent Girls.

## **2.2 THEORETICAL OVERVIEW**

The theoretical overview is presented under the sub sections of Aspects of Adolescent Development and Theories on Adolescent Development.

### **2.2.1 Aspects of Adolescent Development**

Adolescence is a developmental period accompanied by dramatic changes in the physical, emotional, cognitive and social aspects of an individual. Due to these rapid developments, adolescents experience numerous developmental challenges, though in varying paces, such as- escalation of need for independence; evolution of sexuality; transition through education to the commencement of employment; consolidation of advanced cognitive abilities; and negotiation with the changing relationships to the family, peers and to the broader social ties (Cameron & Karabanow, 2003). Jersield (2014) defines adolescence as that span of years during which boys and girls move from childhood to adulthood, mentally, emotionally, socially and physically. The major developments during adolescence are described below:

#### **2.2.1.1 Physical Development**

The most obvious and important development during adolescence is the physical development. It is characterised by growth in height, weight and the development of secondary sexual characteristics.



Another major biological change is the completion of skeletal growth accompanied by a marked increase in skeletal mass, followed by changes in body composition (Stang & Story, 2005) and changes in the frontal lobes of the brain, responsible for functions such as self-control, judgment, emotional regulation, organization and planning (Begley, 2000). These changes in turn fuel major shifts in adolescents' physical and cognitive capacities and their social and achievement-related needs (Zarrett & Eccles, 2006).

Girls experience an early onset of physical transformation compared to boys. Boys and girls show different maturational patterns. Physical changes of puberty commence between 8 to 13 years in girls. The first signs of puberty among females are the development of breast buds and the appearance of sparse pubic hair. The onset of menstruation occurs 2-4 years after the initial appearance of breast buds and pubic hair (Stang & Story, 2005).

At the same time, girls begin with their spurt in height. During a one-year growth spurt, boys and girls can gain an average of 4.1 inches and 3.5 inches in height respectively (Steinberg, 2007). This spurt typically occurs two years earlier for girls than for boys. Weight gain results from increased muscle development in boys and body fat in girls (Ruffin, 2009). Along with this enlargement of the ovaries, uterus, labia and clitoris occurs. For most of the girls, menarche occurs around 13 years of age, but with a range of

variation from 10 to 17 years. Full reproductive function does not happen for a year or more afterwards.

Eveleth and Tanner (1990), in their review of the sexual development of adolescents worldwide, found that the timing of menarche varies greatly across cultures. Of the almost 150 groups of people studied, the mean age of menarche ranges from around 12 years of age. The first major factor is nutrition and good nutrition is associated with an earlier onset of menarche.

For boys, observable signs of puberty appear later than girls. Testicular enlargement usually begins around 12 years but in some boys as early as 10, followed by appearance of pubic hair and growth of the penis. Following the onset of puberty for both sexes, growth in weight and height usually begins distally in the hands and feet before moving proximally to the arms and legs. The timing of puberty is influenced by health and nutrition. At this phase, all the external and internal body parts and organs attain their complete form and maturity.

#### **2.2.1.2 Intellectual Development**

The structural brain-imaging studies conducted during the past decade reveal that significant increase in white matter takes place during adolescence and continues into the early 20s (Hazen, Schlozman & Beresin, 2008). During early adolescence, youth develop the capacity for abstract thought processes (Flavell, 2011; Piaget, 1952). It is also found that general all round

intellectual efficiency continues to mature at least until the age of 15-17 years. Cognitive skill development over the adolescent years enables youth to become increasingly capable of managing their own learning and problem solving while also facilitating their identity formation and maturation of moral reasoning (Zarrett & Eccles, 2006).

Typically, young adolescents are eager to learn about topics they find interesting and useful and that are personally relevant (Brighton, 2007). Despite their rapidly developing capacity for higher-level thinking, most adolescents still need guidance from adults to develop their potential for rational decision making (APA, 2002). According to Heckhausen (1999), the successful development of cognitive skills relates to youth's ability to plan and organize an important skill for successful pursuit of educational and occupational goals.

### **2.2.1.3 Emotional Development**

Emotional development during adolescence involves establishing a realistic and coherent sense of identity in the context of relating to others and learning to cope with stress and manage emotions (Santrock, 2001). Adolescence is characterized by significant increase in negative emotionality, greater sensitivity to peer-related social interactions, and greater reward-seeking and greater engagement with long-term and socially complex goals (Nelson, Leibenluft, McClure & Pine, 2005).

Due to the rapid physical and sexual development followed by hormonal imbalances, which are characteristic of adolescence period, they face much conflict and difficulty in adjusting to the sudden increase of sexual and aggressive drives. These changes cause disturbance and confusion in the adolescents. Olukunle (2007) notes that sometimes they are happy, at other times they are sad and may not be able to point to what is responsible for the mood change. Emotional surges are heightened and may be impulsive or sexual in nature, which may bring about disapproval from adults, if such feelings conflict with their values. These feelings may result in unresolved interpersonal and intrapersonal issues.

There is increasing evidence of significant levels of emotional and behavioural difficulties such as depression, anxiety, conduct disorder, substance misuse and suicidal thoughts that are experienced by adolescents (Sawyer, 2001). In the case of early maturing girls, they are often treated differently than their later-maturing peers. Because they look more mature, others often treat them as though they are older, requiring them to act as old as they appear. Such expectations overlook more age-appropriate socio-emotional development and needs of these girls. Although they may appear more independent and confident, these girls also report greater emotional distress than their later-maturing peers (Kaplan, 2004). It is a proven fact that healthy adulthood depends upon successful resolution of the emotional and behavioural problems during adolescence (WHO, 2011).

#### **2.2.1.4 Social Development**

An improved social relation is an aspect of adolescent development. As Spano (2004) opines, as they grow and develop, young people are influenced by outside factors, such as their environment, culture, religion, school and the media. Parents of adolescents ought to deal with changes in many of their social relationships, providing opportunities to develop and exercise their personal and social identities and further explore their autonomy (Zarrett, 2006).

Children's understanding of their social environment has been shown to be a major contributor to the development and change in their aggressive behaviour (Egan, Monson & Perry, 1998). It is found that the transition to healthy adulthood is dependent on the social environment in which adolescents live, learn and earn (WHO, 2007). The quality and support of the social network thus plays a significant role in reducing mental health problems during adolescence (Rani et al., 2010).

#### **2.2.2 Theories on Adolescent Development**

From time to time, scientists have approached the understanding of adolescence from different theoretical perspectives or points of view. As a result, there exists a plethora of scientific theories on adolescent development. However, each theoretical perspective is rooted in specific assumptions to explain the process of adolescent development. A single theoretical

perspective will not be sufficient to cover all the facets of the process of adolescent development. In order to create an all-inclusive understanding on the behaviour of adolescents, one must cross look at and scrutinize the numerous theoretical perspectives in a chronological order of their emergence.

### **2.2.2.1 Biological Theories**

#### **Hall's Biogenetic Psychology of Adolescence**

Hall (1844–1924) is well known for his irreplaceable contributions in founding Organized Psychology both as a stream of Science and as an established profession. Hall was among the torch bearers of educational reforms. He is christened as the ‘father of adolescent research’ as well as the ‘father of Child Study Movement’.

Hall emphasized that adolescence intrinsically is a period of “storm and stress” characterized by varying degrees of behavioural and emotional turmoil prior to the establishment of a steady equilibrium in the adulthood. Hall’s findings are in full agreement with the most recent findings in the realm of Scientific Psychology. His views on the ‘storm and stress’ are highly intricate and elaborate. According to Hall (1904), “the curve of despondency starts at eleven, rises steadily and rapidly till the age of fifteen, and then falls steadily till twenty three”. This finding has striking similarities with the findings of recent research that proposes the picture of a ‘mid-

adolescent peak' in depressed mood. This characteristic change in mood unfolds and escalates in early adolescence and tapers after the mid-teenage. Scholars like Arnett (2006) opines that Hall had foretold the detrimental effects media and technology could pose to adolescents. Recent researches reveal the wide array of spiteful effects of media from inciting substance abuse, violent crimes and delinquency to endorsing conventional gender norms and stereotypes. Principally, Hall recognized that children are bestowed with varying capabilities that warranted varying levels of education. He pointed out that children had the right to be educated, but only to their capabilities and not beyond. In discussing the concept of "individualization," Hall spoke of the idea of new education as being the adjustment of methods to reflect individuals' variations of age, sex, ability and vocational expectation (Ross, 1972).

#### **2.2.2.2 Psychological Theories**

##### **Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory and Adolescent Emotional Development**

Freud (1916) was in agreement with the evolutionary theory of Hall. The psychoanalytic theory of Freud disregarded the role of environmental factors in the development process and emphasized that it is genetically determined. Freud opined that environmental factors play comparatively insignificant roles in development. He believed that adolescence was a universal phenomenon and included behavioural, social and emotional

changes; not to mention the relationships between the physiological and psychological changes, and the influences on the self-image. He also stated that the physiological changes are related to emotional changes, especially an increase in negative emotions, such as moodiness, anxiety, loathing, tension and other forms of adolescent behaviour.

### **Anna Freud's Theory of Adolescent Defence Mechanism**

Anna Freud's (1948) theory placed the relationship between the three parts of the psychic apparatus i.e., the Id, the Ego and the Super ego at the pinnacle. She was of the opinion that adolescence is characterised by a 'psychological disequilibrium' consequent to sexual maturation and associated excitement of ego-defence mechanisms [eg. intellectualism, asceticism]. She saw adolescence as a period of unrest or flux. The unrest is typified by recurring or fluctuating episodes of energy and sluggishness, altruism and self-centeredness, anguish and enthusiasm.

Among the ego defence mechanisms, asceticism and intellectualization are most popular. Asceticism is due to a generalized mistrust of all instinctual wishes. This mistrust goes far beyond sexuality and includes eating, sleeping, and dressing habits. The increase in intellectual interests and the change from concrete to abstract interests are accounted for in terms of a defence mechanism against the libido. This naturally brings about a crippling of the



instinctual tendencies in adult life, and again the situation is "permanently injurious to the individual" (Freud, 1948).

### **2.2.2.3 Rank's theory of Adolescent Need for Independence**

Rank (1884-1939), a keen adherent of the psychoanalytic school was greatly influenced by the Freudian realism. Rank opined that on the basis of consciousness and 'will', there has to be a thorough re-examination to place adolescent development fit into the psycho analytic theory. It will not be appropriate to consider sexuality as the most crucial formative aspect in the process of development anymore. It has been established that its counterpart in "will," can control sexuality to a certain extent. Rank also proposes that the change from dependence to independence, which is one of the most vital elements of personality development, takes place on the course of shift from childhood to adolescence.

The individual will comes across the social will, embodied by parents and expressed in moral codes in the latency period. Establishing an autonomic independence that society demands and accepts turns out to be an imperative yet hard task for the adolescent in his/her early adolescence. This emerging demand for independence and the struggle to accomplish it becomes the root cause for the formation of relationships in adolescence and consequential issues. According to Rank, it is pointless to impose sexual

restrictions and inhibitions as it is through this struggle that the individual's will attempts to achieve independence against authority by biological needs.

#### **2.2.2.4 Psychosocial Theory**

##### **Erikson's Theory on Adolescent Identity Development**

Erikson (1959) illustrates adolescence as a stage through which the individual has to launch and establish a sense of personal identity so as to evade role diffusion and identity crisis.

Erikson postulated individual's development as resulting from his/her interactions with environment. The social development of a person comes up with age specific expectations starting from birth. Through distinct and unique ways, individuals try to fulfil these expectations by reacting psychologically. Erickson put forward eight issues or crisis of life that arise during the course of development of an individual. How the individual resolves the crisis in each stage of life is important because it influences the development of his or her personality.

Among Erikson's stages of development, that starts with birth and ends with death, the crises of life during adolescence are industry verses inferiority (6-10 years) and identity versus role confusion (12 to 19 years). Adolescents struggle with these stages, to construct their own personalities accordingly.

During the period of industry vs. inferiority, the young person puts efforts to compete with their peers, either in schools or in society in general. By taking part in this struggle, the youngster probably develops a sense of accomplishment or in other words, a sense of industry. The child who fails to compete with his/her peers develops a sense of shame or a sense of inferiority. The child tries to put in further efforts to bring more accomplishment, if he or she is motivated. To facilitate the acquisition of a healthy and potent ego-identity, the child's achievements ought to be acknowledged consistently.

The crisis in the subsequent stage of life is identity verses role confusion, wherein the adolescent explores to discern his/her personal identity, being independent from the family. They take effort to integrate several roles or to fulfil many expectations, to comprehend where they fit in, what they really are and what they can be. Failure in doing so results in role confusion. They fail to make decisions on their own education, career, life goals, friend making and so on. Erikson also points out how parents and teachers play an equal role in helping the adolescents overcome the crisis of Identity vs. Role confusion successfully. In adolescents who find it hard to confront this stage, identity confusion is liable to be stronger than identity formation. Such an individual is more likely to explore or develop unhealthy and damaging lifestyle habits. Failure in this stage of development induces rejection of social contacts. Failure in undergoing proper development results

in issues to adjust and conform to social values. Consequently, such adolescents become particularly vulnerable to negative peer pressures.

#### **2.2.2.5 Cognitive Theory**

##### **Piaget's Cognitive Theory and Adolescent Mental Development**

Piaget (1977) put forward the idea of four stages of cognitive development. The stages he proposed are as follows: sensory motor, preoperational, concrete operations and formal operations.

The stage of concrete operations takes place at about 7 to 11 years of age. In this stage, the child is able to reason logically about concrete events.

The stage of formal operations immediately follows this stage and is characterized by the capability to think in abstract ways furthermore. This stage commences at 11 years of age and go on to develop until the onset of early adulthood. The theory, especially its qualitative aspects finds universal application. The sequencing of stages are found to vary across various cultures globally.

#### **2.2.2.6 Kohlberg's Cognitive-Developmental Approach to Adolescent Morality**

Kohlberg (1958) explained that internal cognitive processes like thinking and reasoning play a major role in one's moral development. The theory holds that moral reasoning, the basis for ethical behaviour, has six

identifiable developmental stages which are grouped into three levels: pre-conventional morality, conventional morality, and post-conventional morality.

The pre-conventional level of moral reasoning is common in children, although adults can also exhibit this level of reasoning. At this level the morality of an action is judged by its direct consequences.

The conventional level of moral reasoning is typical of adolescents and adults. Here the morality of actions is judged by comparing them with society's views and expectations. Conventional morality is characterized by an acceptance of society's conventions concerning right and wrong and the moral judgement is controlled by likes and dislikes of others. At this level an individual obeys rules and follows society's norms even when there are no consequences for disobedience. The rule's appropriateness or fairness is seldom questioned by an individual at this level.

At the post-conventional level, also known as the principled level, the individual's own perspective may take precedence over society's view; individuals may disobey rules inconsistent with their own principles. Post-conventional moralists live by their own ethical principles—principles that typically include such basic human rights as life, liberty, and justice.

But in self-accepted moral principles level individual's controlling force of moral judgement are highly internalised. The decisions of the individual are now based upon her /his conscience and the belief in universal

principles of respect, justice and equality and they do not think about opinion of others (Mangal, 2010).

#### **2.2.2.7 Bandura's Social Learning Theory on Gender Role Socialisation**

The social learning theory developed by Bandura (1977) can well be termed as an outcome or an extension of the school of behaviourist tradition, that places learning inseparably connected with stimulus and response. It has also been referred to as a bridge between the behaviourist and cognitive learning theories. The social learning theory posits that children are reinforced to learn gender appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in the society. The reinforcements may be positive or negative.

The social learning theory also posits that children learn by observation and imitation. Children tend to imitate and observe the gender appropriate/inappropriate roles from parents of their own sex. Gender appropriate roles and expectations for a female is perceived by a young girl from her mother while a young boy learns from his father what defines a male and what not. This theory emphasizes the role of parents and family in gender role socialization of adolescents.

#### **2.2.2.8 The Gender Schema Theory**

Bem who was a major critique of the Cognitive Development Theory, pioneered the Gender Schema theory in 1981. One of her chief critiques of

the cognitive development theory was that it offered no logical explanation as to why the children get socialized based on sex as a category, specifically.

Bem describes that children learn to use 'gender' as a means to process information concerning the world in cultures wherein the differences between the sexes are highlighted. Children tend to systematize information and maintain it with the assistance of the gender schemas or the cognitive structures.

According to Bem, two important features of gender schemas deserve particular attention. Firstly, the gender schemas are predisposed to be polarized, in order that children judge behaviours that are apt and acceptable for females as not apt and acceptable for males and vice versa. The second one is that the gender schemas are potentially androcentric. Children internalize the notion that men are more valued in the society. Females and femininity are considered inferior to males and masculinity and that masculinity is the prevailing norm.

#### **2.2.2.9 The Capability Theory**

Celebrated Indian economist-philosopher Amartya Sen articulated the Capability theory in the 1980's. Several scholars including Martha Nussbaum have appreciably developed it. This approach posits that the freedom to attain well-being is about what people are able to do and to be, and therefore the lives they are effectively able to lead. Over and above a clear-cut theory of

well being, the Capability Approach is by and large used as an adaptable framework to explain many social phenomena.

Nussbaum affirms a liberal view that is compatible with the feminist affirmation of the value of women as persons. “At the heart of this tradition (of liberal political thought) is a twofold intuition about human beings: namely, that all, just by being human, are of equal dignity and worth, no matter where they are situated in society, and that the primary source of this worth is a power of moral choice within them, a power that consists in the ability to plan a life in accordance with one's own evaluation of ends (Garrett, 2008).

An essential constituent of Nussbaum's capability approach is the list of aspects of life to which capabilities relate. The list is as follows:

1. Life: Being able to live to the end of a human life of normal length; not dying prematurely.
2. Bodily health: Being able to have good health, including reproductive health; being adequately nourished; being able to have adequate shelter.
3. Bodily integrity: Being able to move freely from place to place; being able to be secure against violent assault, including sexual assault;



having opportunities for sexual satisfaction and for choice in matters of reproduction.

4. Senses, imagination, thought: Being able to use the senses; being able to imagine, to think, and to reason--and to do these things in a way informed and cultivated by an adequate education; being able to use imagination and thought in connection with experiencing, and producing expressive works and events of one's own choice; being able to use one's mind in ways protected by guarantees of freedom of expression with respect to both political and artistic speech and freedom of religious exercise; being able to have pleasurable experiences and to avoid no beneficial pain.
5. Emotions: Being able to have attachments to things and persons outside ourselves; being able to love those who love and care for us; being able to grieve at their absence, to experience longing, gratitude and justified anger; not having one's emotional development blighted by fear or anxiety.
6. Practical reason: Being able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one's own life (this entails protection for liberty of conscience)
7. Affiliation: Being able to live for and in relation to others, to recognize and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms

of social interaction; being able to imagine the situation of another and to have compassion for that situation; having the capability for both justice and friendship; being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others.

8. Other species: Being able to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and the world of nature.
9. Play: Being able to laugh, to play, to enjoy recreational activities.
10. Control over one's environment. (A) Political: being able to participate effectively in political choices that govern one's life; having the rights of political participation, free speech and freedom of association.

(B) Material: Being able to hold property (both land and movable goods); having the right to seek employment on an equal basis with others.

### **2.2.3 EMPOWERMENT**

The term empowerment has different meanings in different sociocultural and political contexts, and does not translate easily into all languages. An exploration of local terms associated with empowerment around the world always leads to lively discussion. These terms include self-strength, control, self-power, self-reliance, own choice, life of dignity in accordance with one's values, capable of fighting for one's rights, independence, own decision making, being free, awakening, and capability—

to mention only a few. These definitions are embedded in the local value and belief systems. Empowerment is of intrinsic value; it also has instrumental value. Empowerment is relevant at the individual and collective level, and can be economic, social, or political. The term can be used to characterize relations within households or between poor people and other actors at the global level. There are important gender differences in the causes, forms, and consequences of empowerment or disempowerment. Hence, there are obviously many possible definitions of empowerment, including rights-based definitions (UNICEF 2001).

### **2.2.3.1 WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**

Empowerment of women is essentially the process of upliftment of economic, social and political status of women, the traditionally underprivileged ones, in the society. It involves the building up of a society wherein women can breathe without the fear of oppression, exploitation, apprehension, discrimination and the general feeling of persecution which goes with being a woman in a traditionally male dominated structure (Dutta & Bhakta, 2017).

At the Social Summit in Copenhagen in 1993 and the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo 1994, almost all member states committed themselves to the empowerment of women. This Commitment was operationalised and formulated into a clear action plan at

the Fourth World Conference on women in Beijing 1995 where commitments were made to the “empowerment and advancement of women, including the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief, thus contributing to the moral, ethical, spiritual and intellectual needs of women and men, individually or in community with others and thereby guaranteeing them the possibility of realizing their full potential in society and shaping their lives in accordance with their own aspirations”.

Women empowerment is also defined as a change in the context of a woman’s life, which enables her increased capacity for leading a fulfilling human life. It gets reflected both in external qualities (viz. health, mobility, education and awareness, status in the family, participation in decision making, and also at the level of material security) and internal qualities (viz. self awareness and self confidence)(Human Development in South Asia ,2000).

India’s National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, 2001 perceived the need for increased space for women in decision making, economic and social policies, enhanced opportunities and gender equality in the fields of education, health, etc. and prescribed to achieve the goal by 2010. The specific goals of the Policy stress the need to attain equal participation in decision-making in social and economic life, to enable women to identify their full potential, equal access to quality education, career-

guidance, employment, health and safety and changing societal attitudes and community practices. But the goals specified by the National Policy are yet to be achieved (Kuruvilla & Seema 2014).

From the stand point of UNESCO's gender empowerment index, a person becomes empowered when she is able to make decisions for herself and others, socially and politically. Empowerment of women also entails learning to deal with the forces of oppression along with conscious efforts to enhance the quality of life whereby women become agents of their own development.

Longwe(1990) developed the Women's Empowerment Framework. This Gender analysis framework helps planners understand the practical meaning of women's empowerment and equality, and then to evaluate whether a development initiative supports this empowerment. The basic premise is that women's development can be viewed in terms of five levels of equality: welfare, access, "conscientization", participation and control. Empowerment is essential at each of these levels. Welfare addresses basic needs, and access addresses ability to use resources such as credit, land and education. "Conscientization" is a key element of the framework: recognition that discrimination creates gender-related problems and women may themselves contribute to this discrimination. With participation, women are

equal to men in making decisions, and with control the balance of powers between the genders is equal.

### **2.3 CHALLENGES TO ADOLESCENT GIRLS' EMPOWERMENT**

The Census 2011 data reveals that there are more than 225 million adolescents who account for almost 21 percent of the country's population, with 50 percent of them being adolescent girls. This vast population is trapped in a society with such socio-cultural practices and contrasting stages of development that leaves them powerless to make their essential life-choices.

Baker, Nakagami, Noronha, Potaski & Puckart (2009) found that despite the Indian government's wide range of programmatic efforts, girls throughout India remain isolated in their households and communities. Girls in rural and urban slum areas live predominantly without voices, options and opportunities to increase their social and economic potential which could advance themselves, their families, and their communities.

Adolescent girls are at a particular disadvantage since they are systematically denied the opportunities of mobility, freedom and economic power that their male counterparts have the benefit of. It is important to have a clear and comprehensive picture of the issues and challenges that adolescent girls face before venturing into the strategies for their empowerment.

### **2.3.1 Confusions with Body Image and Accepting Bodily Changes**

Adolescence is the time of faster bodily changes. Several studies have recorded the challenges experienced by adolescent girls in accepting the bodily changes. Dubey (2014) lists out the anxieties of adolescent girls regarding varieties of menstrual dysfunctions, painful menstrual cramps and accompanying disturbances like breast fullness or breast pain, bloating, fatigue, headache, increased appetite especially for sweets and salty foods, irritability, mood swings, depression, inability to concentrate, tearfulness and violent tendencies.

Body image concerns become increasingly common in adolescence (Levine & Smolak, 2002; Lunde, Frisén, & Hwang, 2007). Researchers reveal the significant association between body dissatisfaction among teenage girls and their exposure to thin models in the media (Cafri et al., 2005; Hausenblas et al., 2013). Fay & Price (1994) observe that slimming, dieting and body control advertisements are exclusively directed at women. Adolescent girls and young women very often compare their bodies with media images.

Lieberman, Gauvinb, Bukowskic and Whitec (2001) found that peer pressure was a strong predictor of eating behaviour and body esteem after controlling for interpersonal variables. Highly externalized self-perceptions, teasing and attributions about the importance of weight and shape to gain popularity for dating were important predictors of both body esteem and

eating behaviour. Also, girls who were nominated as popular by peers were highly likely to engage in a disordered eating pattern and thereby had lower body esteem. Results highlight the need for eating disorder prevention at the level of the peer group. Programs should focus on decreasing pressure to be thin, acceptance by peers for attributes other than appearance and combating weight- and shape-related teasing within the school system.

Menstruation is generally considered as unclean in the Indian society. Isolation of the menstruating girls and restrictions imposed on them in the family, have reinforced a negative attitude towards this phenomenon (Dhingra & Kumar, 2009). Several research studies have revealed that girls have low level of knowledge about good hygienic practices such as the use of sanitary pads (Thakre et al., 2011) and there is no possibility of properly drying the cloth, because nobody, especially men, may see any sign of menstruation in a shame-based culture. The consequence is that women and girls mostly have to hang it in well-hidden, often unhealthy places and use moist and damp cloths. Poor hygiene during menstruation has been associated with serious ill-health ranging from reproductive tract infection, urinary tract infection, bad odour and many more (Akpenpuun, Rumun & Msuega, 2014).

Thakre et al. (2011) narrates the various restrictions during menstruation such as not being permitted to attend any religious functions or visit temples, not allowed to do the household work, sleep on the routine bed



and touch anybody. Ray and Dasgupta (2012) found girls being absent from school during their menstrual period due to lack of proper disposal facility of sanitary napkins.

A study on menstrual hygiene among rural adolescent girls conducted by Devi and Ramaiah (1994) found that majority of the girls were having accurate knowledge about the phenomenon of menstruation. Regarding the practices, only 10 girls were using boiled and dried cloth as menstrual absorbent. Though all the 64 girls received advice regarding menstrual hygiene from different sources, some of their practices were unhygienic. This indicates that the parents of these girls were lacking accurate knowledge and this lack of knowledge got transferred to their offsprings. The findings highlighted the need for educational television programmes and intervention of school nurses/health personnel in imparting awareness on hygienic practices, and also the relevance of including sex education in school curriculum.

The study titled, 'Effectiveness of reproductive health education among rural adolescent girls: A school based intervention study in Udipi Taluk, Karnataka' was conducted by Rao, Lena, Nair, Kamath and Kamath (2008) examined the effect of health education on students' knowledge and attitudes towards reproductive health. It was found that, though most of the students (98%) were aware of the importance of regular antenatal check-ups,

their knowledge regarding importance of diet, rest and exercise during pregnancy was poor (66%). Missed period as the first sign of pregnancy was an unknown thing for around 40% of the students. It was also observed that their knowledge was poor regarding the availability of different methods of contraception.

Joseph, Bhattacharji, Joseph and Rao (2008) examined through their study, the general and reproductive health of adolescent girls in rural south India. This study has made visible, the abysmally poor general health of rural adolescents. Having survived various hazards of infancy and childhood, these girls continue to suffer from the after-effects of poor nutrition and adverse socioeconomic conditions including unhygienic practices and insanitary facilities that still prevail in rural India. This study has exposed the extremely poor knowledge of the girls in topics such as nutrition, menstruation, pregnancy and child care.

Dasgupta and Sarkar (2008) also studied the menstrual hygiene practices of adolescent girls. The main objectives of the study were (i) to elicit the beliefs, notions and sources of information regarding menstruation among the study population and (ii) to find out the status of menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls. This was a descriptive, cross-sectional study conducted among 160 adolescent girls of a secondary school situated in the field practice area of Rural Health Unit and Training Center, Singur, West

Bengal. The results showed that out of 160 respondents, 108 (67.5%) girls were aware about menstruation prior to the attainment of menarche. Mother was the first informant regarding menstruation in the case of 60 (37.5%) girls. One hundred and thirty-eight (86.25%) girls knew it as a physiological process. Seventy-eight (48.75%) girls were aware of the use of sanitary pads during menstruation. Nonetheless, when it comes to actual practices, merely 18 (11.25%) girls used sanitary pads during menstruation. For cleaning purposes, 156 (97.5%) girls used both soap and water. Regarding restrictions practiced, 136 (85%) girls practiced diverse restrictions during menstruation. The researcher concluded the report with the opinion that menstrual hygiene, a very important risk factor for reproductive tract infections, is a vital aspect of health education for adolescent girls.

Thakre et al. (2011) conducted a study titled 'Menstrual hygiene: Knowledge and practice among adolescent school girls of Saoner, Nagpur District'. Three hundred and eighty seven girls of 8th and 9th standards were purposively selected for personal interviews in the study. Results showed that only 36.95% of the girls were aware of menstruation before menarche. The major source of information about menstruation for them was found to be their mothers. More than three fourth of the girls in the study were not aware of the cause and the source of the bleeding. A majority of them had knowledge about the use of sanitary pads. The mean age of menarche in the study subjects was  $12.85 \pm 0.867$  years; sanitary pads were used by 49.35% of

the selected girls. The practice of the use of old clothes was reported in 45.74% of the subjects. Satisfactory cleaning of the external genitalia was practised by 33.85% of the girls. Three fourth of the sample practiced various restrictions during menstruation. Among them, 173 (71.78%) girls did not attend any religious functions or visit temples, 102 (26.36%) girls were not allowed to do the household work, 102 (26.36%) girls were not allowed to sleep on the routine bed, 97 (24.81) girls were not allowed to touch anybody, and 20 (5.17%) girls were not allowed to attend their schools during menstruation. Some menstrual hygiene indices have shown a significant difference between rural and urban girls.

### **2.3.2 Conflicts Related to Educational Aspirations**

Education is essential to prepare adolescents for healthy, safe and productive transition to adulthood. Despite the fact that investment in adolescent girl's education can lead both long and short term positive changes for girls, their future children, their communities and countries (Clader et al., 2013), the traditional gender role perceptions affect the educational aspirations of parents and their adolescent children. In the case of adolescent girls, programs that emphasize their healthy and productive transition to adulthood are not adequately linked with the education sector. Instances of parental denial of opportunities for higher education of girls are also well documented in research (Kainuwa & Yusuf, 2013; Reshma, 2014).

Parents often tend to lack proper career aspirations about their adolescent girls as marriage is considered as more important than career in girls' lives. Girls in turn are in a conflict situation arising from parental pressures to get married on one side and their desire for higher studies and employment on the other side (Le et al., 2014). Plan (2011) noted that lack of education and employable skills in turn make young girls and women vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

Scaria (2014) based on the studies in Kerala blames that generally the higher education of girls is perceived to be in the interests of the family for getting value in the marriage market, fostering knowledge for better children, health, and domestic work and fails to make the girls self-dependent and empowered in the true sense.

Adolescent girls face a number of challenges when it comes to their progress in education, especially in the Indian context. Ethiraj (1993) came up with significant observations from his study on opinions of parents from rural areas on education of girl children. The study was intended to find out if there exists any significant difference between sub samples of rural parents in respects of their opinion towards girls' education. The sample comprised of 133 parents of students studying in a school, who came from rural backgrounds. Findings of the study reveal that there is a significant difference between male and female parents in terms of favourability of

opinion towards girls' education. Surprisingly, male parents had a more favourable opinion towards girls' education. Literate parents had more favourable opinion than illiterate parents towards girls' education.

Sujata et al. (1995) studied in detail, the gender discrimination existing among school students in the arena of education. The objective was to see whether there is any gender discrimination in the school and family environment. Major findings of the study were that 61% of boys were sent from home to school, while in case of girls, it was only 39%. However, a soaring 72% of rural students expressed that there is gender discrimination existing in the society they belong to.

Mohammed (2000) has done a comparative analysis of participation of boys and girls at secondary and higher secondary levels. The main objectives of the study were to estimate the class wise and sex wise enrolment in secondary and higher secondary classes at schools and to analyze the attitudes of parents towards the school system. Both students and parents were chosen as samples. The findings revealed that involvement of girl child in domestic chores was one reason for their absenteeism. The firm-held belief among the parents that investment in the education of girl child might not be beneficial is another reason for their academic backwardness and absenteeism.

Mohammed (2000) also carried out a study on the educational problems of low enrolment of Muslim girls in select blocks of Tehsil

Handwara, District Kupwara, Kashmir. The study has revealed that educational facilities for girls were inadequate to meet their needs. The main reason for low enrolment was that they were preoccupied with domestic work all the time. Poverty stricken parents prefer to educate the sons but not the daughters.

Lakshmi and Karimulla (2007) undertook a study on the attitude of 100 rural parents towards girls' education. The findings revealed that both literate and illiterate parents had highly favourable attitude towards girls' education without any significant difference between the compared groups.

### **2.3.3 Adjusting with Peer Pressures**

In adolescence, young people start to adhere to and be a member of a peer group and they spend a great deal of time with their friends. A typical adolescent usually likes to unfasten from the parental ties and to spend less time with their families (Larson & Richards, 1991). It is to be noted here that peer relationships have also been found to be vital for the psychological well-being of a person in adolescence (Greenberger, Chen, Tally & Dong, 2000).

"Peer pressure" can be described as the influence exerted by a peer group in encouraging a person to change his or her attitudes, values or behaviours to conform to the group. A person affected by peer pressure may or may not want to belong to these groups. They may also recognise dissociative groups that they do not wish to belong to and therefore adopt

behaviours in opposition to those of the group (Adams, 1996). The pursuit for peer approval and recognition is manifested in the way they dress, speak, walk and in their general interests so that they can blend in with the group (Oni, 2010).

Peer relations are widely believed to be important for different aspects of adolescent development. Studies done in this field invariably suggest that peers have a powerful impact on the attainment of vital developmental tasks at this stage of life. These tasks include development of autonomy and independence and construction of a positive self-concept (Dekovic, Engels, Shirai, Kort & Anker, 2002). Adolescents who have troubles in their relations with peers face more challenges at school. They are more habitually engaged in delinquency and are more susceptible to have psychological issues (Berndt, 1996; Kupersmidt, Coie & Dodge, 1990; Parker & Asher, 1987). Peers influence academic growth and achievement in addition to developing pro-social behaviours (Mounts & Steinberg, 1995; Wentzel & Caldwell, 1997). Peers also bear a significant role in the development of undesirable behaviours including drug and alcohol use, cigarette smoking and delinquency (Urberg, Luo, Pilgrim & Degirmencioglu, 2003). It is observed that girls who display obvious signs of physical maturation (i.e., the manifestations of secondary sexual characteristics) may find it hard to sustain friendships with peers who have not matured and developed such characteristics in a comparable pace (Petersen, Sarigiani & Kennedy, 1991).



Thorne (1986) observed that boys have a tendency to join together with large groups of same sex peers while peer relationships of girls usually include close cliques like dyads, triads or tetrads. Thompson (2015) suggests that if peers are doing drugs or having sex, the adolescent is a lot more times susceptible to do the same.

The study undertaken by Santor and Kusumakar (2000) measured peer pressure, popularity and conformity in adolescent boys and girls for predicting school performance, sexual attitudes and substance use. A sample of 148 adolescent boys and girls in grades 11 to 13 were selected for the study. The results revealed that school performance, substance use, as well as sexual attitudes and behaviour were more strongly correlated with the peer pressure.

Oni (2010) investigated peer group pressure as a determinant of adolescents' social adjustment in Nigerian schools. The results of the analysis showed that peer pressure among adolescents is related to their social adjustment and that the gender of the adolescents affects their social adjustment as well. Based on these findings, the following recommendations were made: parents should serve as role models for their children to emulate; parents should be watchful of the types of friends kept by their adolescent children; and parent-child relationship should be cordial enough to permit adolescents in discussing their problems with them. In addition, the finding

suggested the management of adolescents as the joint responsibility of parents, guidance counselors, school administrators and the society at large.

Akhtar and Aziz (2011) conducted a study on the effect of peer and parent pressure on the academic achievement. 156 students were selected by using cluster sampling technique. An opinionnaire was used to elicit the opinions of the students regarding peer and parent pressure. The findings of the study were that the parent pressure affects positively and peer pressure affects negatively on the academic achievement of female students. However, no significant effect of peer and parent pressure was found on the achievement of male students.

At the same time, a number of studies have found that peer pressure plays a significant role in the formation of adaptive abilities. The study conducted by Yunus, Mushtaq and Qaiser (2012) titled as “Peer pressure and adaptive behaviour learning: A study of adolescents in Gujarat” on a sample of late adolescents revealed that peer pressure has a positive influence as those who received high amount of peer pressure, have better adaptive abilities. Both male and female adolescents were reported to accept peer pressure in an equal manner.

Korir and Kipkemboi (2014) conducted a study on the impact of school environment and peer influences on students’ academic performance in Vihiga County, Kenya. The study assessed school environment factors and

peer influences in terms of the level of psychological impact they have on learners. It was a correlation study carried out in twenty-one public secondary schools. The study established that school environment and peer influence made significant contribution to the students' academic performance.

#### **2.3.4 Confusions about Interpersonal Relationship**

Adolescence is the time for physiological changes that influence their perception of themselves and the way others perceive them. They are treated as children where they would want to be treated as adults and as adults where they would like to be treated as children (Sundararaman, 2010). They are going through puberty, meeting the changing expectations of others and coping with feelings they might not have experienced before (Gala & Chaudhary, 2004).

Adolescent romantic relationships are important experiences in the lives of teenagers (Feiring, 2000; Furman & Shaffer, 2003). But the restrictions imparted by parents often make the adolescent girl confused to have any kind of relationship with the opposite sex. In majority of schools, adolescent boys and girls are discouraged from sitting together, interacting and mingling with each other (Kuruvilla & Thasniya, 2017). According to Arnett (2012), Indian adolescents are found to spend much more time with families than their American counterparts and to feel positive in doing so

most of the time. Very few of them reported any signs of conflict with their parents and there was no attempt at breaking away.

A survey of girls at different levels of education in the youth culture perspective was undertaken by Saraswathi (2002). The study invariably revealed that girls were under parental control and not encouraged to take up independent decisions. With regard to their relationship with members of the opposite sex, girls were found to be highly traditional. At the same time, when it comes to their attitude towards women's issues the girls was found to possess progressive attitudes.

Bassi (2003) undertook a study on the construct of gender in school. The main objective of the study was to explore how the 'gender code' and the 'hidden curriculum' influenced the gender relations and the roles girls and boys identify to. Findings of the study revealed that the gender code and hidden curriculum of the school inhibit girls from crossing gender boundaries that are reinforced by school practices and processes. Within the school premises, children were segregated in both formal and informal spaces based on gender.

### **2.3.5 Issues Related to Choice of Career and Selection of Role models**

Naqui (2011) highlights that women in India have struggled to establish an identity and create a space for themselves in workspaces and sectors. However, till date, the family occupies a unique and critical place in

the life of young people in matters related to their career choices. Parents still prefer to get their daughters married off rather than making them economically independent through paid employment (Kuruvilla & Nisha, 2015; Singh, 2017). It is natural for girls growing up in a traditionally patriarchal culture to assume that their duties and capabilities are different from that of their male counterparts and their social position as inferior to them. The occasional career guidance sessions at schools and colleges fail to overcome the parental pressures and traditional gender role perceptions that demotivate girls from aspiring for prospective careers.

On the one hand, women are striving to be independent by being employed and on the other the traditional family support is missing (Ramu, 1989). Girls still have lower rates of secondary school enrolment and completion in many parts of the world and lack the right skills for jobs worthy of high wages. The World Bank Group (2013) reveals that adolescent girls are often found to be less qualified for jobs. The combined impact of ability and femininity stereotypes make young girls feel ill-suited for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (Betz & Sekaquaptewa, 2012). Vocational training will significantly improve the economic conditions of the girls themselves and their communities, thereby filling a gap for girls with limited social networks utilizable for economic empowerment. This can in turn increase the age of marriage and bring in the freedom of choice to shape their lives (Baker et al., 2009). When it comes to finding a job, young women

struggle because they are more socially isolated, lack family support and have with fewer contacts to help them in job hunting. They often lack the confidence to set off and find the career opportunities out there.

Fentiman et al. (2011) point out that women use their personal experiences to help shape not only their own lives but also the lives of a new generation. By the time they reach their teenage, the priorities they once had can swing and shift considerably. While parents and family are still important influences, they are also a source of conflict for many, with girls responding to peer pressure, pushing the boundaries and seeking new experiences. This has resulted in more and more girls venturing into non- traditional career paths (Barry & Potter, 2006) but the proportion of such girls and women is abysmally low.

Obura and Ajowi (2012) investigated gender and perceptions of career aspirations of students in secondary schools. The results showed that the most popular career for female respondents was medicine, which was chosen by 24.4% females. The least preferred careers for females were aviation and computer sciences both of which were chosen by 4% female students each. Female respondents who chose nursing were 12.1% compared to 2.5% male respondents. Career in engineering was chosen by 15.2% males as compared to 6.3 % female respondents. Regardless of gender, the most popular careers were medicine and law. Female respondents generally were more inclined

towards careers that were biological- science based, whereas the preferences of male students leaned more heavily towards the physical sciences. Law was widely chosen by both sexes with the males having it as the most widely aspired for career chosen by 21.1% and 13% females having it as the second most widely chosen career after medicine. The list of preferred choices therefore points out marked gender disparity in certain career aspirations. This also indicates that there was a significant relationship between students' career aspiration and gender. The most stereotyped subjects were nursing and engineering. Neutral careers were accountancy, design, law, medicine, and teaching. The stereotypically feminine careers were nursing and journalism. The stereotypically masculine careers were engineering, architecture, aviation, business, computer science and forces. Both male and female respondents were more concentrated in neutral careers. A larger percentage of males aspired for stereotypically masculine careers while a larger percentage of females aspired for stereotypically feminine careers.

Beaman et al. (2012) observe that the presence of local female politicians boosted Indian girls' grades and career aspirations.

Adolescent girls in the Indian context find it difficult to choose a proper role model in their career. According to Douvan (1976) employed mothers provide role models that could inspire their daughters' subsequent career achievements. Regarding the selection of role models, Biskup and

Pfister (1999) found that boys predominantly choose sportsmen, movie figures and actors as their role models while girls mainly chose figures from the music world. Vescio et al. (2003) in their study found only a relative small percentage of girls choosing an elite athlete while the majority nominating a family member or friend as their role model.

Chan (2011) conducted a study on what preadolescent girls learn about gender roles from celebrities. Qualitative interview methodology was adopted for getting the data. The study revealed that girls aged 10 to 12 very often select female adult media celebrities as models for gender roles and gender identities. The selection of media celebrities was focused on certain 'admirable' or 'desirable' attributes. Some interviewees reported explicitly that they adopted the celebrities as positive role models. Interviewees also identified with the celebrities because they liked the way they behave, or their specific personality, or their specific talents. In all the interviews, the tendency for idol worship was absent. No interviewees reported strong emotional attachment with the media celebrities or demonstrated confusion of self-identity. None of the interviewees perceived the celebrities and media characters as perfect. However, interviewees reported of inappropriate gender roles from these celebrities. Moreover, the interviewees expressed their contempt on celebrities who engaged in unacceptable behaviours such as drinking and consumption of drugs.



### **2.3.6 Safety Issues Related to Gender Based Violence**

Puberty intensifies the vulnerability of girls to violence. During the transition into womanhood, sexuality and gender roles begin to assume greater importance in how adolescent girls are viewed socially. UNICEF (2014) reports that in every 10 minutes, somewhere in the world, an adolescent girl dies as a result of violence. The gender based violence that adolescent girls face range from eve teasing and sexual abuse to trafficking.

As UNESCO (1993) reports, eve-teasing is the sexual harassment of women in crowded public spaces, a behaviour commonly seen in large cities as well as in villages. Eve-teasing is probably the most common act of public violence against women which includes various forms of harassments like making vulgar comments, indecent proposals, unwelcome gestures with hands, legs, fingers or other organs, attempting to make physical contact etc. (Kuruvilla & Suhara, 2014). Eve teasing is a ridiculous form of enjoyment for men while a physical as well as psychological torment for the women who are subjected to it. This is one of the daily problems women in Indian society face. As per Akhtar (2013), of all the forms that violence against women can assume, eve teasing is the most ubiquitous and insidious because it is considered normal behaviour and not an assault to females.

Most of the adolescent girls would have an experience of being stalked or teased while walking on the street or passing by a public place. The

seemingly innocent act of stalking sometimes reaches the extent that the victim commits suicide out of sheer humiliation. There are many cases of girl students stopping their studies for the fear of eve-teasing (Hoque, 2013).

Sexual abuse and rape are the most painful psychosocial/public health problems that adolescent females experience. An even more disturbing fact is that the perpetrator of violence in most of the cases of sexual abuse to girls is either a close and confident person that she knows well. It may be a family member, a relative, an intimate neighbour, a care-giver, a classmate, a teacher or a family friend. Cases of sexual abuse where the offender is a totally unknown person to the survivor are very few (Bustreo, 2014; Dubey, 2014). Besides this, girls are sometimes blamed for their own victimization (UNICEF, 2014). Chege (2007) observes how girl children experience gender based violence in their schools, especially from their male teachers.

Internal trafficking of women, men and children for purposes of sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, bonded labour and indentured servitude is widespread. Robinson (1997) and Dottridge (2012) observes that traffickers travel to other countries to seek young girls, thus, cross border trafficking occurs mainly for sex tourism, prostitution, pornography, forced labour, slavery or for debt bondage. Sharma (2014) points out that 25 percent of women trafficked to India are under 18 years of age.

Trafficking, bonded labour, and child prostitution by their very nature preclude girls from leading normal lives in childhood and in many cases because of problems with rehabilitation as adults (Scolotarof et al., 2014). Young girls are recruited from less developed countries in promise of better job opportunities overseas. Upon arrival abroad, victims' passports and other valuable forms of identification are taken away, and in most cases, the victims are sexually tortured to yield submission. Finally, the girls become commercial sex workers and prostitutes in the brothels (Rahman, 2011).

Rekha (1997) studied the issues of women and girls engaged in commercial sex work in the Odisha state, on a population of 100 commercial sex workers. Semi-structured questionnaires and in depth interviews were used. Among the respondents, 40% of the respondents were adolescent girls. The study indicated that girl child prostitution is rampant in the state. This study also revealed that the main reasons for joining commercial sex work were poverty in the family, certain family traditions encouraging the practice and family disputes including marital discord. The study concludes that trafficking of girls is the result of the degradation of the morale of the society as well as the values and norms of the society and it suggests that moral education be made a part of the school curricula.

Puja (2000) carried out a study on the paradigm of violence and adolescent conceptions. The sample consisted of 40 children in the age group

of 11-13 years and 15-17 years. The study found that violence was seen as a negative term and was unanimously condemned by the respondents. Media, especially television, was seen to have massive impact on children's perceptions of violence, being the main source of information. Reduction of social ills like poverty, unemployment, and better parental guidance would help in moulding the thoughts of young minds and thus can control the increase in crime and violence. Counselling and rehabilitation of criminals, instead of punishing them was also suggested by many respondents.

Venkitakrishnan and Kurien (2003) conducted a study among the survivors of rape in Kerala state. The main objectives of the study were to look into the details of gender discrimination and the inherent ideology of patriarchy that influence rape incidents. The study was based on 15 case studies of rape survivors, selected from different districts in the state, which revealed that majority of the rape cases, were committed by brute force that too, on children and adolescents. It was also found that the perpetrator in a few cases have come in the garb of lovers. In these cases, the survivors happened to be of 16-24 years of age. Most of the rape survivors had education up to the secondary level or less or even, illiterate. It also concluded that incident of rape leaves a permanent scar on the mind and body of the survivor. The society also views that victim blaming is highly prevalent in the society. Members of the society put the blame on the survivors for their lack of care and caution rather than on the offenders.

Jaishankar and Kosalai (2007) conducted a study on victims of stalking in India. This investigation has revealed that stalking is much graver than eve teasing and it is an obsessive behaviour. The study was conducted in select 10 colleges including Arts, Science, Medicine and Engineering in Tirunelveli city, Tamil Nadu. A total of 150 respondents were selected for the study. Results have shown that stalking harassment included unsolicited telephone calls (30.7%), spying 11.3% (including standing outside home 14%, outside college 12.7%), unsolicited letters (22.7%) and trying to communicate with the 'victim' of stalking (17.4%). Another finding was that majority of the victims did not report the incident of stalking to police or to their parents.

Vindhya (2011) undertook a study on survivors of sex trafficking in Andhra Pradesh, India. The study was carried out on a sample of 78 women who had been trafficked, rescued through police raids or interventions made by local NGO's or who had escaped through their own efforts. Case study method was used for getting relevant data. Findings of this study underline the role of poverty in sex trafficking. A majority of them were in the 16-24 age group, among them seven were still under 18 years of age indicating that they were all minors when they had been trafficked. Gender discrimination, lack of formal education, lack of awareness among women of their rights, the status of being unwanted in the family, child marriage and abandonment by the husband served as proximal events to the trafficking.

Hoque (2013) undertook a study on eve teasing in Bangladesh and its causes and impacts on society. The researcher found that eve teasing has become one of the most severe problems of Bangladesh. It ruthlessly infringes the freedom and right of mobility of a woman. A soaring 90% of girls between the ages of 10-18 are affected by eve teasing. It has reached to such an alarming situation that many girls committed suicide in the last three years due to eve teasing. Many female students are forced to stay at home giving up their studies. Parents are marrying off their school and college going daughters in order to avoid this horrible situation. No government initiatives to tame teasers have proven effective so far.

Akhtar (2013) undertook a study titled eve teasing as a form of violence against women: a case study of district Srinagar, Kashmir. Data for the study were collected through both quantitative as well as the qualitative methods by canvassing interview schedules, carrying out focus group discussions and observation. The results revealed that 100% respondents reported as having faced eve-teasing, in some or other forms, irrespective of their socio-economic backgrounds. Majority of the respondents (69 %) had first suffered eve teasing at the ages of 14 -16 and 16.7 % respondents had this experience at the ages of 16 – 18; while 14.3 % respondents reported having been teased for the first time at the ages of 18 – 20. These findings suggest that eve teasing is a bitter experience that a woman suffers as soon as she leaves childhood; her childhood is snatched from her when she is

victimized for the first time and made to realize that she has to learn to evade herself in order not to be victimized. Eve teasing is one of the daily problems that every woman has to confront, irrespective of the social class to which she belongs.

Bashir and Khurshid (2013) conducted a study on eve teasing and molestation. The result revealed that 80% of respondents were aware about the occurrence of eve teasing and rest 20% was unaware about the same. 40% of the people were of the view that eve teasing can be curbed by providing moral education in schools /colleges so that the children will learn good lessons from the very beginning of their lives.

Kuruvilla and Suhara (2014) conducted a study on response patterns of girl students to eve-teasing on a sample of 120 respondents who were all post graduate / research scholar students of Calicut University Campus situated in Malappuram District of Kerala state. The results of the study showed that the whole sample have faced many attempts of eve-teasing in their lives. Majority of the sample (90%) have a clear awareness about ‘what constitutes eve-teasing’. Half of the sample had heard about the IPC sections related to eve-teasing, but with no idea about the punishments given to the offenders. Majority of the respondents (96%) agreed that the victims of eve-teasing must get help and support from the society. Almost 100 percent of the sample agreed that lack of respect to women is the major cause for eve-teasing. While

92 percent of the sample considered lack of strict punishment of offenders as a reason for increasing trend, 90 percent considered negative influence of media and pornography as the major factors leading to eve-teasing. The results also revealed that students vehemently opposed the usual victim blaming and were totally against the notions that women's dressing style and behaviour patterns as causative agents for this rising trend.

### **2.3.7 Pressures for Early Marriage**

The legal age for marriage in India is 21 for men and 18 for women. Marriage before the age of 18 is a fundamental violation of human rights. In India, 50% of girls between 15 and 19 are already married (UNFPA, 2000). As Arnett (2012) opines parents often believe that they fail in their duty if their daughter is not married and have children.

Parents may pursue marriage for their adolescent daughters in an attempt to secure a better economic future to them. In turn, adolescent girls may consent to the arrangement due to family pressures without fully understanding and being prepared for the responsibilities, risks and considerable complexity of navigating the roles of wife, mother and daughter-in-law (Le et al., 2014).

Poverty often triggers the practice of early marriage. Families may hope that an early marriage will secure a young girl's financial future and honour (Parsons et al., 2015; Warriar, 2017). UNICEF (2011) highlights that



girls are likely to find themselves in a position of powerlessness within the household of their husband's family, with no clear access to friends of the same age or other sources of support. This powerlessness means they are more vulnerable to abuse and may also have to bear an excessive burden of domestic work. Too often, these unions result in disempowerment, abuse and early pregnancy – all of which can lead to serious health consequences (Bustreo & Hunt, 2013). International studies have established that adolescent pregnancy brings many disadvantages to the girl's health, mental and psychological wellbeing, economic and career opportunities, poverty and future life prospects (Gray et al., 2013). But still the practice of early marriage persists in several parts of the country as a means to ensure the future safety of girls (UNICEF, 2001).

Nithyashree's (2007) study on the opinion of rural women towards girls' education revealed that 89% of the respondents had a favorable opinion towards girls' education, while the remaining 11% had unfavorable opinion. 60% of the respondents were not aware of the facilities provided by Government to encourage girls' education. Educational qualification of mothers, income of the family and social participation were positively correlated with education of girls. It was also found that the tradition of early marriage significantly impedes the educational advancement of girl students.

### **2.3.8 Issues Related to Usage of ICT**

Tavakkol et al. (2005) point out that in all countries, young individuals, 16-24 years old were the largest users of internet. Over the past twenty years, unscrupulous computer users have continued to use the computer to commit crimes (Schreiber et al, 1995). Salimi et al.(2014) argue that the latest and the greatest challenge to the criminal law are to tackle cybercrimes. Cybercrimes committed against persons include various crimes like transmission of child-pornography, harassment of any one with the use of e-mail; distribution, posting, and dissemination of obscene material including pornography and indecent exposure etc. Such cybercrimes which threaten to undermine the growth of the younger generation also leave irreparable scars and injury on the younger generation, if not controlled (Azeez et al., 2010).

Social networking websites open a wide window to socialization. Due to their specific socio-cultural contexts, teenage girls as well as women fall easy victims to traps in the cyber world (Hof & Koop, 2011). The legal and psychological researches on the risky functions of the cyberspace and consequent effects have proved that social networking is far more dangerous than chat rooms. However, as Clemmitt (2006) opines, most of the users are oblivious to the fact that their identity could be exploited by malicious intent.

Sangwan and Chhikara (2003) studied the impacts of television viewing behaviour of teenagers and adolescents. A sample of 200 teenagers

and 100 adolescents were interviewed with the help of self-prepared and duly pre-tested interview schedule. Parents of these 200 teenagers and adolescents were also interviewed. Results of the study revealed that teenagers and adolescents differ in spending time on T.V. Girls devote longer duration on T.V and they, irrespective of age, preferred fashion.

Dhamija and Panda (2007) undertook a study on the attitude of postgraduate students towards internet. The sample comprised of 200 postgraduate students. The investigators concluded that postgraduate students have more favourable attitude towards the internet with hardly any difference between male and female students and rural and urban students.

The study by Koovakkai and Muhammed (2010) was focused on the effect of locale factor in the abuse of internet by adolescents. The study on a sample of 150 adolescents in Kerala using a structured questionnaire revealed that the habit of changing/manipulating information on the internet, habitually viewing and downloading sexually explicit pictures/pornographic items, plagiarism and tendency of sending undesirable messages over new media are comparatively high among the adolescents in rural areas. Comparatively higher percentage of adolescents in rural areas finds it to be fun sending false information over the internet. The rural adolescents are behind the urban adolescents in the understanding that giving false information on the internet is unethical and is a criminal offence. Even though the rural adolescents are

more inclined to downloading vulgar pictures/pornographic items, they are more aware as compared to urban adolescents that it is wrong. In the case of plagiarism, adolescents feel that it is easy and convenient and it is the usual method followed by students.

A study was carried out by Swamy (2010) on internet awareness and competence among high school students and teachers. A sample of 86 students and 40 teachers were involved in the study. Findings showed that there was no significant difference between high school boys and girls in terms of awareness and competence to use internet.

The study done by Thiyagu (2011) assessed mobile learning activities among post graduate students. 230 samples were collected using random sampling technique. Results showed that there is significant difference in mobile learning activities among the post graduate students with respect to their gender in terms of making use of 'texting', 'contacts', 'organizer', 'settings', 'gallery', 'mobile internet' but no significance difference was found in mobile learning activities among the students with respect to their gender in terms of using other mobile applications.

Bergen et al. (2013) conducted a study on adults' sexual interest to interact with children and adolescents in the online media. This descriptive, quasi-experimental study showed that there is a large interest to engage in sexual conversations with children and adolescents among visitors of the three

chat rooms included. However, the amount and quality of the sexual interest varied as a function of the age of the impersonated children and adolescents and as a function of chat room.

### **2.3.9 Feeling Inferior and Having Low Self Esteem**

According to Rose and Montemayor (1994), self esteem encompasses one's self-evaluations of adequacy and worth. Self esteem may be an especially central issue during adolescence when establishing an independent identity becomes an important task. Harter (1998) reveals that in the transition from childhood to adolescence, individuals begin to develop more abstract characterizations of them, and self-concepts become more differentiated and better organized. When considering self esteem it is important to note that both high and low levels can be emotionally and socially harmful for the individual. As per McLeod (2012), an optimum level of self esteem lies in the middle of the continuum that is not too low or not too high.

Physical body changes followed by secondary sex characteristics make adolescents more and more conscious about their physical appearance. The dissatisfaction of physical appearance develops behavioural problems and low self esteem. Girls often feel that their physical appearance is more valuable than their abilities. People generally make evaluation of other person's personality and character on the basis of appearance. Physical attractiveness

plays very significant role on the self esteem and emotional intelligence measures of adolescent girls.

Most of the norms and values that are held in our social system such as productive role for men and reproductive role for women make girls to feel that the ultimate goal of their life is becoming a wife and a mother. In most of the families girl child is treated as a burden and inferior than boys which in turn lowers the feeling of self worth among girls. Lack of motivation and empowerment is another reason for low self esteem.

Although boys and girls report similar levels of self esteem during childhood, a gender gap emerges by adolescence and as a consequence adolescent boys have higher self esteem than adolescent girls (Robins et al., 2002). Low self esteem has been shown to be correlated with a number of negative outcomes, such as depression (Silverstone & Salsali, 2003). Rosenberg & Owen (2001) offer the following description of low self esteem people based on empirical research. People with low self esteem are more troubled by failure and tend to exaggerate events as being negative. They often interpret non critical comments as critical. They are more likely to experience social anxiety and low levels of interpersonal confidence. This in turn makes social interaction with others difficult as they feel awkward, shy, conspicuous and unable to adequately express themselves when interacting with others.

Agarwal and Raj (2004) studied relationship between self esteem and school performance. A sample of 505 children in the age range of 8-14 years was taken from schools of Agra. The results proved that there exists a significant positive correlation between self -esteem and school performance.

Clay, Vignoles and Dittmar (2005) investigated the relationship between body image and self esteem in adolescent girls, by testing the influence of socio-cultural factors. The study found that viewing ultra-thin or average-size models led to deprivation in both body satisfaction and self esteem in adolescent girls aged 11–16, with changes in self esteem fully mediated by changes in bodily satisfaction. These findings demonstrate a causal effect of media images on body satisfaction, apparently spreading to global self esteem.

Joshi and Srivastava (2009) conducted a study on self esteem and academic achievement of adolescents. The sample consisted of 400 adolescents aged 12 to 14 years from Varanasi District. The findings indicated that there were no significant differences with regard to self-esteem of adolescents from rural and urban backgrounds. However, male adolescents were found significantly superior in self esteem than female adolescents.

Tam, Lee, Har and Pook (2011) undertook a study titled, ‘Perceived social support and self esteem towards gender roles and contributing factors in adolescents’. It was aimed at examining the relationship between self

esteem and perceived social support among the Malaysian adolescents. Gender differences of perceived social support and self esteem among the respondents were also investigated. A sample of 460 Malaysian adolescents was selected. Half of the respondents were male and the remaining were females. The study came up with the result that self esteem is positively correlated with social support. Adolescents will have greater self esteem when they receive high social support from either family, peers or significant others. The study also established that peer support is the highest form of perceived social support.

The study titled ‘Adolescent’s self-concept: Understanding the role of gender and academic competence’ conducted by Rath and Nanda (2012) also came up with fascinating results. A sample of 240 adolescents was randomly selected from different urban colleges of Odisha state, for the said study. In each group of 120 adolescents, there were 60 boys and 60 girls. The results indicated that academically competent adolescents have higher physical, moral, personal, family, social and overall self-concept than less-competent ones. The strength of association between personal self-concept and overall self-concept in boys was higher than the association found in girls. Similarly, the strength of association between physical self- concept and overall self-concept, as well as social self-concept and overall self-concept is higher in girls than that of the boys. This study also highlighted that it may be more probable for girls to be more eager to ‘be liked’, more desirous of making a



favourable impression on others. This suggests that girls become much more “other-directed” or “people-oriented” than boys. Their self-consciousness may derive from the fact that they are much more concerned with other’s attitudes towards them and thus tend to see themselves through the eyes of others.

Tahir, Inam and Raana (2015) studied the relationship between social support and self esteem of adolescent girls. The study was carried out on a sample of 120 girls ranging from 16 to 19 years of age. The result shows that a significant correlation exists between self esteem and family support and between peer support and self esteem. Thus, higher self esteem was associated with having higher satisfaction with support from families and peers.

### **2.3.10 Confusions Regarding Gender Roles**

Gender stereotypes begin from a very young age when children start to identify the gender characteristics as they grow up and learn about socially desirable behaviours for boys and girls in their daily interactions. Boys learn about behaviours expected from men which in most cultures are synonymous with being physically and emotionally strong, being competitive, dominating and controlling others (Thomson, 2002) while girls learn to become more and more passive and docile (Carter, 2014; Hamieh & Usta, 2011).

Girls learn that being submissive, shy and obedient and not expressing one's thoughts and feelings are desirable feminine attributes. Various experiences in day-to-day living reinforce gender stereotypes and perceptions on masculinity and femininity. These notions not only reflect the traditional value of girls in comparison to boys, the compartmentalized roles and responsibilities that society ascribes to them but also affect access to education, health, employment, income within family and society (Krishnan et al., 2008; Sen et al., 2007)

In the role of a mother, woman is respected and even worshiped as a selfless sustainer of the family. Arnett (2012) opines that as a young girl she may be loved, ignored or feared as her conduct is considered to determine the family's honour.

The expectations related to fertility and domestic work place tremendous pressures on young women (Chaudhary, 2004). Sharma (1996) found that gender identity was the primary feature of the female adolescent's sense of self. Although formal education generated certain questioning about self-worth and future aspirations, it did not seem to overwhelm her sense of identification with her gender role. The emphasis on her role as a future homemaker is never lowered, even at the highest level of education.

In 2000, a study was carried out by Crespi on adolescents and their parents in Great Britain to assess the socialization and gender roles within the

family. This study suggests that the concept of gender socialization can be operationalized in three distinctive ways, as forms of transmission from parents to children, which depend on personal attitude and resources (self esteem, age, status and also on family life (housework gender division). Also, cross- gender relationship between fathers and daughters, mothers and sons has emerged as significant in determining traditional/non traditional gender attitudes. During adolescence, the identification with gender models goes through different relational mechanisms.

Girls and boys are often portrayed in stereotyped roles in commercials (Pike & Jennings, 2005). Activities portrayed in commercials often signify traditional gender roles. Furthermore, heavy exposure to television content has been found to foster gender stereotyped attitudes (Morgan, 1987; Morgan, 1982). The images in the media are more likely to show women as homemakers, and if they work outside the home, in traditional jobs for women, such as secretarial and teaching positions, and jobs that involve caring for other people and their possessions, such as nursing, flight attendant positions and domestic work. Adolescent girls form ideas about their own lives by observing how girls and women in the media look and behave, their motivations and their goals, what they do with their time and with their lives.

### **2.3.11 Curiosities Regarding Reproductive Health and Sexuality**

Early marriage and early childbearing are common barriers of all adolescent girls. Also, they have limited knowledge about sexual and reproductive health issues and lack the ability to make independent decisions about their health (UNFPA, 2009). Similarly, girls are not aware or bothered about their sexual and reproductive health rights.

Yakandawala (1991) undertook a study in Sri Lanka titled Communication and Advocacy strategies – Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health. The main objectives of the study were to identify the profile and characteristics of adolescents in various areas such as fertility, teen pregnancies, sexual behaviour, STDs, contraception, etc. and to describe and document the policy and programme responses in the country to address the sexual and reproductive issues of adolescents. The study points out the need for promoting education of parents and providing them the skills to support their children in the process of growing up, particularly in the areas of sexual behaviour and reproductive health. The study also emphasizes the use of mass media more effectively as a strategy in promoting adolescent reproductive and sexual health.

A study was conducted by Women Empowerment and Human Resource Development Centre of India, Thiruvananthapuram (2001) on the topic of reproductive and child health status of Kerala women. The main

objectives were to study the general health status of women in Kerala and to study the reproductive health status among adolescents. Tools and techniques used in study were survey method, observation, focus group discussion etc. Sample comprised of 240 women among whom 60 women were in the age group between 16-20 yrs and 20 health workers. Data was collected from Malappuram, Kasaragod, Trivandrum and Wayanad districts. The study has revealed that the incidence of adolescent marriage is very high among Tribal and Muslim dominated areas. In Malappuram district, occurrence of early marriage is very high because of the peculiar cultural taboos and other social norms prevailing in the area. Problems during the time of menstruation are higher among adolescents living in coastal, rural and tribal areas. Adolescents are suffering from mental problems like sudden depression, tendency for suicide, sleeplessness, loneliness etc. In Muslim dominated and tribal areas, the proportions of adolescent mothers are 20% and 60% respectively. This may be due to the lack of self-employment facilities available in these areas which may force them to opt for married life at the early age. This may affect the general health condition of the teenagers. The study also revealed that in the Muslim dominated Malappuram district, around 90% of women in the age group of 21 to 36 were married before reaching 20 yrs.

Gomathi (2003) conducted a study on premenstrual syndrome and performance of under-graduate students on a sample of 500 under graduate girls. The findings revealed menstrual symptoms were severe for the

undergraduate students. Stress, irritability and mood swings were the most common psychological symptoms, which were followed by crying and anxiety during menstrual period.

Jayalakshmi et al. (2006) has conducted a study on growth status of adolescent girls in an urban government school. The main objective of the study was to assess the growth status and prevalence of under nourishment among adolescent girls between 10 and 18 years of age from class 5 to 10 in the particular government girls' high school. The sample consisted of 861 girl students from 4 divisions, each selected at random, starting from class 5 till class 10. The results revealed that, of the total 861 students only 20.3% had weight in the normal range as per National Centre for Health Statistics (NCHS).

Studies underscore the fact that adolescents face an array of physical, emotional and social challenges. Nair (2012) carried out a study on Panchayath level primary care approach to adolescents. Sample of the study was 2650 teenagers in the age group of 13 to 19 years. The study has revealed that social and health related issues exist among adolescents. The problems vary from diseases such as asthma, obesity, underweight, goiter, antisocial behaviour and gender discrimination, improper concepts on sexuality, sexual abuse and lack of proper counselling and guidance.

Nair et al. (2012) conducted a study entitled ‘School based adolescent care services: A district model’. Objective of the study was to analyse the problems of higher secondary school students and to document the effect of family life and life skill education package. A survey was conducted among 11501 adolescents belonging to 103 higher secondary schools in Thiruvananthapuram District. The study showed that 61.2% adolescents reported scholastic problem, 22.1% family related problems, 31.9% personal problems and 15.2% adjustment problems, with boys reporting higher percentage. 65.8% reported body image related problems.

Sahayarani and Stanly (2013) undertook a study on AIDS awareness among XI standard students in the Pondicherry region. The study was intended to analyze the awareness on HIV/AIDS among higher secondary students. The sample size was 300. The study showed that there was no significant difference in the awareness about HIV/AIDS between boys and girls. The students had high awareness about AIDS.

UNESCO (1998) conducted a study on adolescent sexuality and fertility in India. Findings of the study revealed that the adolescents were sexually active before marriage and outside marriage, more than it was previously thought of and boys are more sexually active than girls; the prevalence of reproductive tract infections and gynaecological morbidities were alarmingly high; adolescents do not use contraceptives for spacing, and

the use of temporary methods of contraception, if at all, is limited. In fact, induced abortion is used as a spacing method, and the adolescents go to unapproved practitioners to get these abortions, so the risk of sepsis is high. Adolescents, both boys and girls, have very little information about reproductive anatomy, physiology or contraception; and there is under-utilization of services by adolescents for gynaecological conditions such as RTI. It was also found through the study that there is lack of participation in decision making by adolescents, particularly among girls, even more so among the unmarried.

Sabherwal (2003) studied sexual behavioural patterns relating to HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases among college students of Delhi. Main objectives of the study were to assess knowledge of college students on sexuality and to explore their attitude towards sex. A sample of 1000 students consisting of 650 girls and 350 boys from different colleges of Delhi was used for the study. The study has revealed that 105 students had prior sexual exposure out of which 9 students had experienced sex by the age of as low as 14. The age of first sexual contact ranged from 15 to 20 years for 89 students, 36 students had more than one sexual partner. Friends followed by television and newspapers/magazines were cited to be their main source of information on sexual matters. Almost half of the students surveyed had never been taught sex education in schools. Besides 15 students, all others were of the opinion that sex education should be included in educational institutions.



Joshi (2004) conducted a study on sexuality in India. On variables such as gender equality, virginity, peer group dependence, monogamy, role of media, deviant behaviour, social approval, role of religion and morality, sex crime, life style, myths and misconceptions, no significant difference was found between male and female adolescent students of low SES group. Male and female adolescent students of middle SES level have a significant difference in values and perceptions relating to the variables needed for sex education and variables on heterosexuality. Comparison of sex and sexuality related values and perceptions of male and female adolescent students of high SES showed the difference to be significant for gender equality variable and heterosexuality. High SES males agree more on gender equality and social approval than middle or low SES males. As SES has emerged as an important factor in acceptance of sex education, it was suggested that curriculum planners could take into consideration this finding while planning sex education/ adolescence education or reproductive health curriculum.

Jha (2012) analyzed the sexual behaviour, problems and perceptions of college going adolescent girls in Gwalior city of Madhya Pradesh. Structured interview method was used to collect qualitative and quantitative data. The study indicated that media acted as the major causative factor for pre-marital sex in the general population. However, the respondents belonging to nuclear families felt that the communication gap between parents is the primary reason behind it and children of such families consider sex as a stress-buster

instrument and it leads to pre-marital sex primarily. The study concludes that today's youth believes in upholding the cultural traditions by having faith in the marital bond, disapproving of premarital sex and abiding by social code of conduct. Lack of correct information about 'safe sex', ignorance about HIV testing and views such as 'AIDS can't happen to me' can put them at risk. Nuclear family structure provides more opportunities to youth to discuss about their psycho-social problems. It is recommended that a programme should be developed for the parents so that they could come out of their cocoons and provide timely solutions to their growing children.

### **2.3.12 Challenges Related to Emotional Well Being**

Fox (1963) studied exhaustively the problems of urban adolescent girls and found that the major problems are related to school adjustment, sex and marriage, morality and religion, personal/psychological issues and socio-psychological relations. Based on the findings Group Discussion Technique was suggested as a technique to resolve the problems and conflicts of adolescent girls. It was also suggested that teachers must wake up to their responsibilities and make efforts to fulfil them.

Chakravarthi (1960) was successful in putting forward a problem checklist for high school girl students of Delhi. The purpose was to prepare an exhaustive problem checklist for girl students and to study how the various sub-samples differ in their problems. The study was conducted on a sample

of 400 girls of 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades from four higher secondary schools of Delhi. The study revealed that 25% of respondents expressed concern about their physical appearance, 40% complained of health issues, 60% felt free to discuss their personal problems with their parents and 25% suffered a feeling of inferiority.

Rammohan, Vijayalakshmi and Reddy (1995) studied the problems faced by girl students in women's polytechnics. The study was aimed at identifying various problems faced by girl students and to study the intensity of problems faced by them. The sample comprised of 58, 71, 34 students. Findings showed that all students faced financial problems in their education. 57% of students expressed psychological problems while 65% of students indicated personal problems.

Annie (2000) conducted a study on the inferiority feelings of adolescent girls. The sample of the study consisted of 400 adolescent girls studying in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> standards of Thiruvananthapuram district in Kerala. The study has revealed that girls belonging to backward community showed significantly elevated inferiority feelings than those belonging to forward community.

Mehta (2000) studied the social values and futuristic perceptions of college going girls in Delhi. The questionnaire was administered to over 600 college girls randomly throughout Delhi during 1999. Findings showed that

the girls appear to be progressive, rational, bold in their orientations towards economic dependence, self dependence, equality of education and social opportunities, career freedom and decision making. Their social values have, in recent years changed considerably thanks to their living in India's major metropolis and receiving high education. Education have made them confident, broad minded and progressive.

The study on health risk behaviour and attitude towards physical activity among higher secondary school students in Kerala conducted by Babu (2007) came up with interesting results. The variables selected were height, weight, dieting behaviour, overweight, hygiene, violence, mental health, prevalence of tobacco use, alcohol and other drug use, HIV/AIDS related knowledge and attitude towards physical activity. The sample consisted of 5067 male and female students in the higher secondary schools of Kerala state. Results of the study revealed that the prevalence of underweight among higher secondary students of Kerala aged 16-19 years was 40.64%. A soaring 32.54% of respondents articulated that they have experienced a sense of loneliness and have attempted suicide. The percentage of alcohol consumption among the youth was 5.96%. Cigarette smokers among students were 6.16%. 33.95% of students watched television, played video or computer games 3 hours per day.

Mehra (2008) conducted a study on the effect of yoga practices on social stress and academic stress of female adolescents. The sample comprised of 120 class XI female students from a school of Chandigarh. The major finding of the study was that students exposed to yoga practices experienced reduction in both social and academic stress.

Tiwari (2009) studied stress among 300 male and female adolescents in the age group of 14 to 19 years from various educational institutes of Varanasi District. It was found that sex difference exist only with financial stress. Difference between science and non-science students irrespective of their sex was found to be significant regarding academic, social, familial, emotional and overall stress.

Devi (2011) had analyzed the relationship between emotional competence and social reticence of adolescent students. The objectives were to find out the level of emotional competence of adolescents with respect to their gender, locality, parental educational qualification and parental occupation. Hundred adolescent students from various schools in Thoothukudi district were selected for the study. The study found that there is a relationship between the emotional competence and social reticence of adolescents based on their gender and locality they hail from.

Ramachandran (2011) conducted a study on the impact of religion, caste, income and type of family on the mental health of adolescents. 120

students from Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh were taken as the sample. Study revealed adolescents from Hindu families as doing better in terms of mental health than adolescents belonging to non-Hindu families. Adolescents from the high income group did better in their mental health than adolescents from low income group.

Chaturvedi (2013) conducted a study on emotional stability of intellectually superior, average and dull performing adolescent boys and girls. Objective of the study was to measure the correlation between intelligence and emotional stability of adolescent boys and girls. The sample consisted of 200 students. Analysis of the data revealed that girls were found to be more emotionally stable than boys. Girls were also found to be significantly more socially adjusted than the boys.

### **2.3.13 Gender Discrimination at Home and Society**

Adolescent girls face gender discrimination of various dimensions in every sphere of life including one's own home, school, religion, media and the public spaces. At home they receive comparatively low nutritional intake and health care than their brothers (Gopalan, 1984; UNICEF, 2011). The discrimination against girls is quite obvious in the area of education as compared to boys. Parental attitudes very often do not favour girls' education and as a consequence girls have been benefitted much less from educational opportunities across different regions of the world (Ambreen & Mohyuddin,

2012; Rehman & Biswal,1993). Restrictions on mobility and decision making are other prominent forms of discrimination that girls face when compared to boys in the family. As opined by Kuruvilla and George (2015), when children reach adolescent age, parents allow greater freedom to boys than girls, permitting boys to roam around individually or with their peers while restricting the mobility and interactions of the girls with peers and elders of opposite sex. Denial of property rights and other resources is also prevalent in most of the families.

The school system is totally entrenched with gender bias and gendered classroom practices. Schools discriminate between boys and girls by assigning gender stereotyped roles and responsibilities, differential provisions for play and different disciplinary practices for girls and boys (Kuruvilla & Thasniya, 2016). The entire school climate is gendered in some cases with separate gates for entry and exit for boys and girls and specific dress code for girls. By the time girls reach adolescence, mixed seating, mixed grouping and mixed play hitherto followed are stopped in most of the schools. All these serve to develop a feeling of other in girls. Schools in most cases reinforce the existing gender ideology, stereotypes, norms and expectations everywhere (Jha, 2008; Sadker & Sadker, 1994; Younger & Warrington, 1996).

In the public spaces like the roads, buses and trains girls and women face gender based violence of different dimensions. The media also discriminates between the sexes by depicting derogatory images of women

and sustaining the gender stereotypes of men and women where men are portrayed as strong and active, and good at decision making while women are shown as passive, dependent and incapable emotional beings (Kuruville, 2008).

Religious interpretations further strengthen the misconceptions regarding the superiority of men and the triviality, weakness and impurity of women. The property rights of Indian women are often guided by Personal laws dictated by respective religions and are often discriminatory (Kuruville, 2015). Cultural and religious customs reinforce traditional gender roles, especially those regarding women's responsibilities in the home and family (Kuruville & Nisha, 2015). Religions are reported to be formulating regulations regarding clothing (Kelly, 2010; Khan, 1997) and marriage (Saha & Dey, 2014). The exclusion of women from positions of leadership in the religious community (Kuruville, 2012; Sullins, 2006) is yet another discriminatory practice. Besides these, during menstrual periods generally girls/women have high restrictions in entering places of worship (Gutterman, Mehta & Gibbs, 2013). Son preference is evident in all religions and men are considered as superior and women inferior, impure and sinful.

## **2.4 CONCLUSION**

After critically evaluating the existing literature and related studies, the investigator observed that the arena of adolescent empowerment had been widely explored internationally. However, there exists a dearth of studies



specifically focusing on the empowerment of adolescent girls, challenges and prospects before them, especially related to ensuring safety and dignity, bolstering their self esteem and developing appropriate gender role perception amongst them. Existing studies on adolescent girls' empowerment have their focus on adolescent health and nutrition, developmental tasks and educational problems. Studies related to social security, safety needs, life goal, selection of career and gender role perception of adolescent girls in the Kerala society are rare. Hence, it is necessary to carry out a study aimed at assessing the present condition of adolescent girls with emphasis on their self esteem, gender role perception, challenges faced by them in the areas of safety, higher education and selection of career and the coping strategies presently adopted by adolescent girls to combat the different types of challenges.

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CHAPTER - 3

**METHODOLOGY**

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### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Research methodology is a set of procedures that explains how a researcher systematically answers the research problem. The success of any study would essentially be linked to the suitability of methods adopted for carrying out the study. The effectiveness of the study banks upon the following factors, the exhaustive account of which constitutes this chapter. The methodology of the research process is presented under the following heads:

- 3.2 Design of the study
- 3.3 Area of the study
- 3.4 Sample of the study
- 3.5 Tools used for the collection of data
- 3.6 Data collection procedure
- 3.7 Scoring and consolidation of data
- 3.8 Case study strategy
- 3.9 Secondary data
- 3.10 Statistical techniques used for analysis

### **3.2 DESIGN OF THE STUDY**

The present study is designed for elucidating the empowerment of adolescent girls and identifying their present challenges and prospects. Survey method was employed for the collection of data in the study, for the reason

that it is a popular method and is especially apt for collecting information about different aspects and challenges to empowerment of adolescent girls. This method not only allows direct contact with the respondents but also permits the standardisation of the questions asked. Besides, it is an efficient method to compare and contrast the responses made by the sample.

### **3.2.1 Triangulation**

Triangulation indicates the use of two (or more) methods in a study in order to improve the validity and reliability of the findings of the study. The idea is that one can be more confident with a result if different methods lead to the same result. Triangulation is a powerful technique that facilitates validation of data through cross verification from two or more sources. In particular, it refers to the application and combination of several research methods in the study of the same phenomenon (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). In the present study triangulation was used by employing case studies in addition to the use of inventories in the survey method and using both quantitative and qualitative techniques for analyzing the collected data.

### **3.3 AREA OF THE STUDY**

The present study was conducted in Malappuram district which is the most populous district in the State of Kerala. The District of Malappuram has a predominantly Muslim population (68.0 percent), followed by Hindus (29.8 percent) and Christians (2.2 percent) and has a lower scheduled caste

population (9.3 percent). Malappuram is having a literacy rate for both males (95.76 per cent) and females (91.62 per cent) below the state average (Census, 2011). The negative attitude of parents against education, lack of motivation and household responsibilities of girls and women lead to educational backwardness and drop out of girls in the region (Hameed, 2007).

Since women are married at a very young age in Malappuram, they do not pursue higher learning and are predominantly engaged in domestic and household duties. As per Census, 2011, Malappuram district also has the lowest female work participation rate in the state (7.63 per cent).

It has the lowest mean age at marriage for both males and females and the highest adolescent birth rate. The fact that Malappuram has a predominantly Muslim population may explain the early age of marriage for girls in the district. Illegal marriages with the help of local religious leaders are common in this district. Also, the fact that a large number of women in Malappuram are married at an early age may imply that they do not face the pressures and rigors of pursuing higher studies and the competitiveness of the academic environment. Since more women than men commit suicide for fear of failing in examinations in Kerala, this fear is probably absent among the females in Malappuram, the vast majority of whom settle down to a life of domesticity and child rearing from an early age. The ongoing conflicts that most educated women in Kerala face may be absent among the women in

Malappuram, many of whom get married and start a family very early. Therefore, they do not have to struggle with the ambitions of pursuing higher education and careers on the one hand, or, on the other hand, deal with discrimination at work. They are more likely to be less unhappy with the traditional sexual division of labor at home, as well (Mitra & Singh, 2007). Though the suicide rate of women is lowest in Malappuram, the district has the discredit of having the highest number of crimes against girls and women as per the records of the State Crime Records Bureau (2014, 2015 & 2016). Derogatory practices like polygamy, purdah, adolescent marriage and pregnancy, desertion and divorce are quite rampant in the area (Kuruville, 2011).

### **3.4 SAMPLE OF THE STUDY**

Adolescent girls of Kerala form the target population of the present study. The investigator selected 600 adolescent girls from Plus one Standard (11<sup>th</sup> Class, Higher Secondary Level) of Malappuram district as the sample. To obtain a representative sample of girls belonging to all religions from urban and rural locales, due consideration was given to include schools belonging to Hindu, Christian and Muslim managements and that too in the rural and urban areas. Considering the depth and scope of the study, factors like caste, socioeconomic position etc were not included as classificatory

variables in the present study in order to focus more on the other significant factors.

Multi stage sampling technique was used to arrive at the required sample. There is a total of 210 higher secondary schools in Malappuram district from which 15 schools were selected using stratified random sampling by dividing the schools into mutually exclusive groups/strata such as type of school management and locality of schools. From the listed schools the plus one standard was again selected using random sampling through lottery method. All the girl students of the selected plus one standard formed the respondents of the study.

Being a study that probes into the various challenges and issues faced by adolescent girls and that too in a very detailed manner, the sample was confined to a single district. Since the State Crime Records Bureau (2014, 2015 & 2016) highlights Malappuram as the district with highest number of crimes against girls and women in the state of Kerala, the study was focused on adolescents of Malappuram district.

### **Breakup of the Sample**

The sample was categorised into: i. Adolescent girls belonging to Hindu, Muslim and Christian religions ii. Girls studying in urban and rural schools iii. Girls studying in Government, Aided and Unaided schools. The breakup of the sample is given in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1****Breakup of the Sample Based on Different Classificatory Variables**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Sub-samples</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Total</b>
Religion	Hindu	227	600
	Muslim	245	
	Christian	128	
Locality of school	Rural	318	600
	Urban	282	
Types of school Management	Government	190	600
	Aided	219	
	Unaided	191	

The profile of the schools included in the study based on type of management and locale is given in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2****Profile of Schools Included in the Study**

<b>Type of Management (No. of School)</b>		<b>Locale</b>		<b>Total</b>
		<b>Urban</b>	<b>Rural</b>	
Aided	Hindu -2	1	1	6
	Muslim- 3	1	2	
	Christian- 1	1		
Unaided	Hindu- 1		1	4
	Muslim- 2	1	1	
	Christian -1		1	
Government		3	2	5



### **3.5 TOOLS USED FOR THE COLLECTION OF DATA**

In order to collect the necessary data for any research, different tools are to be made use of. Taking into consideration the objectives of the present study, the following tools were adopted/prepared and used for the collection of data.

#### **3.5.1 Self Esteem Inventory (Battle, 2000)**

To measure the self esteem of respondents, Self Esteem Inventory developed by Battle (2000) was adopted by the investigator. Reliability and validity of the tool were well established by the author in a series of studies. It has been widely adapted in recent studies to assess the self esteem of respondents. As it was essential to have the vernacular language (Malayalam) version of the inventory for the respondents to comprehend and make responses, the Malayalam version of the inventory developed by Suchitra (2004) was used in the present study with slight modifications.

While adopting the inventory to the adolescent population, some of the expectancy statements were deleted and a set of six statements were freshly introduced. The final tool has 48 questions related to academic self esteem, general self esteem, parental/home self esteem, social self esteem, personal self esteem and self esteem related to gender roles (Appendix I).

### **3.5.2 Inventory on Challenges Faced by Adolescent Girls**

The Inventory on Challenges Faced by Adolescent Girls was prepared based on a pilot study conducted among adolescent girls. The detailed account of the pilot study is furnished below.

#### **Pilot Study with Curiosity Box**

The pilot study was conducted among 100 adolescent girls studying in five higher secondary schools of Malappuram district of Kerala state. The schools were selected randomly. Two hours –long adolescence education classes were imparted to the students in their respective classrooms. At the end of sessions, the girls were asked to pen down their apprehensions and queries on paper slips distributed to them, without having to write their names on the slip. Each of them was asked to write down at least one query or problem for which they need clarification and to put the slips into the curiosity box to pass along. Clarifications were given for the queries one after another. The problems were about sexuality, menstrual hygiene, relationships, and goals in life, handling media devices/mobile phones, selection of appropriate career and about fear of harassment at homes, public spaces and public conveyances. The experiences with the curiosity box provided vital insights and impetus for developing the inventory on challenges faced by adolescent girls.

## **Preparation of Inventory**

In the light of information gathered during pilot study, the investigator divided the different types of challenges into 12 dimensions and prepared few questions based on each dimension. After identifying the number of items in each area, the investigator discussed with experts in the field, supervising teacher and co- researchers, for further suggestions. The inventory was finalized with the most appropriate items belonging to the 12 dimensions given below:

1. Safety issues.
2. Menstrual hygiene and reproductive health
3. Gender discrimination
4. Curiosity regarding sex and sexuality
5. Gender role perception
6. Conflict of emotions
7. Usage of ICT
8. Confusions regarding interpersonal relationship
9. Peer pressure
10. Accepting the bodily changes
11. Choice of career and lack of role models
12. Educational aspirations

Three statements were furnished based on each dimension in the inventory to which the respondent was to mark her agreeableness using a ‘√’ mark. If the respondent had marked at least one item under a particular dimension as applicable to her, it was taken as a challenge faced by her. If none of the three statements under a dimension was marked as applicable to her, then it was not considered as a challenge in her present condition. Separate space was provided at the end of the inventory to write down any issue that is felt as a challenge, apart from those listed earlier.

### **Validity of the Tool**

For establishing face validity, the final form of the ‘Inventory on challenges faced by adolescent girls’ was shown to ten experts. Their feedback regarding the structure and language of the tool were noted. The concurrence from the experts with regard to the structure and language of the tool therefore established the face validity of the tool.

In order to establish content validity of the tool, the investigator selected 12 components related to challenges of adolescent girls, after consulting with the experts. Three questions were selected from each component. Therefore, the content validity was established.

In order for establishing construct validity, the prepared tool was given to experts to ascertain whether the items are suitable for constructing the ideas

meant by the researcher. A few suggestions and clarifications were given by the experts. On the light of the suggestions, a few modifications were done.

Thus, the final form of the Inventory on Challenges Faced by Adolescent Girls was prepared with 36 items based on 12 dimensions (Appendix II).

### **3.5.3 Inventory on Gender Role Perception**

To measure the gender role perception of respondents, the Inventory on Gender Role Perception (Kuruville, 2011) was adopted by the investigator. Reliability and validity of the tool were well established by the author. The inventory consisted of 20 statements related to the life goals and roles of men and women in various spheres of life such as education, health care, employment, property rights, political leadership, decision making power etc. The inventory included 18 positive statements and 2 negative statements with a score of 2 marks for each with a total score of 40. The respondents were required to mark their agreeableness or disagreeableness with each of the statements. A high score indicated a progressive gender role perception and a low score implied a conventional/traditional gender role perception. A copy of the inventory on Gender role Perception is presented as Appendix III.

### **3.5.4 Inventory on Response Patterns of Adolescent Girls**

The response patterns employed by the adolescent girls to confront the variety of challenges before them were assessed using the Inventory on

response patterns adopted by adolescent girls against different types of challenges that was developed by the investigator herself.

As a preliminary step for preparing this inventory, the investigator carefully went through the queries and problems brought out through the curiosity box. After analysing these problems, questions related to the 12 areas of challenges and how the respondents dealt with such situations in their lives were methodically devised. After discussing with ten experts in the field, the content validity of the tool was ensured. The inventory consisted of 24 open ended questions constructed in an interactive style. Questions in the inventory were designed based on the respondents' life situations and how they handled the major challenges if they happen to come across them. Each question in the inventory addressed the different aspects of challenge involved in a dimension. Space was provided for the respondents to write down their responses in their own words. A copy of the Inventory on response patterns is presented as Appendix IV.

Along with each inventory, the personal profile to collect information pertaining to the religion of the respondent, locality of school and type of school management where the respondent studies were included.

### **3.6 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE**

Question booklet and response sheets were prepared for each tool. The Principals of the higher secondary schools were contacted in advance and

consent obtained for data collection from the students. The slot for data collection as well as the adolescence education class was fixed in consensus with the Principals of the schools.

The researcher had directly administered the tools among the students. Before administering the tools, a brief description was given to all respondents concerning the nature of the study, the importance of careful participation, significance of their active cooperation besides the necessary instructions for filling in the response sheet. No time limit was imposed. Each of the question was made clear to the respondents. All of these helped the researcher to establish a fine rapport with the students. Subsequent to the data collection, an adolescence education class that lasted for an hour was imparted to the students. Following this, the queries raised by the girls were clarified one after the other.

### **3.7 SCORING AND CONSOLIDATION OF DATA**

After the completion of data collection, all the response sheets were carefully examined. The personal profile questionnaire and the responses made in the inventories by the subjects were carried over to tabulation sheets. The responses of self esteem and gender role perception were converted into numerical scores as per the scoring scheme of each tool.

### **3.8 THE CASE STUDY STRATEGY**

In order to make an in-depth analysis of the challenges faced by adolescent girls, eight case studies were also attempted. This was envisaged to serve the purpose of a multidimensional exploration of the same sample. A handful of cases were identified by the researcher from the 'Curiosity Box' and also through direct interaction with the students after the class that was held as part of the data collection. Details of experiences through which the students have passed were obtained from the concerned higher secondary teachers and Souhrida club coordinators. Students were not interviewed personally as it may further intimidate and aggravate their grievances.

### **3.9 SECONDARY DATA**

Although the current study relies mainly upon primary data, secondary sources were used in addition for obtaining pertinent information on prospective programmes, schemes and opportunities aimed at the empowerment of girls in the state of Kerala. Using secondary data, social welfare programmes for higher education and employment, educational loans, scholarships, the catalytic role of ICT in the empowerment of girls, governmental policies for women, protective legislations and other supportive mechanisms were studied.



### **3.10 STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED FOR ANALYSIS**

The analysis of data was completed by using percentage analysis, t-test procedure, chi-square test and graphical representation.

#### **3.10.1 Percentage Analysis**

The two tools used in the study, viz., the inventory on challenges faced by adolescent girls and the inventory on response patterns adopted by adolescent girls against challenges, were analysed using qualitative techniques and percentage of subjects who responded to the challenges and related responses were calculated. The scores of self esteem and gender role perception were also subjected to percentage analysis to understand and categorize the sample into High-, Average and Low- groups.

#### **3.10.2 t-Test**

t-Test was used in order to compare the variables such as self esteem and gender role perception of adolescent girls belonging to different classificatory variables such as religion, locality of schools and types of school management etc.

#### **3.10.3 Chi –Square Test**

Chi- square test was employed with the aim of ascertaining association between self esteem and gender role perception of adolescent girls with

various classificatory variables such as religion and type of school management.

#### **3.10.4 Graphical Representation**

Graphical representations in the form of bar diagram and doughnut chart were prepared to provide clarity on the data pertaining to the concepts studied.

### **3.11 CONCLUSION**

This chapter elucidates the details of the methodology employed to conduct the study in detail under these titles: the design of the study, sample of the study, tools used for the collection of the data, data collection procedure, scoring and consolidation of data and statistical techniques used for analysis. The next chapter includes the analysis of data, results related to the research hypothesis and the summary of results.

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CHAPTER - 4

**ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

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#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

For every researcher, data analysis and interpretation is the most important task during the entire research process. Data analysis drives the research work in a proper direction and to suitable conclusions. It is considered as heart of the research in research process.

The present study entitled as “Empowerment of adolescent girls: challenges and prospects” demands both quantitative and qualitative measurement for obtaining accurate results. Hence the collected data were analysed and interpreted both quantitatively and qualitatively in accordance with the objectives of the study. The sample consisted of 600 adolescent girl students from 15 schools of Malappuram district at plus one level. Due representation was given to the type of management of schools and religion and locality of students. This chapter describes the results of analysis of self esteem, gender role perceptions and challenges faced by adolescent girls in the present society and coping strategies adopted by them against various challenges. Data collected using inventories of self esteem, gender role perception and challenges of adolescent girls are quantitatively analysed. Qualitative analysis was done for the data regarding coping strategies adopted against various challenges and case studies of adolescent girls. The data and results of analysis are presented under the following heads:

- 4.2 Analysis of self esteem of adolescent girls
- 4.3 Analysis of gender role perception of adolescent girls
- 4.4 Analysis of challenges faced by adolescent girls
- 4.5 Analysis of response patterns adopted by adolescent girls against various challenges
- 4.6 Tenability of Hypotheses
- 4.7 Case studies

## **4.2 SELF ESTEEM OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS**

The data regarding the self esteem of adolescent girls were collected by administering the self esteem inventory developed by Battle (2000) with modifications. Preliminary analysis of the data such as mean and standard deviation for the total sample and the subsamples based on the classificatory variables such as locality, religion and type of management of schools were undertaken. The data and results of analysis are presented below.

### **4.2.1 Self Esteem of Adolescent Girls- Total Sample**

The total sample was divided into three groups, viz, those with High-, Average- and Low- self esteem based on the conventional Mean + 1 $\sigma$  and Mean - 1  $\sigma$  method. The percentage of adolescent girls belonging to the three categories was calculated and the results are presented in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1**

**Data and Results of Preliminary Analysis of Scores of Self Esteem**

<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
600	34.31	6.22
<b>Percentage of Respondents</b>		
<b>High</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Low</b>
18.5	65.9	15.5

As revealed from Table 4.1 there are majority of respondents(65.9%) come in the category of average, 18.5% of the respondents come under the category of high and 15.5% of the respondents come in the category of low self esteem.

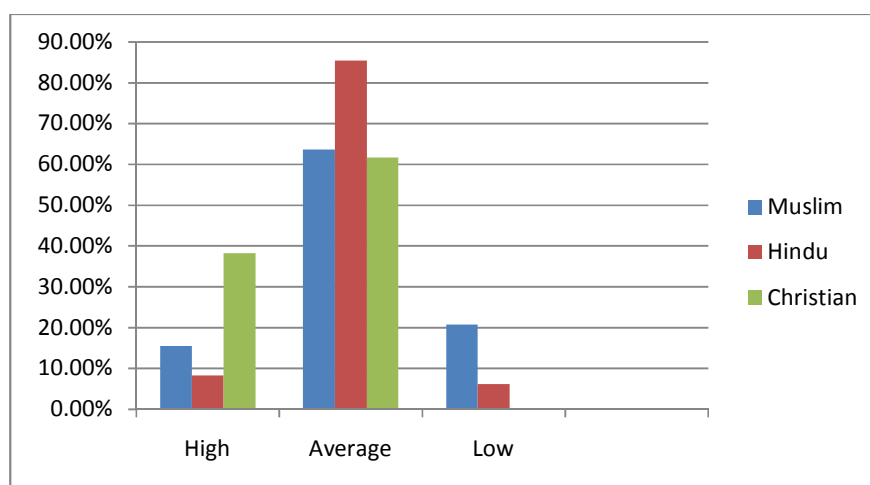
**4.2.2 Self Esteem of Adolescent Girls Belonging to Different Religious Communities**

The data and results of the percentage analysis of adolescent girls with High, Average and Low Scores of self esteem in the three major religious groups are presented in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2**  
**Self Esteem Scores of Adolescent**  
**Girls Belonging to Different Religious Communities**

Category	Percentage of Respondents		
	Muslim	Hindu	Christian
High	15.5	8.3	38.28
Average	63.6	85.4	61.71
Low	20.81	6.16	Nil

As evident from Table 4.2 in all the major religious groups studied, self esteem of adolescent girls corresponded to average level. Highest number of respondents with high self esteem belongs to Christianity and there are no girls with low scores for self esteem in the community. The highest number of girls with low self esteem was found in Muslim community.



**Figure 4.1**  
**Percentage of Adolescent Girls Belonging to Different Religious**  
**Communities with High, Average and Low Scores of Self Esteem**

### 4.2.3 Comparison of Self esteem of Adolescent Girls Belonging to Different Religious communities

To compare the self esteem of adolescent girls belonging to different religious communities, the data obtained was analysed using t test. The data and results of test of significance of mean difference for the scores of self esteem of adolescent girls belonging to the three major religious groups are given in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3**

**Data and Results of t Test for Scores of Self Esteem of Adolescent Girls**

Sample	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation	T
Hindu	227	32.96	5.09	0.48
Muslim	245	33.24	6.9	
Christian	128	38.7	4.31	9.55**
Muslim	245	33.24	6.9	
Christian	128	38.78	4.31	11.3**
Hindu	227	32.96	5.09	

\*\* indicates a significant mean difference at .01 level

It is clear from Table 4.3 that the t value for the comparison of self esteem of adolescent girls belonging to Hindu and Muslim communities is 0.48 which indicates no significant difference between the two. The t values for the comparison of self esteem scores of adolescent girls belonging to Hindu and Christian communities and those of Christian and Muslim religious



groups are 9.55 and 11.3 respectively which shows a significant difference in self esteem of the compared groups in favour of adolescent girls of Christian community.

#### **4.2.4 Association between Religion and Self Esteem**

The association between religion and self esteem was analysed using chi –square test. The data and results of chi- square test are given in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4**  
**Association between Religion and**  
**Self Esteem of Adolescent Girls**

<b>Classificatory Variable</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b><math>\chi^2</math> – Value</b>	<b>Level of Significance</b>
Religion	600	2	295.8	0.01

Table 4.4 shows that the chi square value 295.8 with 2 degrees of freedom is significant at 0.01 level indicating a statistically significant association between religion and self esteem of adolescent girls.

#### **4.2.5 Comparison of Self Esteem of Adolescent Girls Belonging to Urban and Rural Schools**

To compare the self esteem of adolescent girls belonging to urban and rural schools the data obtained was analysed using t test. The data and results

of test of significance of mean difference for the scores of self esteem of adolescent girls studying in rural and urban schools are given in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5**  
**Data and Results of t test for Scores of Self Esteem of Adolescent Girls Belonging to Urban and Rural Schools**

<b>Locale</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>T</b>
Rural	318	32.59	7.38	.07
Urban	282	32.63	6.32	

From Table 4.5 it is obvious that there is no significant difference in the self esteem of adolescent girls studying in rural and urban schools.

Since no difference was found in t test, the chi square test for association between the variables of self esteem and locale was not attempted.

#### **4.2.6 Comparison of Self Esteem of Adolescent Girls Belonging to Different Types of School Management**

To compare the self- esteem of adolescent girls studying in different types of school management, the data obtained was analysed using t test. The data and results of test of significance of mean difference for the scores of self esteem of adolescent girls belongs to the Government, Aided and Unaided school managements are given in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6**

**Data and Results of t Test for Scores of Self Esteem of Adolescent Girls  
Belonging to Different Types of School Management**

<b>Sample</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>T</b>
Government	190	32.92	7.6	0.53
Aided	219	32.55	6.34	
Government	190	32.92	7.6	*2.43
Unaided	191	30.82	7.63	
Aided	219	32.55	6.34	**2.8
Unaided	191	30.82	7.63	

\*\* indicates a significant mean difference at .01 level

\*indicates a significance mean difference at .05 level

Table 4.6 shows that there is no significant difference in the self esteem of adolescent girls belonging to Government and Aided schools. But the t values for the comparison of self esteem scores of adolescent girls belonging to Government and Unaided schools and those of Aided and Unaided schools shows a significant difference in self esteem of the compared groups favouring the government and aided schools. Thus the adolescents studying in unaided schools were found to have a significantly lower self esteem than their counterparts.

#### 4.2.7 Association between Self Esteem and Type of School Management

The association between the type of school management and self esteem was analysed using chi –square test. The data and results of chi-square test are given in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7**

#### **Association between Self Esteem and Type of School Management**

<b>Classificatory Variable</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b><math>\chi^2</math> – Value</b>	<b>Level of Significance</b>
Type of school management	600	2	40.588	0.01

Table 4.7 shows a statistically significant association between self esteem and type of school management where the adolescent girls pursue their studies.

#### 4.2.8 Discussion

Self esteem is defined as a “positive or negative attitude toward a particular object, namely, the self” (Rosenberg, 1965). Those who have high self esteem are presumed to be psychologically happy and healthy (Branden, 1994; Taylor & Brown, 1988), whereas those with low self esteem are believed to be psychologically distressed and perhaps even depressed (Tennen & Affleck, 1993).

It is imperative to have a clear understanding on the concept of self esteem while exploring the empowerment of adolescent girls. It is evident from the previous studies that self esteem is a term that has a bearing on many interrelated factors such as body image, religion, educational status, academic expectations, type of family, home & school environment and many more.

When the relation between religion of girls and their self esteem has been assessed, it was found that the self esteem corresponds to average category for all the three major religious groups (Hindu, Muslim and Christian). However, from the percentage analysis, it was found that students who belong to Christianity had higher self esteem while students of Muslim community ranked the lowest compared to the other two groups.

Religion was found to have a significant association with self esteem of adolescent girls. Similar findings were obtained by Singh (2016), Lalfakzuali (2015) and Every and Perry (2014). Studies by Stolz, Olsen, Henke and Barber (2013) and Relland and Lauterbach (2008) conclude that greater involvement in religion is associated with higher self esteem. Nagar, Sharma and Chopra (2008) found that gender perceptions are built during childhood and adolescence, depending mainly on prevailing socio-cultural practices. This in turn lead to lower self esteem among girls and they become used to the neglect and tolerate discrimination and injustice.

Ciarrochi and Heaven (2012) concluded that religious values and self esteem were significantly correlated.

No significant difference was found in the self esteem of adolescent girls studying in urban and rural schools. The sample for the present study was selected from Malappuram district which befalls in the category of underdeveloped districts. Living conditions in the district are not very different for urban and rural areas and the study might have reflected this special trend. The findings are in agreement with that of Joshi and Srivastava (2009) whose study on self esteem and academic achievement of 200 urban and 200 rural adolescents from Varanasi district found no significant difference in the self esteem of rural and urban adolescents.

The analysis also revealed no significant difference in the self esteem of adolescent girls studying in government and aided schools. But those from unaided schools were found to have a significantly low self esteem than their counterparts in aided and government schools. This might be due to the association between religion and self esteem as all the unaided schools in the sample were run by religious communities. Among the four unaided schools included in the study two belong to Muslim management and one each to Hindu and Christian management.

### 4.3 GENDER ROLE PERCEPTION OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS

The Inventory on Gender Role Perception (Kuruville, 2011) has been used for collection of data from the respondents. Preliminary analysis of the data such as mean and standard deviation for the total sample and the subsamples based on the classificatory variables such as religion of respondents, locality and management of school undertaken. The data and results of analysis are presented below:

#### 4.3.1 Gender Role Perception of Adolescent Girls- Total Sample

The total sample was divided into three groups, viz, those with High-, Average- and Low- scores on gender role perception based on the conventional Mean + 1 $\sigma$  and Mean - 1 $\sigma$  method. The percentage of adolescent girls belonging to the three categories was calculated and the results are presented in Table 4.8.

**Table 4.8**  
**Data and Results of Preliminary Analysis of**  
**Scores of Gender Role Perception**

<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
600	33.72	4.31
<b>Percentage of Respondents</b>		
<b>High</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Low</b>
25.3	55.2	16.5

As evident from Table 4.8 majority of the respondents (55.2%) have average scores indicating less progressive gender role perception. Whereas 25.3% of respondents have high scores indicating progressive gender role perception and 16.5% of respondents have low scores indicating traditional gender role perception.

#### **4.3.2 Gender Role Perception of Adolescent Girls Belonging to Different Religious Communities**

To assess the percentage of adolescent girls belonging to the major religious groups with progressive/ less progressive /traditional gender role perception, the conventional method of Mean +  $1\sigma$  and Mean –  $1\sigma$  of the scores was used. The results are given in Table 4.9.

**Table 4.9**  
**Percentage of Adolescent Girls with High, Average and Low Scores of Gender Role Perception**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Percentage of Respondents</b>		
	<b>Muslim</b>	<b>Hindu</b>	<b>Christian</b>
High	14.6	36.5	42.9
Average	55.9	56.82	57.5
Low	29.38	6.6	Nil

As evident from Table 4.9, 42.9% of Christian girls have high scores indicating progressive gender role perception whereas the percentage of Hindu and Muslim adolescents is 36.5 and 14.6 respectively. Similarly while



there are no girls among Christian community with low scores for gender role perception, the percentage for Hindu and Muslim adolescents are 6.6 and 29.38 respectively. In all the three religious groups majority of adolescent girls belong to the category of average scores. It is also to be specifically noted that among the Muslim sample, there are much more respondents with low scores on gender role perception than those with high scores.

#### **4.3.3. Comparison of Gender Role Perception of Adolescent Girls Belonging to Different Religions**

To compare the gender role perception of adolescent girls belonging to different religions, the data obtained was analysed using t test. The data and results of test of significance of mean difference for the scores of gender role perception of adolescent girls belonging to the three major religious groups are given in Table 4.10.

**Table 4.10**

**Data and Results of t test for Scores of Gender Role Perception of Adolescent Girls Belonging to Different Religious Groups**

<b>Sample</b>	<b>Sample size</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>t value</b>
Hindu	227	34.87	4.39	9.57**
Muslim	245	30.37	6.03	
Christian	128	35.94	2.6	12.95**
Muslim	245	30.37	6.03	
Christian	128	35.94	2.6	2.97**
Hindu	227	34.87	4.39	

\*\* indicates a significant mean difference at .01 level

Table 4.10 shows that there is a significant difference in the gender role perception of adolescent girls belonging to the three major religious groups of Hindu, Christian and Muslim. As indicated by the mean scores, Hindu girls have more progressive gender role perception than Muslim girls. Similarly significant difference exists in the gender role perception between Christian and Muslim girls with Christian girls having progressive and Muslim girls having traditional perceptions about women's roles in the society. As compared to Christian girls, Hindu girls possess less progressive outlooks on gender roles. Thus the analysis shows adolescent girls belonging to Christian community to have the most progressive and those belonging to Muslim community to have the least progressive outlooks on gender roles of women.

#### **4.3.4 Association between Religion and Gender Role Perception**

The association between religion and gender role perception was analysed using chi –square test. The data and results of chi- square test are given in Table 4.11.

**Table 4.11**

**Association between Religion and Gender Role Perception of Adolescent Girls**

<b>Classificatory Variable</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b><math>\chi^2</math> – Value</b>	<b>Level of Significance</b>
Religion	600	2	595.765	0.01

Table 4.11 shows a statistically significant association between religion and gender role perception of adolescent girls. This in turn reveals that religion plays a highly significant role in shaping the gender role perception of adolescent girls.

#### **4.3.5 Comparison of Gender Role Perception of Adolescent Girls Belonging to Rural and Urban Schools**

To compare the gender role perception of adolescent girls belonging to rural and urban locales, the data obtained was analysed using t test. The data and results of test of significance of mean difference for the scores of gender role perception of adolescent girls studying in rural and urban localities are given in Table 4.12.

**Table 4.12**  
**Data and Results of t test for Scores of Gender Role Perception of Adolescent Girls belonging to Rural and Urban Locales**

<b>Locale</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t</b>
Rural	318	32.93	5.6	.31
Urban	282	33.07	5.64	

From Table 4.12 it is clear that there is no significant difference between the gender role perception of girls studying in urban and rural schools.

Since there was no difference, the chi square test for ascertaining the association between the two variables was not attempted.

#### **4.3.6 Comparison of Gender Role Perception of Adolescent Girls Studying in Different Types of School Management**

To compare the gender role perception of adolescent girls studying in different types of school management, the data obtained was analysed using t test. The data and results of test of significance of mean difference for the scores of gender role perception of adolescent girls studying in the Government, Aided and Unaided schools are given in Table 4.13.

**Table 4.13**  
**Data and Results of t test for Scores of Gender Role Perception of Adolescent Girls Studying in Different Types of School Management**

<b>Sample</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t</b>
Government	190	32.54	5.36	.09
Aided	219	32.49	5.51	
Government	190	32.54	5.36	3.16
Unaided	191	30.57	6.24	
Aided	219	32.49	5.51	3.29
Unaided	191	30.57	6.24	

\*\* indicates a significant mean difference at .01 level

Table 4.13 shows that there is no significant difference in the gender role perception of adolescent girls studying in the government and aided

schools. But the t values for the comparison of gender role perception scores of adolescent girls belonging to Government and Unaided schools and those of Aided and Unaided schools shows a significant difference in gender role perception of the compared groups favouring the government and aided schools.

#### **4.3.7 Association between Type of School Management and Gender Role Perception of Adolescent Girls**

The association between type of school management and gender role perception of adolescent girls was analysed using chi –square test. The data and results of chi- square test are given in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14

**Association between Type of School Management and Gender Role Perception of Adolescent Girls**

<b>Classificatory Variable</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b><math>\chi^2</math> – Value</b>	<b>Level of Significance</b>
Type of school management	600	2	61.31	0.01

Table 4.14 shows a statistically significant association between gender role perception and type of school management where the adolescent girls pursue their studies.

#### **4.3.8 Discussion**

The present study emphasizes the due significance of religion in shaping the gender role perception of adolescent girls. It is evident from the responses that the adolescent girls from Muslim community have more traditional outlooks regarding gender roles when compared to their counterparts from Hindu and Christian religions. The findings are in agreement with that of Read (2003) who found Muslim respondents of the sample to be more gender traditional than their non-Muslim peers. The cultural restrictions on girls from Muslim communities in the region are high compared to the other two categories. A closer analysis of the scores obtained for girls from Hindu and Christian religious groups indicates that Christian girls have comparatively more progressive gender role perceptions than those belonging to the Hindu community.

The results of the study are in partial agreement with the research findings of Kuruvilla (2013), according to which the students belonging to Christian communities of the sample have more progressive outlook while Muslim students seem to have traditional perceptions about women's roles in the society. Though Kuruvilla found no significant difference between the gender role perceptions of Hindu and Christian respondents, a statistically significant difference is obtained for these groups in the present study. The results are substantiated by the fact that in the Kerala context, early marriages

are most common among Muslims and the religious notions still prioritise wifehood and motherhood in women's lives than higher education and employment. Religious teachings propose and propagate the protectionist approach whereby Muslim girls and women are expected to be taken care of and protected by men in the capacity of father or husband. In the Hindu community of the region gendered customary notions regarding impurity of women's body during menstruation, son preference for the sake of lighting the funeral pyre, restrictions on inter caste marriages etc. are still prevalent. In the region, Christians constitute a minority community and they seem to support the higher education, employment and economic independence of girls and women which in turn might have contributed to the progressive outlooks on gender roles among the adolescent girls. The findings also reveal that there are respondents who have higher scores for gender role perception indicative of their progressive outlooks in all the three religions studied. Hence it may be assumed that religiosity as endorsed by Read (2003) might be more important in shaping women's gender role attitudes than are their affiliations as Muslims, Hindus or Christians. Further studies are required for making any final conclusion in this regard.

As opined by Kuruvilla and Nisha (2015) due to the inappropriate gender role perception existing in the society as a whole, girls/women are forced to comply with the traditional roles of wife and mother and accept the secondary status as natural. This might have contributed to the lower work

participation rate of women in Kerala (18.23) when compared to the national average (25.51) as per Census 2011. Even if women go out for work, their career options are narrowed down and jobs like that of teaching and nursing are preferred for them. Girls and women who break the stereotypes are susceptible to much resistance, very often in the form of ridicule and violence. The amounting rate of gender based violence and low percentage of Keralite women in the state assembly and the Indian parliament are also aftermaths of this traditional gender role perception existing among men and women in the society. Hence, there is an urgent need to gender sensitizes all socialization agencies and make adolescent girls realize their social and economic potential which in turn would advance themselves, their families, and their communities.

#### **4.4 CHALLENGES FACED BY ADOLESCENT GIRLS**

In order to understand the various challenges of adolescent girls, a pilot study was conducted. After analysing the primary data the researcher developed an inventory for analysing the important challenges of adolescent girls. The data obtained using the inventory and results of analyses are discussed below:

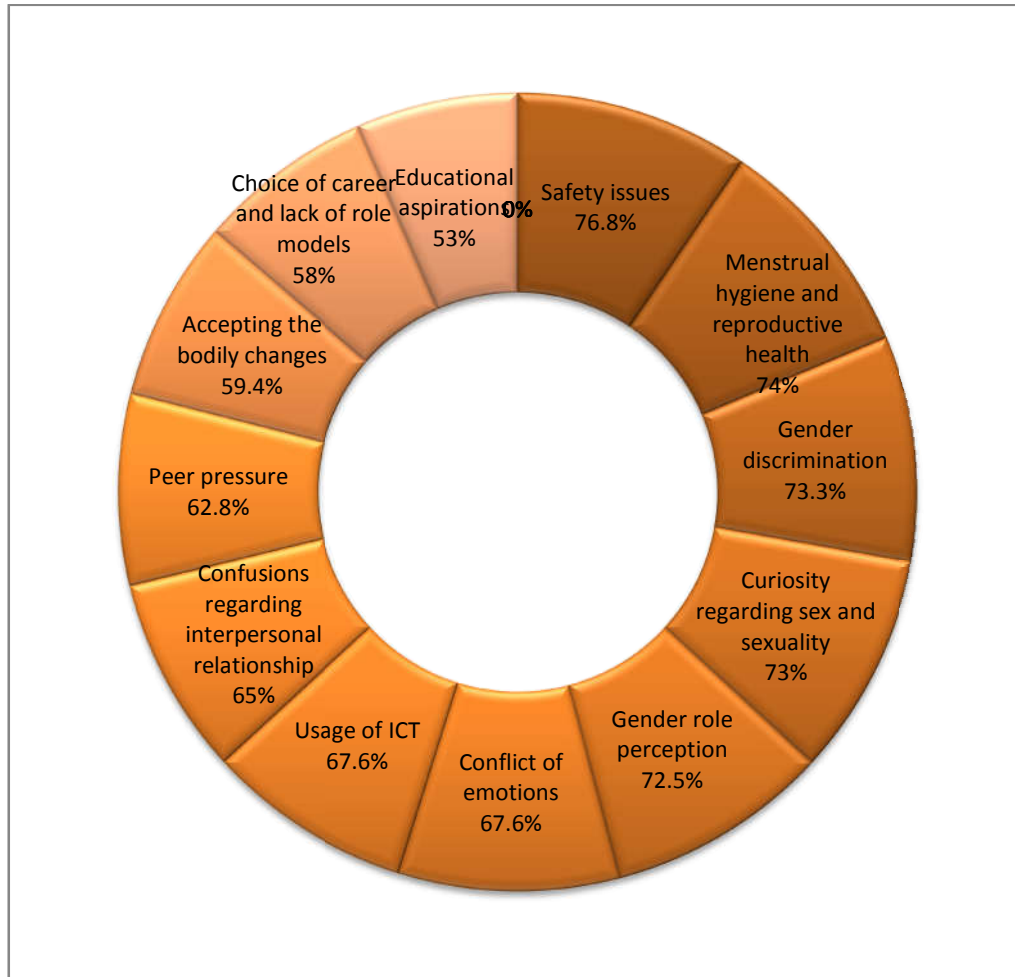
Analysis of the data reveals that adolescent girls face a variety of challenges such as those related to gender discrimination and gender role perception, conflict of emotion, safety issues, lack of role models, peer



pressure, confusions regarding interpersonal relationship, inability to accept bodily changes, menstrual hygiene and reproductive health, curiosities regarding sex and sexuality, choice of career and usage of ICT. The respondents were to mark the issues in the decreasing order of 1 to 12 on the basis of threat/seriousness involved with ‘1’ as the most serious challenge and ‘12’ as the least challenging issue. Among the 12 major issues that pose a challenge to the adolescent girls, safety issue was found to be the most important challenge faced by majority of girls. The details of challenges marked by the sample in the decreasing order of frequency are given in Table 4.15.

**Table 4.15**  
**Challenges Faced by Adolescent Girls**

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Percentage of Respondents</b>
1.	Safety issues	76.8%
2.	Menstrual hygiene and reproductive health	74.4%
3.	Gender discrimination	74%
4.	Curiosity regarding sex and sexuality	73.3%
5.	Gender role perception	73%
6.	Conflict of emotions	72.5%
7.	Usage of ICT	67.6%
8.	Confusions regarding interpersonal relationship	65%
9.	Peer pressure	62.8%
10.	Accepting the bodily changes	59.4%
11.	Choice of career and lack of role models	58%
12.	Educational aspirations	53%



**Figure 4.2**

### **Challenges Faced by Adolescent Girls**

#### **4.4.1 Challenges Related to Safety**

As evident from Table 4.15 and Figure 4.2 safety issue is the major challenge for majority of (76.8%) adolescent girls. Almost all of them agreed that they are scared of being attacked in the public physically and sexually and are incapable of facing the staring and peeping eyes. In addition to this, they were unaware of legal and institutional safeguards that ensure women's

safety. Eve teasing, sexual abuse from close relatives, teachers, neighbours and the very insecurity of being subject to violence are the major safety issues faced by girls.

#### **4.4.2 Challenges Related to Menstrual Hygiene and Reproductive Health**

Table 4.15 reveals that menstrual hygiene and reproductive health is the second important challenge faced by adolescent girls (74.4%). Most of the girls studied are scared of white discharge and doubtful whether the use of sanitary pads / wearing jeans would lead to infertility. Ambiguities about the right age for marriage and conceiving is another issue raised by the girls. All these reveal the misconceptions of adolescent girls with regard to reproductive health and sexuality.

#### **4.4.3 Challenges Related to Gender Discrimination**

The third significant challenge as per Table 4.15 is gender discrimination (74%). The respondents often feel that their mobility and freedom of opinion is restricted because of being girls. As conveyed by almost 60 percent of the sample they do not have a mobile phone of their own while their brothers do possess it. They want to be treated the same as their brothers and they think that if they were boys they could run around and play on their courtyards and school ground.

#### **4.4.4 Curiosities Regarding Sex and Sexuality**

As shown in Table 4.15 curiosities regarding sex and sexuality were found to be the next major challenge faced by adolescent girls (73.3%). The girls were confused about whether premarital/ extramarital sex relations and masturbation are a sin or not and fail to get clarifications about these doubts from any source. The sample also expressed their curiosity to know more about sexual intercourse about which nothing is mentioned in any classes. At the same time the bodily changes and accompanying emotions make the adolescents more and more curious to know about such matters.

#### **4.4.5 Challenges Related to Gender Role Perception**

The fifth significant challenge as per Table 4.15 is related to gender role perception (73%). Majority of the respondents are of the notion that women's primary responsibility is domestic chores and even if she is employed, cleaning and cooking are the sole responsibilities of women themselves. Likewise, they also shared the opinion that employed women will not be able to take care of their children properly. The shaping of gender role perception is largely dependent upon the type of socialisation that one receives from the various agencies. The inappropriate gender role perception of girls often leads to improper choices in all spheres of life. During adolescence, the socialisation results in stereotyped gender-role conceptions and is often not susceptible to change. As remarked by Kuruvilla and Nisha

(2015) despite the higher literacy rate and gender development index in Kerala, traditional views and stereotypes regarding gender roles are still prevalent in the society. Appropriate gender role perception among adolescents is also regarded as essential for healthy transition from childhood to adulthood. Thus there is an urgent need to gender sensitize adolescent girls and enable them to realise their abilities and new roles in the society.

#### **4.4.6 Challenges Related to Emotional Conflicts**

Adolescence in general is proven to be a period of stress and strain and this is equally applicable to girls and boys. In the present study Table 4.15 shows that 72.5% girls accept emotional conflicts as a major challenge to them. Among this, majority of girls agreed that they tend to be easily irritated and often get angry. They feel depressed and lonely at home and inferior in being a girl. The girls do not get proper guidance and counselling to understand their emotions. Studies have found that adolescent girls suffer from emotional problems such as anxiety, anger, irritations, loneliness, inferiority and depression (Mishra and Sharma, 2001). They undergo a complex process of emotional, physical and social changes as part of gendering and sometimes they fail to adjust with these changes which in turn lead to mental health problems. Hence adolescent girls need special attention and care for emotional balancing. The social conditioning that makes girls feel inferior to their counterparts is to be discouraged at the early stages itself.

#### **4.4.7 Challenges Related to Usage of ICT**

The rapid development of computer, internet, mobiles and other communication technologies yields numerous resources and choices for adolescent girls. On the other side, this has led to the rise of new challenges of cyber crimes such as morphing, pornography and new forms of abuse and molestation in the social networking sites. In the present investigation as evident from Table 4.15, 67.6% of the sample expressed usage of ICT as posing a challenge to them. Only 40 percent of the sample possess a mobile phone of their own while almost all of them admitted that their brothers including younger ones do possess a mobile of their own. Most of the girls are scared of being abused in the social networking sites. Some of them admitted that they are addicted to watching TV and few of them agreed that their parents often scold for their lengthy watching of TV, sitting with laptop or chatting over phone. The study reveals that adolescent girls are not aware of judicious use of technologies and the online safety strategies.

Haneefa and Sumitha (2011) points out that a good number of students convey issues related to security and privacy and fear of misusing their personal information as the major problem while using social networking sites. A number of studies also have highlighted the negative outcomes such as overuse of the mobile phone and related financial problems (Billieux, Vander & Rochat, 2008 ;Funston & Macneill, 1999) and addiction

to the mobile phone in young adults and adolescents (Bianchi & Phillips, 2005; Funston et al., 2004). The present study reveals the need for mobile literacy to adolescents on how to engage judiciously with ICT and awareness regarding cybercrimes and cyber laws to prevent the trapping in networking sites.

#### **4.4.8 Challenges Related to Interpersonal Relationship**

Interpersonal relationship is another persistent area of challenge for 65% of girls in the total sample. They are confused as how to maintain a good relationship with opposite sex and not quite sure about how to handle love affairs. Less than fifty percent of the girls believe that there is nothing wrong in having friendship with boys. Stanton-Salazar and Spina (2005) investigated adolescents and found that the support from friends is necessary to withstand emotionally challenging circumstances and to cope up them effectively. The formation and maintenance of stable interpersonal relationships is a fundamental human motivation (Baumeister and Leary, 1995) and research findings have consistently indicated that poor quality relationships are linked to negative mental health outcomes in young people (Allen et al., 2007; Branje et al., 2010). Adolescence is typically a time when young people begin to engage in romantic relationships and the likelihood of having a romantic partner during this period increases with age (Shulman & Scharf, 2000; Zimmer-Gembeck, 1999). Attraction towards opposite sex and maintaining

healthy friendship are always been an issue of adolescent girls. Findings highlight the importance of guidance and counselling for girls for maintaining healthy and confident inter personal relationships.

#### **4.4.9 Challenges Related to Peer Pressures**

Peers play a greater role in the emotional and social development of adolescent girls and peer influence is not easy to negate. The results of the present analysis show that 62.8% of girls have challenges related to peer pressures. These girls opine that even when they realise that what their friends do is something wrong, they have to support them. Other issues raised by them include pressures from friends to have romantic affairs and the worry over not having a mobile phone like their friends and brothers.

#### **4.4.10 Challenges Related to Accepting Rapid Bodily Changes**

During the time of adolescence, girls face lot of problems related to bodily changes and menstruation. In the present study 59.4% of girls report that they are embarrassed due to rapid bodily changes and are uncomfortable with monthly periods. Some of them feel that they are not attractive enough.

#### **4.4.11 Challenges Related to Choice of Career and Lack of Role Models**

As per Table 4.15, 58% of girls responded that they are utterly confused as how to choose an appropriate career and they lack proper role models. They are worried often since the interest of their parents regarding



choice of their career is different from their preferences and aptitudes. The sample also agreed that they have a strong tendency to imitate the models from media. Selection of an appropriate role model is considered to be essential for enhancing adolescent girls' self-efficacy and motivation for attaining their life goals. The findings reveal that girls are far behind in selecting an appropriate role model.

#### **4.4.12 Challenges Related to Educational Aspirations**

Table 4.15 reveals that 53% of adolescent girls have confusions related to their own educational aspirations. The respondents feel that dowry and marriage expenses are hurdles to higher education of girls. They conveyed that their parents are of the opinion that it would be difficult to get bridegrooms for educated girls. Also, they doubt whether their parents would support their aspirations for professional education. Gendered stereotypes around domestic responsibilities and parental restrictions out of fear about safety, pose a major barrier for girls to get good education, employment and participation in public activities.

#### **4.4.13 Discussion**

The results of the study highlight the specific challenges pertaining to adolescent girls in the Kerala context. A study conducted by Kuruvilla and Suhara (2014) on 'response patterns of girl students to eve-teasing' found that eve teasing acts as a control on girls and women by censoring their

general mobility and accessibility to public spaces, thereby affecting their sense of personhood and security. Studies also highlight that girls' experiences with sexual harassment increase with age during adolescence (Leaper & Brown, 2004; McMaster et al., 2002). The present study exposes the reality that besides all the policies and programmes for supporting the safety of adolescent girls, different forms of gendered violence are still prevalent in the society. The girls are well aware of the rampant atrocities against girls and women in the society but are uninformed about the strategies to combat them.

Despite the awareness classes rendered as part of various programmes of the government and NGOs and the adolescence education classes in the school curriculum, girls still maintain false apprehensions and doubts regarding menstrual hygiene and reproductive health. Poor menstrual hygiene practices often results in serious ill-health ranging from reproductive tract infection, urinary tract infection, bad odour and many more (Akpenpuun, Ruman & Musega, 2014). Some researchers report that girls suffer from various discomforts like stomach ache, vomiting, headache, back pain and depression (Kamalam & Rajalakshmi, 2005; Rani, 2005) during menstruation and white discharge (Khanna et al., 2005). All these studies and the findings of the present study point out the need of more intensive awareness among adolescent girls on menstrual hygiene and reproductive health.

Similarly adolescence is a phase where one understands own sexuality and explore it, but unfortunately there is no reliable source of information available to Indian adolescents. Parents in most Indian families keep a distance with their adolescents and are reluctant to engage in open conversations whereby children fail to clarify their doubts with parents. Even in schools when young adolescents learn about reproductive system, teachers are unwilling to explain the scientific details or answer the queries of children. Parents and teachers must realise the need for sex education and open discussions in matters related to sexuality with adolescents. According to Reddy et al. (2005) growing interest in sex makes adolescent girls seek more and more information about it and consequently they take advantage of whatever sources of information available to them and this acts as a major source of stress among them. The stigma and secrecy surrounding sexuality, especially in the Kerala context poses a major threat and challenge to adolescents in their quest for information related to sex and sexuality.

The gender discrimination experienced at the family is highlighted by the findings of the study. Hence the need for upbringing boys and girls alike is to be stressed in parental awareness classes conducted under the auspices of the PTA. The restrictions on mobility and other choices put forth by parents must be democratic and gender neutral.

Family as a primary agency of socialisation can facilitate the idea of gender equality. The need for treating women as equal human being must be taught to boys from childhood. What the boys learn from their Indian homes is detrimental to the concept of gender equality. As highlighted by Kuruvilla and George (2015), in a family set up where the head of the household is engaged in commanding rather than sharing, ordering rather than doing things on one's own, likes to be served and pleased, demands love and respect but forgets to give love and respect, interested in scolding and battering rather than discussing and resolving issues, the values caught by children from their parents will not contribute to gender justice. When the turn of the children comes to become a husband /wife, whatever they have learned from their role models through observation will be repeated and perpetuated.

In developed countries with high indices of gender equality, children learn lessons of egalitarian relations from their parents itself. But in a highly patriarchal society like that of India, children rarely get opportunities to be witnesses of egalitarian family relationships especially between husband and wife. In Indian families wives generally display utmost respect and reverence to the husbands and directly teach their children to respect fathers while they rarely see the fathers openly respecting their wives. When children grow up, the sons demand strict obeisance from their wives just like their role model fathers and daughters naturally imbibe the mental dispositions of their

mothers to be passive and submissive whereby the unequal power relations get transmitted from generation to generation (Kuruvilla & George, 2015).

Discrimination and stereotypical role assignment existing in mainstream society subordinate women to a secondary status. As pointed out by Mensch et al. (2003) when girls enter puberty, they experience an abrupt shift in what is considered appropriate behaviour, and at that point, they become aware of the restrictions placed upon them as women. The family and society limit opportunities and autonomy of girl children, particularly their activities on public sphere, much more than those of the adolescent male siblings. The Youth Study (International Institute of Population Sciences & Population Council, 2010) conducted across 6 states in India in 2006-07 has reported similar findings that only 5% young women (ages 15-24) were allowed to visit nearby village/ neighbourhood for entertainment in comparison to 58% young men in the same age group suggesting the restricted mobility for young women.

Adolescence in general is regarded as a period of emotional mood swings. The need for freedom confronted by additional restrictions at the adolescence stage on mobility, interactions with opposite sex, bodily dispositions and sexuality might be a major reason for the emotional disturbances of adolescent girls.

Several studies report that adolescence is a period in life when the establishment of friendships and interaction with peers takes on increasing importance (Arnett, 2007; Hartup & Steven, 1997). It may be in positive and negative ways like peer influences in academic achievement and prosocial behaviours (Mounts & Steinberg, 1995; Wentzel & Cladwell, 1997) as well as problem behaviours such as drug and alcohol use, cigarette smoking, and delinquency (Urberg et al., 1997) or social relations with friends and romantic partners to be a common source of depressed mood in adolescence (Larson & Richards, 1994; Petersen et al., 1993). Thompson (2015) explains that if peers are using drugs or having sex, the teen is much more likely to do the same. Peer relationships also may serve as an important protective factor (Piko & Fitzpatrick, 2003). Success in managing peer relationship is linked to critical adolescent behaviours and mental health (Buhrmester, 1992). They need relationships with peers who can serve a variety of functions, including providing guidance, companionship and intimacy (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985). For adolescents' social development, peer relationships have shown its importance in the literature and in practice (Miller et al., 2000). Peer relationships have been found to be positively related to many indicators of psychological and social adjustment (Bishop & Inderbitzen, 1995). Being neglected or rejected by peers during adolescence is linked to serious problems such as delinquency and depression (Merten, 1996). The results of

the present study indicate that learning to resist unhealthy peer pressures is an important developmental task for adolescent girls.

Studies reveal a significant association between body dissatisfaction among teenage girls and their exposure to thin models in the media (Cafri et al., 2005; Hausenblas et al., 2003). Many girls are subject to body shaming and are embarrassed about their body images and this leads to self-deprecation and self distrust. Awareness about body image encouraging an open and public dialogue on body positivism is to be developed.

Higher education of girls is showing a progressive trend in recent days with more and more parents willing to send their girl children to professional education. But unfortunately this is a change markedly noticeable only among socially privileged parents. Even in the Kerala context, in several parts of the state there are parents who still hold the notion that the safety of girls could be ensured only through marriage. Such parents may either deny their girls higher education or may send them till a good alliance is secured.

Generally, parents give more attention to save money for dowry of their daughters rather than investing in their education. Parents especially in certain parts of the state and certain communities compel their adolescent daughters to marry before the age of 18 which in turn results in school dropout and social isolation (Kuruvilla & Nisha, 2015). The present study is based in Malappuram district of the state of Kerala which is noted for its

higher number of adolescent marriages and pregnancies. Very often the young girls fail to resist their parents and may have to yield in before their compulsions for marriage and forget their aspirations for higher education.

As per the findings of the study conducted by Kuruvilla and Anjana (2014) on attitude of parents towards higher education of girls in Malappuram District, among the total sample of 318 parents studied 14% of sample have less favourable attitude, 67% of sample have moderate attitude and only 19% have more favourable attitude towards higher education of girls. This study also highlighted that Christian parents have the most favourable attitude and Muslim parents have the least favourable attitude towards higher education of girls. Another study conducted by Hameed (2014) on female education and demographic transition in Kerala with special reference to Malappuram district found that one fifth of the sample are not willing to educate their boys and girls equally. The findings also revealed that respondents who prefer to educate their boys' up to the desire of their children are certainly high when compared with the respondents who prefer to educate their girls' up to the desire of their children.

The findings reveal the confusions and inability of girls to choose appropriate careers. Majority of the sample have mothers who are home makers and only very few have employed mothers to be taken as their role models. Career aspirations are influenced by factors such as gender,



socioeconomic status, race, parents' occupation and education level and parental expectations (Domenico & Jones, 2006). Women often perceive barriers and role conflicts as obstacles in their career development process (Albert & Luzzo, 1999; Brown & Barbosa, 2001; Luzzo & McWhirter, 2001). The inappropriate gender role perceptions might be a barrier and contributive factor to the inability to choose the right career or an appropriate role model.

As opined by Kuruvilla (2015), depictions in the print and electronic media can strongly influence the human mind which has a natural tendency to imitate whatever it is exposed to, especially in the magic box. Negative portrayal and degrading images of women depicted in the visual media serve to sustain the gender stereotypic images of men and women where women always are at the loser side. Awareness is to be generated among men and women so as to facilitate a selective internalisation of the real and rejection of the unrealistic fantasies depicted in the media through media literacy programmes. Media literacy also includes the awareness for not being misguided by the representations given in the media and making a judicious and logical screening between what is acceptable and what is not acceptable.

#### **4.5 RESPONSE PATTERNS ADOPTED BY ADOLESCENT GIRLS AGAINST VARIOUS CHALLENGES**

Response patterns adopted by adolescent girls against different types of challenges related to safety issues, menstrual hygiene and reproductive

health, gender discrimination, curiosities regarding sex and sexuality, gender role perception, conflict of emotions, usage of ICT, confusions regarding interpersonal relationship, peer pressures, accepting of bodily changes, choice of career and lack of role models and educational aspirations are discussed below:

#### 4.5.1 Response Patterns against Safety Issues

Different types of challenges that come under safety issues are eve teasing on the street, harassment while travelling, indecent behaviour of neighbours and teachers and also witnessing attempts of sexual abuse.

Reponses patterns of adolescent girls against these challenges are presented in Tables 4.16 and 4.17.

**Table 4.16**  
**Response Patterns against Eve Teasing on the Street and Harassment While Travelling**

<b>Eve Teasing on the Street</b>	
<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
Respond directly to the offender	60
Ignore the issue as if nothing has happened	28
Suffer in silence	12
<b>Harassment While Travelling</b>	
<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
React physically	40
React verbally	35
Complain to bus conductor	14
Report abuse to police	6
Suffer in silence	5

Reportedly, a soaring 60% of the respondents are willing to respond directly to the perpetrator of eve teasing. The remaining respondents reported that they neglect the issue and walk away as if nothing has happened or suffer the insults silently. Harassments faced while travelling in public conveyances are addressed with a variety of coping strategies ranging from physical reactions (slapping, pricking with safety pins) to verbal reactions and complaining to the bus conductor or to the police.

**Table 4.17**

**Response Patterns against Indecent Behaviour of Neighbours and Attempts of Sexual Abuse of Teachers**

<b>Indecent Behaviour of Neighbours</b>	
<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
Complain to parents	88
Avoid	12
<b>Attempts of Sexual Abuse of Teachers</b>	
<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
Complain to the principal/school authorities	75
Complain to the parents	25

As evident from the Table 4.17 the indecent behaviours from the part of neighbours are also responded not directly but through the parents after complaining to them. 12 % of the sample reported that they avoid the indecent behaviours. Table 4.17 also shows that complain to school authorities and

complain to parents are the common response patterns of girls against attempt of sexual abuse of teachers.

### **Response Patterns on Witnessing an Attempt of Sexual Abuse**

The analysis of response patterns of the sample on witnessing an attempt of sexual abuse has revealed that the entire sample expressed the readiness to react if they happen to witness an attempt of eve-teasing, physical abuse, misuse of mobile phone or sexual harassment.

#### **4.5.2 Response Patterns against Problems Related to Menstrual Hygiene and Reproductive Health**

Response patterns adopted by adolescent girls against problems related to menstrual hygiene and reproductive health are presented in the Table 4.18.

**Table 4.18**

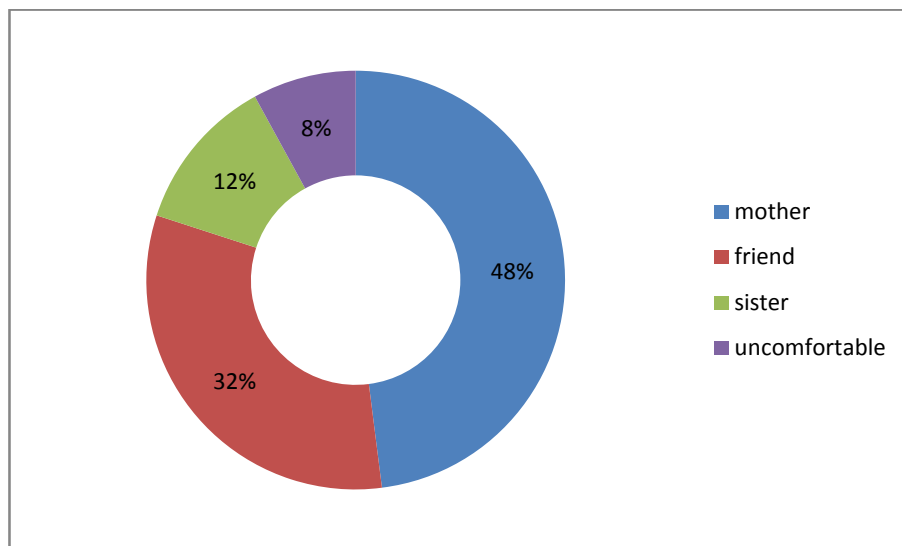
#### **Menstrual Absorbent Replacement at Home/at School**

<b>At Home</b>			<b>At School</b>	
<b>At least 4 times a day</b>	<b>At least 3 times a day</b>	<b>At least 2 times a day</b>	<b>At least one time</b>	<b>Don't replace</b>
26%	65%	9%	76%	24%

The Table 4.18 shows the menstrual absorbents used by the girls were changed on a regular basis. Overall, 65% of the respondents changed their materials at least 3 times of a day, 26% of the respondents changed it at least

4 times a day and rest of the 9% of respondents changed it 2 times a day. But in school days replacement of the material is very difficult for them because of poor condition of school toilets and also lack of disposing facilities of the used materials. Most of the sample reported that at school they couldn't replace the sanitary materials and they use same materials for the whole day time.

The figure 4.3 shows that most of the girls are comfortable to discuss menstrual issues with their mothers, friends and sisters. Few opined that they feel ashamed to openly discuss menstrual issues with others.



**Figure 4. 3**

**Percentage of Girls in Relation to the Person they Feel Comfortable with to Discuss Menstrual Issues**

### 4.5.3 Response Patterns against Gender Discrimination

Response patterns adopted by adolescent girls against gender discrimination are presented in Table 4.19.

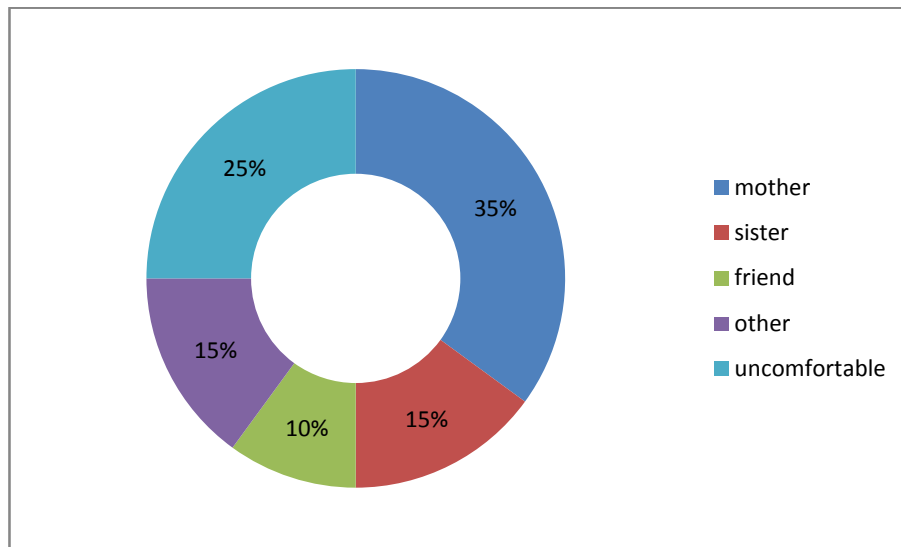
**Table 4.19**  
**Response Patterns Adopted by**  
**Adolescent Girls against Gender Discrimination**

<b>Restriction of Mobility and Freedom of Opinion at Home/School</b>	
<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
Obey parents/ teachers/authorities	54
Argue with parents/teachers/ authorities	24
Convince parents/teachers/authorities	22
<b>Restriction in Using /Having Mobile Phone</b>	
<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
Obey parents/ teachers/authorities	79
Ignore the restrictions	21

There are multiple responses patterns as highlighted by Table 4.19 against restriction of mobility and freedom of opinion of girls such as obey parents/teachers/authorities (54%), arguing with parents/ teachers/authorities (24%) or try to convince parents/ teachers/authorities about their rights (22%). The Table also highlights two types of response patterns against restriction in using /having mobile phone such as obey parents/ teachers/authorities (79%) and ignore the restrictions (21%).

#### 4.5.4 Response Patterns to Curiosities Regarding Sex and Sexuality

Response patterns adopted by adolescent girls against gender discrimination are presented in figure 4.5.



**Figure 4.4**

#### **Percentage of Girls in Relation to the Person they Feel Comfortable with to Discuss Matters of Sexuality**

From the Figure 4.4 it is clear that 35% of respondent discuss their curiosities regarding sexuality with their mothers and rest of them with their sisters (25%), friends (15%), and others (15%). Few of the respondents (10%) are feel ashamed to discuss these issues with others.

#### **4.5.5. Response Patterns against Confusions Regarding Gender Role Perceptions**

Response patterns adopted by adolescent girls against confusions regarding gender role are presented in the Table 4.20.

**Tables 4.20**

#### **Response Patterns against Confusions Regarding Gender Role Perceptions**

<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
Discuss with parents/teachers	50
Discuss with peers	30
Not aware what to do/ whom to ask	20

Table 4.20 indicates that half of all respondents indicated that they discuss the confusions regarding gender role perception with their parents or teachers, 30% of respondents with peers and 20% are not aware what to do and whom to ask such issues.

#### **4.5.6. Response Patterns against Conflict of Emotions**

Response patterns adopted by adolescent girls against conflict of emotion are presented in the Table 4.21.



**Table 4.21**  
**Response Patterns against Conflict of Emotions**

<b>To Reduce Mental Stress</b>	
<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
Spend time with friends and/or family members	45
Listen music/ watch television programmes	32
Sit alone	23
<b>After Arguing with Friends/Family Members</b>	
<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
Apologise	85
Avoid/Ignore	15
<b>Attraction Towards Opposite Sex</b>	
<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
Like romantic relationships	76
Like to marry	12
Avoid/ Ignore	12

Table 4.21 reveals that in order to cope up with the psychological/mental stress, most of the girls spend time either with the parents or with the peers. Some of the girls resort to watching television or listening to music to handle the hard times. To get rid of emotional conflicts, some of the girls reportedly spend their time in isolation. Quite frequently, adolescents find it difficult to control their anger/outrage and arrive at intense arguments with members of the family as well as friends. A good number of

girls are reportedly willing to apologize to others, soon after the occurrence of clash. In matters related to attraction to opposite sex, 76% of the girls long for an intimate relationship to develop and end up in a marital relationship with that person.

#### 4.5.7 Response Patterns against Challenges of ICT

Response patterns adopted by adolescent girls against challenges of ICT are presented in the Table 4.22.

**Table 4.22**  
**Response Patterns against Challenges of ICT**

<b>Undesirable Advances From Cyberspace</b>	
<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
Unfriending/blocking the perpetrator	75
Keep as a secret	13
Complain to parents	12
<b>Missed Calls From an Anonymous Number</b>	
<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
Call back	45
Inform to parents	36
Avoidance	19
<b>For Reducing Addiction Towards Television Programmes</b>	
<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
Spend time with friends/family members	65
Do not know	35

It is evident from Table 4.22 that when faced with harassments from the social networking sites or other web-based applications, the common coping mechanism used by the girls is unfriending/blocking the perpetrator (75%), keeping the issue a well-kept secret (13%) and 12% of respondents complain it to parents. When they get missed calls from anonymous numbers, 45% of girls do call back to the number, 36% of respondents inform parents and rest of them (19%) use avoidance strategies. In order to resist to the increased craving for watching television/soap operas, majority of the girls (65%) reported that they spend more time with family and friends. However, a good number of girls (35%) have reported that they do not have any idea on how to cope up with this issue.

#### **4.5.8 Response Patterns against Difficulties Related to Interpersonal Relationship**

Response patterns adopted by adolescent girls against difficulties related to interpersonal relationship are presented in the Table 4.23.

**Table 4.23**

#### **Response Patterns against Restrictions on Interpersonal Relationship**

<b>Overcome Parents' Restrictions against Friendship with Boys</b>	
<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
Convince parents	46
Dislike boyfriends	35
Obey parents	19

Table 4.23 reveals that majority of girls (46%) try their hands at convincing their parents that there is nothing to be afraid of, the remaining 35% dislike boyfriends and go on without making friendship with boys and 19% of the respondents obey whatever is advised by their parents.

#### 4.5.9 Response Patterns against Challenges Related to Peer Pressures

Response patterns adopted by adolescent girls against difficulties related to peer pressure are presented in Table 4.24.

**Table 4.24**

#### **Response Patterns against Challenges Related to Peer Pressures**

<b>To Overcome the Attraction towards Luxurious Life Like Friends</b>	
<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
Select friends from same categories	75
Avoid	12
Ignore	12
<b>Compulsion to Take Drugs</b>	
<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
Avoid friendship	65
Advise friends	20
Inform parents	15
<b>Compulsion For Romantic Relationship</b>	
<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Avoid friendship	39
Advise friends	46
Inform parents	15

It is clear from Table 4.26 that majority of the respondents (75%) try to make friends with students hailing from socio-economic backgrounds similar to them to overcome the attraction towards luxurious life of classmates. In order to keep away from not yielding to peer pressures for using psychoactive substances/drugs the students employ strategies like reporting to parents (15%), avoiding that particular peers (65%) or advising them (20%) to refrain from such harmful things/habits. Similar strategies are employed to deal with exploitative relationships from peers as well.

#### **4.5.10 Response Patterns against Challenges Related to Accepting Rapid Bodily Changes**

Response patterns adopted by adolescent girls against difficulties related to accepting rapid bodily changes are presented in the Table 4.25.

Table 4.25

#### **Response Patterns against Challenges Related to Accepting Rapid Bodily Changes**

<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
Feel ashamed/ worried	53
Clad the body fully	24
Accept and adjust with	23

It is clear from Table 4.25 that majority of the respondents (53%) feel ashamed or worried on sudden onset of changes taking place in their bodies. Other response patterns they use to address these issues are keeping away

from going out and always being fully clad from neck to feet(24%). 23% of girls reported that they accept and adjust with these issues.

#### **4.5.11 Response Patterns against Challenges Related to Choice of Career**

Response patterns adopted by adolescent girls against challenges related to choice of career are presented in Table 4.26.

Table 4.26

#### **Response Patterns against Challenges Related to Choice of Career**

<b>Overcome Restrictions to Reach Dream Job</b>	
<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>% Of Respondents</b>
Obey parents	53
Convince parents	47

It is clear from Table 4.26 that in order to accomplish their dream careers, 53% of girls go yielding to the restrictions their families impose while 47% dare to convince the parents to pursue their goals. All the respondents (100%) reported that they were willing to work hard to reach their life goals.

#### **4.5.11 Response Patterns Related to Difficulties in Pursuing Higher Education**

With regard to the coping strategies adopted by adolescent girls against difficulties in pursuing higher education, the responses included convince parents and obey parents. The results are presented in Table 4.27.

**Table 4.27**  
**Response Patterns against Challenges related to Difficulties in Pursuing Higher Education**

<b>Overcome Parents Restrictions in Pursuing Higher Education</b>	
<b>Response Patterns</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
Convince parents	69
Obey parents	31

Table 4.27 shows the response patterns of girls against restrictions in pursuing higher education such as convince parents (69%) about their desire and significance of higher education and obey parental directions/opinions (31%).

#### **4.5.12 Discussion**

This session discusses about the various response patterns that adolescent girls adopt to face their day to day challenges. The whole process of socialisation of girls starting from childhood onwards trains them to internalise the concept of inferiority which in turn make them remain passive against some sort of challenges. Sometimes she becomes unaware about her

rights due to the harmful internalisation. As Siddiqui (2011) opined women in our society have been idolized, revered and worshiped in the image of a mother. They are considered as an epitome of everything that is associated with tenderness, nurturance, empathy and sensitivity. So she is highly moulded to ignore violence and suffer it in silence.

Eve teasing is the most common form of sexual violence in the society. Reportedly, a soaring 60% of respondents are willing to respond directly to the perpetrator of eve teasing. The remaining respondents report that they neglect the issue and walk away as if nothing happened. They show agreeableness to tolerate mutely such forms of violence, as they are ‘girls’ who are supposed to do that way. Girls who react to this issue often get no support from either the society or the law making structures. Many a time, the victims are blamed for their dressing pattern or behavior as provocative. This line of thinking is so widespread in the society that the girls believe that it is improper for them to respond or react. It is clear from the study that there are many cases of continuous eve teasing, wherein the victim silently suffers it for months or years without responding. As many as 78% respondents reported that they complain to their parents about the issue of eve teasing when it becomes constant and unbearable.

Many studies support the findings of the present investigation. Kuruvilla and Suhara (2014) point out that half of their sample of University



women students and employees have an opinion that they will respond directly to the harassers and few sample opined they haven't received any support from anyone when they were in trouble. The study also revealed that the fear of further attack and fear of support from society pressurize women not to react against any attempt of eve-teasing.

Reporting to parents, Child Line (A toll free helpline for children) and Police are the reported coping strategies employed by the girls to address attempts of sexual abuse targeted on them. Harassments faced while travelling in public conveyances are addressed with a variety of coping strategies ranging from physical reactions (slapping, pricking with safety pins) to verbal reactions and complaining to the bus conductor or the police. Indecent behaviours from the part of neighbours are also responded not directly but through the parents after complaining to them. The findings reveal that the girls are well aware of the appropriate response patterns to instances of sexual harassment of varying degrees.

The study found that most of the girls are comfortable to discuss menstrual issues with their mothers, friends and sisters while a few feel ashamed to discuss menstrual issues with others. These points out the impact of different cultural taboos associated with menstruation that still exist in the educated society of Kerala. A study conducted by Kamath, Ghosh, Lena and Chandrasekaran (2013) found that adolescent girls often lack knowledge

regarding reproductive health including menstruation which can be due to socio-cultural barriers in which they grow up. These differences create various problems for the adolescent girls. It is essential for girls to have the information, education and an enabling environment to cope with menstruation issues. Also, parents and other family members should be made to acknowledge the need to support their children at school and home with sanitary menstrual absorbents in addition to other basic hygienic products. Poor menstrual health management in schools have been shown to cause adolescent girls worry and feel shameful which in turn contribute to poor academic performance in schools. Therefore it is strongly felt that it should be made mandatory for all schools to have separate, private clean toilets for the girl students with running water and proper disposal facility for sanitary pads.

Girls tend to cope up with gender discrimination from the parents' side since they are already aware of it. Most of the girls wish to restrict themselves without hurting their parents' sentiments. They also believe that they are supposed to do so, owing to the fact that they are "girls". The restrictions added on at the commencement of adolescence cause distress to a few of the girls and they become easily irritated and make use of coping strategies like avoidance and aggressiveness. Fetching mobile phones for the girls is often a matter of concern for the parents. So, most of the parents are not willing to buy mobile phones for them. Girls also cope up with this tendency among

parents by justifying it on the grounds of the hidden traps involved in the usage of mobile phones.

Girls are aware of parental discriminatory behaviours and are trying to cope up with it. In the beginning they protest verbally which could be in the form of argument or an expression of anger. Repeated discriminatory behaviours make them feel irritated and adopt other coping strategies like avoidance, sullenness, aggressiveness etc.

In order to cope up with the psychological/mental stress, most of the girls spend time either with the parents or with the peers. Some of the girls resort to watching television or listening to music to handle the hard times. To get rid of emotional conflicts, some of the girls reportedly spend their time in isolation. Quite frequently, adolescents find it difficult to control their anger/outrage and arrive at intense arguments with members of the family as well as friends. A good number of girls are reportedly willing to apologize to others, soon after the occurrence of clash. Adolescence is a period in life that is characterized by escalation of attraction towards the opposite sex. However, the majority of girls find it hard to employ a proper coping method to deal with this rather sudden expression of their own sexuality. Most of the girls long for an intimate relationship to develop and to end up in a marital relationship with that person..

One of the most stringent restrictions that girl children face upon reaching 'adolescence' in our society is the abrupt blocking of companionship with their male counterparts. Most of the parents view friendship between girls and boys with an eye of suspicion and fear. Even healthy relationships are mistrusted. Parents instruct their girl children that friendship with boys can be harmful for their future. Though a minority of girls try their hands at convincing their parents that there is nothing to be afraid of, the remaining majority goes on without making friendship with boys, and being themselves strictly in the company of other girls alone. Many girls believe friendship with boys as unnecessary or even, as simply not good.

The influence of peer group over the lives of adolescents is quite high. It is normal for the adolescents to imitate/role model their peers and give importance to whatever they say more than anyone else does. It is observed from this study that most of the girls try to make friends with students hailing from socio-economic backgrounds similar to that of them. It is in that way they keep themselves defended from being attracted to affluent lifestyles of other students. In order to keep away from not yielding to peer pressure for using psychoactive substances/drugs the students employ strategies like reporting to parents, avoiding that particular peers, or advising them. Similar strategies are made use of while dealing with exploitative relationships from peers as well.

Society in general, considers distinctly separate professions as appropriate for each sex. The gender division of labour is deep-seated in a society like that of India. Many parents socialize their children according to the prevailing gender norms in the society. Most parents invest the earnings of their lifetime earmarked for marrying off their girl children, rather than educating them or building a career for them. Accomplishing their dream careers thus becomes extremely difficult or nearly impossible for most of the girls. Nearly all girls go yielding to the restrictions their families impose, while a few dare to convince the parents to pursue their goals. Though all the respondents reported that they were willing to work hard to reach their life goals, the many hurdles society erects make their journey tricky and tough.

Adolescents often face harsh criticism on grounds of their bodily appearance and their choices related to it. The socialization process in our society gives more thrust towards physical appearance of girls compared to anything else. Their abilities in other realms go unnoticed but their physical attributes are many a time put under surveillance. Most girls find it difficult to adjust with the sudden onset of changes taking place in their bodies. Reportedly, the coping strategies they use to address these issues are abstaining from going out and always being fully clad from neck to feet. Quite often, they feel anxious about their appearance. It is a detrimental practice of the patriarchal society to make the girls and women body conscious by putting undue importance to their dressing styles. The popular

misconception that dressing styles of girls provoke harassments against them adds up the apprehensions of adolescent girls and their parents alike.

Girls have to beat many hurdles in order to make use of ICT. Therefore, the field of technology remains barren and nearly inaccessible to many girls. Girls who overcome these hurdles and use ICT in turn have to face the risk of cybercrimes. Most of the victims do not get the deserved justice, as the society is inclined to victim blaming. Out of fear for blaming, many girls keep the issue undisclosed or unreported. When faced with harassments from the social networking sites or other web-based applications, the common coping mechanism used by the girls is unfriending/blocking the perpetrator or keeping the issue a well-kept secret. This treatment gives the perpetrators of cyber abuse, bolstered confidence to abuse more women users, making the problem worse. A study conducted by Jaishankar and Kosalai (2007) on Victims of Stalking in India: A Study of Girl College Students in Tirunelveli City found that the reporting behaviour of the victims is very poor. 72% of the victims did not report their victimization to police. Therefore, it would be impossible for the support mechanisms to help them.

When they get missed calls from anonymous numbers, girls do call back to the number, thereby ending up in exploitative relationships and harassment. In order to resist to the increased craving for watching television/soap operas, some of the girls reported that they spend more time

with family and friends. However, a good number of girls have reported that they do not have any idea how to cope up with this issue. Mobile phones have become the most desired daily means of communication and a life style among the adolescents. Even though the mobile phones have opened an arena of vast information and communication, the unresolved questions about cyber crimes against women is alarmingly increasing, particularly those targeted towards adolescent girls. The ban of the technology at school alone can't solve the issues of cybercrimes. Instead of stressing the ban of mobile phones, the judicious use of the technology is to be highlighted.

#### **4.6 TENABILITY OF HYPOTHESES**

##### **H1. Adolescent Girls will be having Low Levels of Self Esteem**

The analysis of data has revealed that most of the respondents in the present study are belonging to the category of average/low self esteem. Therefore the hypothesis that adolescent girls will be having low level of self esteem is partially accepted.

##### **H2. There will be Significant Difference in the Self Esteem of Adolescent Girls belonging to the Different Classificatory Variables**

The analysis of data has revealed that there is a significant difference in the self esteem of adolescent girls belonging to different religious

communities and those studying in different types of management. But no significant difference was found in the self esteem of adolescent girls belonging to different locales. Therefore the hypothesis is partially accepted because the two classificatory variables, religion and type of school management have an influence on the self esteem of adolescent girls whereas locale was not found to make any difference.

### **H.3. Adolescent Girls will be having Inappropriate Gender Role Perceptions**

In all the three religious groups, majority of adolescent girls belong to the category of average scores for their progressive gender role perceptions. This shows that adolescent girls are having inappropriate gender role perceptions and the hypothesis is accepted.

### **H.4. There will be Significant Difference in the Gender Role Perception of Adolescent Girls belonging to the Various Classificatory Variables**

It is revealed from the analysis that there is a significant difference in the gender role perception of adolescent girls belonging to different religious communities. As indicated by the mean scores, Hindu girls have more progressive gender role perceptions than Muslim girls. Similarly significant difference exists in the gender role perception between Christian and Muslim



girls with Christian girls having progressive and Muslim girls having traditional perceptions about women's roles in the society.

Similarly statistically significant difference was found in the gender role perceptions of adolescent girls studying in different types of school management. Therefore the hypothesis is partially accepted because the two classificatory variables religion and type of school management have an influence on the gender role perception of adolescent girls whereas no difference was found in the gender role perception of adolescent girls belonging to urban and rural locales.

**H5. Adolescent Girls will be Facing Several Challenges which they fail to combat effectively**

From the analysis of data it is clear that adolescent girls face several challenges related to gender discrimination and gender role perception, conflict of emotion, safety issues, lack of role models, peer pressure, confusions regarding inter personal relationship, inability to accept bodily changes, menstrual hygiene and reproductive health, curiosities regarding sex and sexuality, choice of career and usage of ICT. A few of these challenges such as those related to safety issues, peer pressures and emotional conflicts were effectively managed by the girls while in most of the issues they seem confused and not knowing what to do. Therefore the hypothesis is accepted.

**Table 4.28**

**Summary of Tenability of Hypotheses**

<b>Si. No.</b>	<b>Hypotheses</b>	<b>Tenability of Hypotheses</b>
1.	Adolescent girls will be having low levels of self esteem	Partially Accepted
2.	There will be significant difference in the self esteem of adolescent girls belonging to the different classificatory variables.	Partially Accepted
3	Adolescent girls will be having inappropriate gender role perceptions	Partially Accepted
4	There will be significant difference in the gender role perception of adolescent girls belonging to the various classificatory variables	Partially Accepted
5	Adolescent Girls will be Facing Several Challenges which they fail to combat effectively	Accepted

**4.7 CASE STUDIES**

Case studies were attempted to probe further into the depth of challenges faced by adolescent girls. Data pertaining to case studies were obtained from the ‘Curiosity Box’ used by the researcher during the adolescence education class delivered in the concerned classes. Further the information was cross checked with the teachers and Souhrida club coordinators of the schools through interviews with them. The names of the girls are changed to ensure anonymity. All the adolescent girls were either

discriminated or trapped or exploited by friends or relatives. The eight cases are presented below:

### **Case No. 1**

Minha, studies in 11th class (Plus one). She is married now. Her Uppa (father) is doing business in Dubai. At her parental home, she has her Umma (mother), her elder sister and two brothers. Minha and her Itha (elder sister) who is now in 12th standard are both good at studies. Minha's ambition is to become a doctor, though the situations are not very encouraging around her. Even though she belongs to a well off family, Minha is worried that she will not be able to fulfill her ambitions, as the family members oppose the idea of sending her for higher education. When her Uppa comes home from Dubai on vacations, he brings new clothes only for his male children. She says Uppa behaves in a way completely ignoring Minha and her sister, as they are girls. When she tries to study at night, someone in the family rushes to switch off the lights asking, ' why should girls study at all?'

Minha's Uppa is of the opinion that women are expected to give birth and take care of children. Umma or anyone in the family never dares to tell anything against him. Uppa argues that it is unnecessary to ask for the interests or opinions of girls in any matter. Thus, he conducted the marriages of the two girls without even asking if they liked their bridegrooms or not. Minha had to ask for help from her teachers in order to get permission from

her husband's family to write the exams. She went to the school, cried before her teachers and they came to the family and pleaded to the family members. Half-heartedly, the family has granted her permission, that too only to write the exams.

### **Case No. 2**

Farsana is a 11th class (plus one) student. There are many shops near her school. Young men flock around these shops all the time. Farsana fell in love with one of these chaps. She handed some of her photographs to him. Shortly, her teachers and other students began to notice that she sits constantly worried and pays no attention in the class. She began to skip classes frequently and the teachers called up her parents. Then she came to the class for two days, but behaved strangely in the class and talked to no one. After a week, news came to the school that Farsana committed suicide.

Farsana wrote a suicide note that she was in her third month of pregnancy. In further inquiry, police found that the man she was in love with had blackmailed Farsana with her morphed photos. He threatened her that he would circulate the obscene photos, unless she slept with him. It was found that the young man, along with his friends, abused her several times.

### **Case No.3**

Remya studies in 11th Standard. A youngster, who happens to be her relative and her neighbour, has been trying to harass her physically every so

often. The families live in close proximity and are in good terms. Since the young man behaves very courteously to all, he is welcomed at every household in the neighbourhood. He is at freedom to visit Remya's home too every now and then. For the same reason, Remya feels insecure at her own home.

She wants to tell this to her mother, but never could she get the courage to do so. Because she thinks that even if she tells about his indecent behaviour, her mother would only put her character responsible for it, as she is a girl. Once the boy came into her room and tried to hug her forcibly. Even then, she feels scared to reveal this to anybody. What actually terrifies her is the blame that everybody would put on her. Both her parents go to work every day and Remya is horrified to stay at home, with no one nearby. Remya says she is unable to concentrate on her studies due to these circumstances. Teachers tick her off for scoring abysmally low in exams. The stress from the school coupled with the stress at home has put her in an overwhelming situation. Remya revealed her problems directly to the researcher after attending the two hour class moderated by the researcher.

#### **Case No.4**

Sameera is a plus one student. When she was a child, Sameera's parents were divorced and they got married separately. Sameera was left to live with her maternal grandparents, right from her childhood. Sameera said

her Uppuppa (the grandfather) had been behaving in a weird way to her, lately. Once, he caught hold of her hands in a peculiar way and she felt awkward about it. However, she did not disclose it to anyone. He repeated this behavior 2-3 times, back then. Sameera said she had not acquired enough courage to tell this to her Ummumma (grandmother). She has been struggling to avoid situations wherein she is left alone with Uppuppa nearby.

Whenever such a situation came, she rushed to her friend's home in the neighbourhood. She was not sure how far she could go to keep herself away from Uppuppa, given that they shared the same roof. In the meantime, she fell in love with an auto rickshaw driver whom she met on her way to school. Although she knew little about his whereabouts, she felt nice talking to him. She said she got all the love and care, which she never got from anyone else in her life, from this person. Sameera said she was determined to elope with this person, if her Uppuppa misbehaved to her yet again.

#### **Case No. 5**

Aardra, a plus one student, loves to be a 'modern girl' in every aspect. She is of the opinion that she is a 'forward thinking' person. Thanks to this, she remains a permanent headache to her parents and grandparents. Her pattern of dressing and hairstyles are quite different from other girls of her age, in the locality. Aardra feels that the local people stare at her shrewdly, every time she goes out. She cannot even imagine changing her style to ways

the other girls do it. Her parents and neighbours have been consistently irritating her commenting about this. Every random person advises her that women are supposed to dress 'modestly' or they will invite sexual harassment from men. Though she loves to spend time with her friends, she says it is pointless to do so, when the friends cannot accept or accommodate her, the way she is.

Aardra aspires to become a fashion model. Since it is totally unacceptable for the family members, she has to quarrel with her father occasionally. Due to this, she has started to hate the school, the home and the society itself. She says her anger becomes unmanageable to herself, at times. Often, she feels lonely and dejected about her life. She asks why the society is reluctant to accommodate a girl who thinks differently. She feels that this conflict has started seriously affecting her mental peace and well being.

#### **Case No. 6**

Arunima is a plus one student in the Humanities stream. She has been in love with Sumesh for the last 5 months. Right from the time they met in a social networking site, Sumesh was firm on the stand that he will not live a life without her. Their interactions were mainly through the site.

Usually, the two chatted or texted for about 5 hours, after everyone at home went to sleep. Once, Sumesh asked Arunima for her nude picture and she did so. From the next day onwards, Sumesh went unavailable for her to

contact. Arunima is petrified with the thought that her pictures are with Sumesh and he may upload it on the internet anytime.

#### **Case No. 7**

Shybi is a plus one student. She complained that her father had been sexually abusing her. She had told it to her friends and teachers. The teachers summoned her parents and enquired about it. The family strongly denied it and teachers could not find anything suggestive of a sexual abuse. The case was referred to Childline and police inquiry took place. Shybi's father pleaded strongly that he would not do such a thing to his own daughter. After detailed inquiries and examinations, it was found that the father did not abuse her. She was referred for counseling and psychological treatments. Shybi was diagnosed with a psychological issue. She was preoccupied with the thought that her father would abuse her and this thought dreaded her. Psychologists say that the fear of sexual abuse from father was instilled in her by the frequent news reports of similar cases in the media.

#### **Case No. 8**

Janvi, a plus one student was in love with a youngster who lived near her school. Teachers gave her warnings upon seeing the duo chatting to each other. One of her friends saw the man gifting Janvi a mobile phone and she reported it to the teacher. The teacher scolded Janvi a lot and called upon her



mother. Janvi's mother came to the school and the teacher advised Janvi to be cautious about her relationship, in front of her mother.

When Janvi came back from school, her mother yelled at her and scolded heavily. After a while, Janvi's mother came to her room and saw Janvi strangled to death with a shawl, hanging from the ceiling.

### **Conclusion**

The eight case studies reveal the different dimensions of threats and challenges that adolescent girls face in the society. The innocence of the young girls is exploited by men including close relatives, friends and neighbours.

The cases described above endorse the fact that women in general and young girls in particular, are potentially vulnerable to a spectrum of challenges that encompass all aspects of their everyday lives. The virtual world poses severe threats to the young girls these days. Rather than providing a free space for women to communicate and network, social media and ICT has increasingly become a space to bully, to ensnare and to silence them.

One of the cases reveals that the society still holds a patriarchal outlook on how a girl should behave, what she should wear and what career

she has to pursue etc. Girls who do not cater to these outlines are viewed with suspicion and ridicule by the family and the society in general.

Another case is representative of young girls who face painful discrimination within their family that restricts them from pursuing education and career for the sake of marriage.

Majority of case studies reveal that many of our young girls live in the constant fear of physical exploitation and abuse even within the four walls of their houses. It is increasingly becoming evident that 'home' cannot be considered as a 'safe zone' for girls and women. Regular incidents of sexual abuse and incest has been so normalized by the media that girls have even started to view their unsuspecting near ones with an eye of fear.

In short safety issues, traps in cyber world and denial of education opportunities for the sake of marriage were the threats highlighted by the case studies. In the survey conducted using inventories, similar findings were obtained where safety issue was found to be the most significant challenge faced by adolescent girls. The data from inventory on response patterns of girls to the challenges have shown the inability and ignorance of adolescent girls to handle the challenges related to usage of ICT. The case studies also endorse this finding. Thus the case studies substantiate the results of the analysis of data collected using other tools.

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CHAPTER 5

**PROSPECTS FOR  
ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT**

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## **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

While adolescence is a time of great vulnerability for girls, it is also an ideal point to foster development. In this point of view, there are many interventions specifically focused on adolescent well being developed and implemented by the government in the recent years. These interventions particularly benefiting adolescent girls are presented in the session. These services are being provided by different agencies belonging to various governmental sectors.

## **5.2 POLICIES CONCERNING ADOLESCENT GIRLS**

### **5.2.1 National Nutrition Policy (1983)**

The National Nutrition Policy underscores the importance of employment and education of girls and women. The policy recognizes that women's employment and education will pave way to improvement in household nutritional status. The policy addresses women as the ultimate providers of nutrition to households through both preparation of food as well as acquisition of food. The policy therefore highlights the significance of socio-economic security of women. The major criticism of the policy is that it focuses on adolescent girls only in relation to their roles as potential mothers and hopeful housewives. Adolescent boys are not directly mentioned anywhere in the policy. The need for the well being of adolescents, as a group has also not been recognized by it.

### **5.2.2 National Policy on Education (1986 modified in 1992)**

National Education Policy of 1986 envisages the total eradication of illiteracy, principally for the 15 to 35 age group and universalisation of primary education. The adolescents as a group overlies the two major subsections of population. Adolescents are treated by the policy both as children who are the beneficiaries of primary education and also as part of the adult population who are the stakeholders of adult literacy programmes. Nevertheless, the policy does not recognize adolescents as a group as such. This is a paradigm failure as it can lead to overlooking their special needs. For a certain extent, the employment related educational needs are addressed through vocational education at the higher secondary level. The policy describes the need for convergence of the non-formal and need-based vocational needs of youth (15-35 years). Education Policy statement in the section “Education for Women’s Equality” has special relevance for education programmes for adolescents.

### **5.2.3 National Population Policy (2000)**

The National Population Policy resolves the invisibility of adolescents as a group. It reinstates that adolescents have remained unaddressed so far and promises to include them as the subjects of its 12 strategic themes. Adolescents are explicitly referred to in the sections on information, nutrition, contraceptive use, STDs and other population-related issues. The

acknowledgment of adolescents as an important section of population is reasonable because of their special position in population that refers to the role they will be playing when India's population will reach the replacement level of fertility and achieve stability. The policy clearly indicates the need to develop a health package for adolescents and to make obligatory, the minimum legal age at marriage.

#### **5.2.4 National AIDS Policy (2000)**

The National AIDS Policy is one of the vital components of the National Health Strategy. Adolescents find a special mention in the policy as they constitute a considerable segment of the sexually active population and unprotected sexual intercourse is the major source of HIV infection. Urge to venture into sex life and tendency for experimentation make them potentially vulnerable to STD's including AIDS. Lack of awareness, peer pressure and a false sense of achievement upon sexual encounters make them even more susceptible. It is evident that though it fails to directly mention adolescents, the policy is highly relevant to them and it aims to address their needs particularly.

#### **5.2.5 National Health Policy (2002)**

The Health Policy presents genuine apprehension for the health of special groups such as adolescent girls. However, the concern is only limited to their nutritional needs. In a few places, adolescent girls are mentioned in

conjunction with pregnant women and children as opposed to treating them as a separate group with specific issues to be addressed. There too, only pregnancy and maternity related health needs of adolescent girls get attention and all other health needs are underplayed. A life cycle approach to the health needs of women is obviously missing.

#### **5.2.6 The Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002)**

The Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) mainly focused at growth with social justice and equity. In the document, specific mentions are given to adolescents mainly in the sections on women and children, health and youth. The policy considers adolescent girls as a separate category to universalize supplementary feeding and to assess the health needs of adolescents.

#### **5.2.7 The Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012)**

The eleventh plan points out that the governmental interventions and their delivery mechanisms must effectively reach the girl child on the basis of her age and specific setting. Prevention of female feticide/ infanticide, importance to health and nutrition of girl child, enabling education for the girl child, gender sensitization of educational system, abolition of child marriage, prevention of girl child abuse, exploitation and violence and welfare and development of adolescent girls are other areas specially mentioned for girls in the plan.

## **5.3 PROGRAMMES CONCERNING ADOLESCENT GIRLS**

### **5.3.1 Midday Meal Scheme**

The Midday Meal Scheme is a school meal programme of the Government of India designed to improve the nutritional status of school-age children nationwide. The programme supplies free lunch on working days for children in primary and upper primary classes in government, government aided, local body, and also for children studying in Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and alternate innovative education centers. It has a path breaking history of many decades. In 1925, the mid day meal scheme was introduced for the poor and disadvantaged children in Madras Municipal Corporation. By the mid 1980's, Gujarat, Kerala and Tamil Nadu along with the UT of Pondicherry initiated a mid day meal scheme for school children. By the end of 1990-91, 12 states in India had universalized mid day meal schemes in schools. From the year 1997-98, the scheme with the central assistance extended itself to all blocks in the country. In the year 2009, food norms have been revised to guarantee balanced and nutritious diet for children in the upper primary group. The amount of pulses was raised to 30 grams per child, vegetables to 75 grams and quantity of oil and fat was fixed as 7.5 grams.



### **5.3.2 Mahila Samakhya Programme**

The Mahila Samakhya programme was launched in 1988 to attain the goals of the New Education Policy (1986) and the Programme of Action “Education for Women’s Equality”. This is a concrete programme for the education and empowerment of women in rural areas, primarily of women from socially and economically marginalized groups.

The objectives of the programme are enlisted as follows: 1. To enhance the self-esteem and self-confidence of women 2. To build a positive image of women by recognizing their contribution to the society, polity and the economy. 3. To develop an ability to think critically 4. To nurture decision making and action through collective processes 5. To enable women to make informed choices in areas like education, employment and reproductive health 6. To ensure equal participation in developmental processes by providing information, knowledge and skills for economic independence 7. To enhance the access to legal literacy and information relating to their rights and entitlements in society.

### **5.3.3 Childline**

The Ministry of Women and Child Development (WMCD), Government of India with collaboration from state governments, NGOs, Bilateral/Multilateral Agencies and Corporate Sector has developed ‘Childline’ in the year 1998 as a national emergency toll free phone

exclusively for the benefit of children across the country. 'Childline' and its services principally have its focus on children in distress as well as children in need of care and protection. The beneficiary group may include children living alone on the streets, survivors of child labour, run-away children, children of commercial sex workers, children who are subjected to sexual abuse or any child who finds herself/himself in distress. The service operates on the toll free phone number 1098 all over the country.

Presently, Childline is operational in 82 cities/districts in India. In Kerala, Childline is functional in 9 cities / districts, of which Trivandrum, Kochi, Thrissur, Calicut and Wayanad units are supported by Government of India and the rest four units are supported by Government of Kerala. The Government of Kerala has started supporting Childline service in Malappuram, Kasaragod, Palakkad and Kannur in 2007-08 for which funds have been routed through Childline India Foundation.

#### **5.3.4 IT@School Project**

The IT@School Project, launched in 2001 is an information technology education project under the Department of General Education, Government of Kerala. The target beneficiary group of IT@School Project is the group of students, teachers and parents. Information Technology education in school enhances the quality of IT education thereby ensuring better career opportunities.

IT@School is the nodal agency for implementing EDUSAT network and runs an exclusive channel for education called 'ViCTERS' (Virtual Classroom Technology on Edusat for Rural Schools). The project has now associated with BSNL to provide Internet broad band connectivity to all high schools in Kerala.

### **5.3.5 Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG)**

The Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls was launched in 2002-03 under the Central Ministry of Women and Child Development. It is primarily aimed at addressing the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers. 6 kg of free food grain (rice) per month are distributed to adolescent girls pregnant women and lactating mothers according to their weight, under the scheme.

### **5.3.6 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya**

The scheme was introduced by the Government of India in August 2004, and then integrated in the national level Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) programme, to provide educational amenities for girls belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, minority communities and families below the poverty line in educationally backward blocks.

### **5.3.7 The Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health (ARSH) Programme**

The Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health Programme, abbreviated as ARSH started in the year 2005, aims to lessen the risky sexual behavior among adolescents and to empower them to make informed decisions on the important challenges of their lives. The National Health Mission or NHM is the nodal agency for its implementation. The programme was constituted with the broader aims of positively influencing important indicators like Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) and Infant Mortality Ratio (IMR). It aims to do so, by reducing the incidence of teenage pregnancy, meeting the unmet needs for contraception and reducing the risk for contracting Sexually Transmitted Infections. ARSH was initiated in Kerala during 2008-09. Other key interventions of ARSH are related to issues of adolescents that range from undernourishment, sexual harassment, substance abuse, suicides and other distress situations in the life.

### **5.3.8 INSPIRE Programme**

Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (INSPIRE) is a ground-breaking programme initiated by the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India in the year 2008. The major objective of the programme is to attract young adolescents towards the creative pursuit of Science. It provides scholarships for talented students for the study of science,

fellowships to pursue research in science and research grants for promising young scholars in the field of Science.

### **5.3.9 Psychosocial Counseling for Adolescent Girls**

Kishori Shakti Yojana is an initiative of the Ministry of Child Development, Government of India, seeking the empowerment of adolescent girls in the country. The scheme envisages advancing the nutritional, health and development status of adolescent girls through promoting awareness of health, hygiene, nutrition and family care, imparting awareness on life skills and helping them to understand the society better so as to contribute their best towards the society's development.

In the year 2008-09, the Kerala government has redesigned the implementation of Kishori Shakti Yojana in the state so as to accommodate issues such as physical and psycho-social needs of adolescent school girls in it. In connection with the new scheme, the Directorate of Social Justice implemented school health clinic/counselling programmes under the aegis of ICDS project in 163 select schools where the number of girls is higher than their male counterparts. The service of a full time expert and a qualified lady counsellor is made mandatory for providing counselling/guidance support to adolescent school girls. Collaborating with other departments including that of Health, Education and Local self Governance, health check up and associated facilities are also provided.

### **5.3.10 Lifestyle Education and Awareness Programme**

The Lifestyle Education and Awareness Programme (LEAP) is a scheme under the Department of Health functioning via the National Health Mission started in the year 2011. It is a school based intervention programme with beneficiaries as adolescent to curb life style related health issues. It focuses on dealing with lifestyle issues like obesity, lack of physical exercises, everyday stress and unhealthy food habits of school going adolescents.

### **5.3.11 SABLA (Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls)**

The Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (RGSEAG) also known as 'SABLA' is a centrally sponsored programme of the Government of India initiated on April 1, 2011 under the Central Ministry of Women and Child Development

SABLA aims at empowering adolescent girls by improving their health status by promoting awareness about health, hygiene, nutrition, reproductive and sexual health and family and child care. The scheme also targets the girls to upgrade home-based skills and life skills. The scheme, by integrating with the National Skill Development Program (NSDP), envisages at providing vocational skills and mainstreaming the out-of-school adolescent girls into formal/non formal education. The scheme also provides to impart

information/guidance about existing public services and utilities such as PHC, CHC, Post Office, Bank, Police Station etc. to its beneficiary group.

In addition, a integrated package of services is to be provided to adolescent girls including nutrition provision, Iron and Folic acid supplementation, Health check-up and referral services, nutrition & health education, counseling/guidance on family welfare, child care practices and home management, Life skill education and accessing public services.

### **5.3.12 Souhrida Clubs**

The institution of Souhrida clubs by the Department of Higher Secondary Education, in the year 2013, aims to improve the physical, academic, social and interpersonal skills of the adolescents and lead them towards a successful adulthood. Souhrida club assures a platform for the students to express their problems frankly. Privacy and transparency are the two key factors of Souhrida. The activity oriented objectives are- to enable self-development and to facilitate the empowerment of adolescents.

**Souhrida – Career Guidance / Adolescent Counseling Cell:** Adolescent counseling and Health Care Programme is a unique, novel and innovative programme conceived and launched by the Department of Higher Secondary Education. This programme is implemented in schools through Souhrida Clubs. A teacher who is selected as the co-ordinator of the club would be given training for conducting the activities of the club. Principals of the

schools would be directed not to change the trained coordinator without the prior permission of the Director. Activities of the club should be conducted with support and participation of all staff of the school. Two students from each class are selected as Class Convenors. One of the School Convenor should be male and the other should be female.

### **5.3.13 Thalir**

‘Thalir’ is a District Mental Health Program of the Department of Health Services in the year 2014. It focuses on addressing behavioural and emotional issues among children, especially to help them stay away from substance abuse, life threatening behaviors like deliberate self harm, suicide etc. It also deals with stress management, provision of life-skills education and management of childhood problems like learning disabilities, conduct disorder and delinquency.

### **5.3.14 Clean Campus, Safe Campus**

The Department of Health and Department of Home Affairs together have launched the ‘Clean Campus, Safe Campus’ programme recently in the year 2014. It is a widespread campaign aimed at arresting the rising prevalence of substance abuse and other inappropriate social behaviour among students. The target group of this programme is students up to standard 12.



### **5.3.15 Dial a Doctor**

The Kerala health department launched 'Dial a Doctor' programme in the year 2014 which enables the school students to seek health related advice over phone round- the-clock from doctors, by dialing a toll-free number 1056. 74 doctors from various specialties and ten psychologists will be available on a given day to answer queries. Special attention is given to answer calls from children dealing with exam-related stress.

### **5.3.16 Nirbhaya**

The Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India has initiated the coveted Nirbhaya Project in the year 2014 to lay siege to gender based violence in the country. The project focuses on a three point agenda- prevention, prosecution and protection. In prevention, the intervention aims at sensitizing the society, empowering vulnerable groups, targeting contributive factors such as alcoholism, gender discrimination and consumerism. In prosecution, the targeted intervention is on ensuring stringent enforcement of laws for ensuring rigorous punishment to the perpetrators. The scheme also aims at providing proper rehabilitation facilities for the survivors of gender based violence.

As part of the Protection, five rehabilitation centres set up at different places of the state which provides services for education and employment to the victims. The government also provided a particular budget provision for the implementation of the policy recommendations of Nirbhaya. Jagratha

Samithis, under the Kerala Women's Commission, at panchayat/local self government level is the core committees for implementing the Nirbhaya programme. In addition, there are district Nirbhaya committees and a state level coordination committee which is closely reviewing the status of the programme and monitor the functioning of local bodies, departments and institutions. At travel points like rail way stations, bus stand and airports an anti-trafficking squad established with contact centres. Toll-free helpline numbers and help booths under the jurisdiction of each police station assist the victims in getting immediate help and the squad protects the victim from media exposure. Also, it ensures the victim gets access to immediate trauma care, medical care and protection within the minimum possible time.

### **5.3.17 National Career Service Scheme**

The Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India launched the National Career Service Scheme on 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2015. The objective of the programme is to facilitate the job seekers to obtain appropriate jobs they deserve. The key factors of NCS initiative revolve around the reinforcement of the existing employment exchange ecosystem with an ICT enabled platform and reaching out to general public through multiple delivery channels and partnerships with existing job market players.

### **5.3.18 Sukanya Samridhi Yojana**

The popular savings scheme for the benefit of the girl children called Sukanya Samiridhi Yojana was launched in January 2015 as a part of the Beti

Bachao, Beti Padhao (Save the girl child, Teach the girl child) campaign of the Government of India. The scheme currently provides an interest rate of 8.3% and tax benefits on savings. The account of the beneficiaries can be opened at any of the post offices in India or in the branches of authorized commercial banks.

The savings scheme is targeted at the parents of the girl children. The scheme encourages parents to build a fund for the future education, career building and marriage expenses of their female child. The scheme also ensures the minimum legal age at marriage of the girl children.

### **5.3.19 Ujjwala**

Ujjwala is the name given to the Comprehensive Scheme for Prevention of Trafficking, Rescue, Rehabilitation and Re-Integration of Victims of Trafficking for Commercial Sexual Exploitation. The Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India initiated the programme in 2016.

The objective of the scheme is to curb the social menace of trafficking of women and children for commercial sexual exploitation. The interventions under the scheme include social mobilization with the participation of local communities, awareness generation programmes, generation of public discourse through workshops/seminars or coordination of any other innovative activity so as to facilitate the rescue of victims from the place of their exploitation and rehabilitation in safe custody.

### **5.3.20 REACH**

Resource Enhancement Academy for Career Heights is a finishing school initiative of the Kerala State Women's Development Corporation, launched on 29<sup>th</sup> December 2009, aimed at empowering women with the required life-skills to ensure success in life. It is a professional grooming academy which works towards the social, economic and educational advancement of women, from across all cross sections of society.

REACH instils the right attitude, skills and knowledge in the young and aspiring girls and women and equip them to cope with strict discipline to meet life situations and challenges with ease. It offers professional grooming to fine tune the attitudes and skills of career oriented women, boosting up their self-confidence and perseverance. It has a 90 % track record in ensuring placement to its beneficiaries and thereby serves to empower girls economically.

### **5.4 CONCLUSION**

Overall, the programs reviewed here indicate that the government has implemented various policies and programmes for the empowerment of adolescent girls. Programmes like Sabla, Nirbhaya and Ujjwala are guaranteeing safety and security of women and children. Through these innovative schemes, the government aims at making the nation women friendly where women can safely travel at midnight too. The Nirbhaya

scheme provides various services including rehabilitation centres to help the victim heal, recover and reintegrate back into the society. On one side the prospects for development of adolescent girls are amounting while on the other side new forms of challenges spring up each day.

It is found that different counseling programmes implemented for school going adolescent girls, with the help of multiple agencies from different funding streams, are doing the same and overlapping work, without any cross consultations and evaluation. Very often minimally trained personnel are delivering the counselling in most of the programs. Hence attention is required to ensure the quality of the counselling services. Still, there are various lacunae, like lack of strictness in stated objectives of the existing programs, manpower-related issues, lack of evaluation of program processes and outcome, etc. Hence there should be proper monitoring and evaluation of the various schemes to improve the effectiveness of the programmes. The existing lack of coordination between programs also needs to be addressed immediately. Above all there is the need for gender sensitive counselling at schools which is lacking at present.

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**CHAPTER 6**  
**SUMMARY, FINDINGS**  
**AND**  
**SUGGESTIONS**

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## **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents an overview of the entire research process and the findings from the study. This chapter also contains conclusions based on findings, implications and suggestions for further research in the area.

## **6.2 RESTATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The present study is entitled as the “Empowerment of Adolescent Girls: Challenges and Prospects”.

## **6.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The study has been designed to attain the following objectives:

1. To assess the self esteem of adolescent girls
2. To analyze the challenges faced by adolescent girls in the present society.
3. To assess the gender role perception of adolescent girls
4. To study the response patterns adopted by adolescent girls to combat the challenges.
5. To compile the existing programmes and policies at the state and national levels related to the development of adolescent girls.

## **6.4 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

The following hypotheses were formulated to realize the objectives of the present study:

1. Adolescent girls will be having a low level of self esteem.
2. There will be significant difference in the self esteem of adolescent girls belonging to the different classificatory variables.
3. Adolescent girls will be having inappropriate gender role perceptions.
4. There will be significant difference in the gender role perception of adolescent girls belonging to the various classificatory variables.
5. Adolescent girls will be facing several challenges which they fail to combat effectively.

## **6.5 METHODOLOGY**

The present study was aimed to assess the self esteem and gender role perception of adolescent girls and analyse the major challenges and response patterns adopted by them. Survey method using triangulation was employed to attain the objectives of the study.

### **Sample**

The present study was conducted on a sample of 600 girl students from 15 schools of Malappuram district at plus one level. Due representation was given to religion of students and to the type of management and locality of schools where they study.

### **Tools**

The following tools were used for data collection in the present study:



1. Self esteem inventory (Battle, 2000) with modifications.
2. Inventory on challenges faced by adolescent girls developed by the investigator.
3. Inventory on gender role perception (Kuruvilla,2011)
4. Inventory on response patterns adopted by adolescent girls which was developed by the investigator.

### **Analysis**

Both qualitative and quantitative analyses were used for the conduct of the study. Quantitative analysis of data was done by using the following statistical techniques:

Percentage analysis, test of significance of mean difference and chi-square test.

### **6.6 MAJOR FINDINGS**

Major findings of the study are:

1. In all the three religious groups studied, majority of adolescent girls belonged to the category of average self esteem.
2. There exists significant difference in the self esteem of adolescent girls belonging to the different classificatory variables.

- a) Adolescent girls belonging to Christian community have significantly higher self esteem than the other two religious groups.
  - b) Adolescent girls belonging to Christian community have the highest and those in Hindu community have the lowest self esteem.
  - c) There is a significant association between religion and self esteem of adolescent girls.
  - d) Locality of the school does not have any influence on the self esteem of adolescent girls.
  - e) Type of school management has a significant influence on the self esteem of adolescent girls with those from government schools having a higher self esteem when compared those from aided and unaided schools.
3. More than 50% of adolescent girls are not having progressive gender role perceptions.
4. There is a significant difference in the gender role perception of adolescent girls belonging to the classificatory variables studied.

- a) Girls belonging to Christian community have progressive while those belonging to Muslim have traditional perceptions about women's roles in the society.
  - b) There is a strong association between gender role perception and religious affiliation of adolescent girls.
  - c) Locality of the school does not have any influence on the gender role perception of adolescent girls.
  - d) Type of school management has an influence on the gender role perception of adolescent girls with those from government schools having more progressive gender role perceptions than their counterparts in aided and unaided schools.
5. Adolescent girls face several challenges related to gender discrimination and gender role perception, conflict of emotion, safety issues, lack of role models, peer pressure, confusions regarding interpersonal relationship, inability to accept bodily changes, menstrual hygiene and reproductive health, curiosities regarding sex and sexuality, choice of career and usage of ICT.
6. Adolescent girls adopt varying types of response patterns ranging from ignoring the issue/suffering in silence to physically react to the offender and complaining to the police to combat the challenges they

face in daily life. Those related to facing harassment from a neighbour/teacher and curiosities regarding sexuality are effective enough while those related to usage of ICT like calling back an anonymous missed call are not effective enough to combat the challenge involved. In matters related to gender role perception adolescent girls are extremely puzzled and feel helpless not knowing what to do and whom to ask.

## **6.7 IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS TO FOSTER EMPOWERMENT OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS**

India has one of the fastest growing youth populations in the world; its gender disparities pose significant barriers for the future of girls. Gender-related challenges such as restrictions on mobility, lack of schooling or dropping out of school, early marriage and violence persist in creating unfair disadvantages for girls within this large group of adolescents in India.

Findings of the present study reveal that, majority of the sample of adolescent girls have average level of self-esteem. Personal fulfillment and effective functioning of a person in society is dependent on having or not having favourable levels of self esteem. Decline in the self esteem of adolescent girls often obstruct their flourishing entry in to the adult stage. Having a low self esteem poses several threats for girls especially those

growing up in a patriarchal society. For this reason, girls warrant particular attention during the period of adolescence.

The study highlights that adolescent girls possess inappropriate gender role perceptions. The Indian society is undergoing a rapid metamorphosis especially in matters related to gender roles. More and more girls are getting enrolled for higher education and employment and that too in non-conventional courses and jobs. While this happens on one side, there is stiff resistance from several corners to the new gender roles taken up by girls and women. Correct gender role perception is essential for making proper choices regarding one's life goals, courses and careers. The shaping of gender role perception is largely dependent upon the type of socialisation that one receives from the various agencies (Kuruville & Nisha, 2015).

The present study highlights the challenges faced by adolescent girls in the Indian context, specifically in the Kerala society during the era of globalization. On one side the prospects for development of adolescent girls are amounting while on the other side new forms of challenges spring up each day. Violence and fear of violence was the most significant challenge faced by almost all the sample. They are not aware of using technologies properly and adopting online safety strategies.

In this context, the implications of the present study are multi dimensional. It calls for changes and gender positive initiatives at different

levels from various socialization agencies and the state. The major implications and suggestions for facilitating the well being and empowerment of adolescent girls are presented below:

### **Role of Parents and the Family**

The gender discrimination experienced at the family is highlighted by the findings of the study. The age old notions of parenting and socialization need to be changed as per the changing needs and challenges.

- Adopt gender neutral parenting and eliminate discriminatory socialisation practices and social evils like son preference, dowry system, domestic violence and other discriminations from the family sphere and the society.
- The do's and don'ts put forth by parents must be made equally applicable for their boy and girl children. Then only the children learn the lessons of gender equality from the home front.
- The need for respecting the individuality of girls must be taught to boys from the very early days.
- The attitude of parents towards higher education of girls is still not so favourable and hence investment in girls' higher education needs to be promoted at par with that of boys.

- The reasons why adolescent girls feel inferior and unworthy is rooted in the patriarchal notions and restrictions imposed on girls. Since the family acceptance would foster the feeling of self worth in girls, parents and other family members must accept and treat girl children as assets and not as burdens.

### **Role of School and School Authorities**

- The study highlighted the influence of type of school management on self esteem of girls. Therefore, school authorities and teachers need to develop and implement positive approaches and initiatives to foster the self worth and self esteem of adolescent girls.
- Teachers should provide equal choices to adolescent girls on mobility, express opinion and taking leadership role to enhance their self esteem.
- School authorities should avoid the gender discriminatory practices like assigning specific dress codes to girls and lady teachers, separate timings and gates for boys and girls to enter and exit school etc.
- Sensitization of girls and boys to gender issues during adolescence is essential as only then would they know the importance of working together to achieve a healthy relationship.
- Gender sensitised counsellors who are well aware of the consequences of discriminatory practices on adolescent self esteem and well being

must be recruited in every school so as to provide gender sensitive counselling to the adolescents and foster proper self esteem and confidence in girls to face the challenges of the society.

- To conduct adolescence education classes effectively in a gender friendly manner, training must be given to teachers and other concerned team. Proper clarification of the doubts of youngsters is more important than the peripheral adolescence education classes. Youngsters often have a reluctance to ask their doubts out of shyness and fear of peer ridicule. The stigma and secrecy surrounding sexuality in the Indian society add up to this reluctance. Based on the experiences from the present study, the investigator strongly recommends the use of ‘Curiosity Box’ in such sessions wherein the adolescents feel very free and open in raising their doubts and apprehensions.
- Under the auspices of the PTA, awareness classes are to be provided for parents to gender sensitise them on the need for treating and upbringing boys and girls alike.

### **Curricular Interventions**

- Appropriate components on proper body image, sex and sexuality, menstrual hygiene and reproductive health, respect for opposite sex,



trafficking and sex rackets, cyber-crimes – mobiles, internet and pornography, legal provisions and rights of girls, stress management etc. must be included in the school and college textbooks.

- Programmes in the form of talks, awareness classes, discussions, field works, film shows, debates etc. may be conducted in schools and colleges to generate gender awareness among the youngsters.
- Career guidance must be made compulsory component of the higher secondary school curriculum so that the youngsters get an opportunity for informed choice of the right career and enter into the right stream of higher education.
- Mobile literacy must be provided to adolescents, as how to use it judiciously instead of stressing the ban of mobile phones and provide awareness regarding cybercrimes and cyber laws to prevent the trapping of youngsters in the networking sites.

### **Role of Religions and Religious Leaders**

In the context of India, especially that of Kerala, religious attachment has increased in recent days and the operation of religious beliefs in private and public spheres is quite evident. Despite the hundred percent literacy, higher educational standards and higher political consciousness of the people, evidence of an increasingly active religious role in political debate on issues

such as dress code, marriage rituals, abortion and homosexuality is apparent in the Kerala context also. Cultural and religious customs reinforce traditional gender roles, especially those regarding women's responsibilities in the home and family.

The study has revealed the strong association of religion with self esteem and gender role perception of adolescent girls. Hence religious leaders and preachers have a major role to play in sensitizing their members towards gender equality.

Realising the need for progressive gender role perceptions and appropriate self esteem in the modern society, religions must take up a proactive role to break the gender stereotypism and support the new roles of women in the society.

### **Role of Media**

Media plays the most significant role in shaping the perceptions and ideologies of adolescents. Media acts as a stronger instrument for creating gender biased notions and stereotypic images among adolescent girls. Representation of girls/women in media has always been derogatory and exploitative. Also girls are negatively affected by the constant exposure to models that fulfill the unrealistic media ideal of beauty. In this context,

- Media should depict women in more and more diverse roles
- Avoid portraying gender stereotypes

## **Role of Government**

The present study has revealed that lack of safety and fear of being subject to violence pose the most important threat and challenge to adolescent girls. This fear controls the mobility and aspirations of young girls and the public discourses should address the impact of these fears on the wellbeing of girls. In this context, the state should:

- Ensure strict enforcement of legal provisions for protecting the rights and safety of girls and women.
- Promote and allocate budgetary provisions for programmes that develop awareness in girls and women about the legal provisions for protecting their rights and safety.
- Every effort to change the sexist mind of society as a whole is needed to curtail the rising atrocities against women. More of gender sensitisation programmes are required for all officers in all government entities to understand the dignity of women and the need for gender justice.
- The need of periodic health checkups for adolescents, especially girls who face discrimination even in their nutritional intakes should be met by the government and it is recommended that these provisions can be a part of the school health programmes.

## **6.8 FURTHER RESEARCH**

The findings of the present study motivate the investigator to suggest the following areas for further research:

- Class, caste dimensions of challenges faced by adolescent girls may also be explored.
- Studies to explore different governmental and non-governmental programmes to address the challenges of girls in the present situation.
- Studies to find out attitude of parents and teachers towards progressive gender role perceptions in the modern society.
- The present study is confined only to Malappuram district of Kerala for practical reasons. The study should be replicated in other districts of Kerala.
- A comparison of self esteem of adolescent boys and girls can be carried out.
- The role of religious institutions in shaping the self esteem and gender role perceptions of boys and girls may be explored in detail.
- Attitudes of higher secondary school teachers towards self esteem of adolescent girls may be studied.
- The gender sensitivity and gender role perception of teachers at all levels of the education system need to be explored.
- The role of school authorises in assigning distinct roles and responsibilities to boys and girls, and male and female teachers may be studied extensively.

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**APPENDIX I**  
**SELF ESTEEM INVENTORY**  
**ADAPTED VERSION**

**Dear Student,**

This inventory consists of 48 statements. After reading each statement carefully, please record your response by marking (✓) in the respective column. The responses will be strictly kept confidential and will be used for research purpose only. Hence, feel free and honest in marking your responses.

Yours faithfully,

Nisha.P  
 Research Scholar

**Personal Data Sheet**

Name : \_\_\_\_\_ Name of school: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Locale : Rural/Urban \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Management: Govt./Aided/Unaided \_\_\_\_\_  
 Religion : Hindu/Muslim/Christian \_\_\_\_\_

Sl. No.	Statements	Yes	No
1	Do you have only very few friends? നിങ്ങളുടെ സ്നേഹിതരുടെ എണ്ണം വളരെ കുറവാണ്?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Are you happy most of the time? നിങ്ങൾ എപ്പോഴും ഉല്ലാസവാൻ/ഉല്ലാസവതി ആണോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Are you comfortable to discuss your parents about your problems? നിങ്ങളുടെ പ്രശ്നങ്ങൾ നിങ്ങളുടെ അച്ഛനമ്മമാരോട് സൗകര്യമായി പറയാൻ കഴിയുമോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Can you do things as well as others? മറ്റുള്ളവർക്ക് ചെയ്യാൻ കഴിയുന്നതുപോലെ കാര്യങ്ങൾ നന്നായി ചെയ്യാൻ നിങ്ങൾക്കും കഴിയുന്നുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Do most people like you? മിക്കവാറും എല്ലാ പേർക്കും നിങ്ങളെ ഇഷ്ടം ആണോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Do you often feel like quitting school? സ്കൂൾ പഠനം ഉപേക്ഷിക്കുവാൻ പലപ്പോഴും തോന്നുന്നുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Are you as intelligent as most people? മറ്റു പലരേയും പോലെ നിങ്ങൾക്ക് ബുദ്ധിസാമർത്ഥ്യം ഉണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Do you argue often with your family? നിങ്ങൾ കുടുംബാംഗങ്ങളുമായി വാദപ്രതിവാദം നടത്തുന്നുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sl. No.	Statements	Yes	No
9	Do you feel you are as important as most people? മറ്റു പലരേയും പോലെ നിങ്ങളും ഒരു പ്രധാനവ്യക്തിയാണെന്ന് തോന്നാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Are you easily depressed? നിങ്ങൾ വളരെ എളുപ്പത്തിൽ നിരാശരാകാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Are you satisfied with your school work? നിങ്ങളുടെ സ്കൂൾപഠനപ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളിൽ നിങ്ങൾക്ക് സംതൃപ്തിയുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Do you feel like you have enough freedom at home? നിങ്ങൾക്ക് ആവശ്യമുള്ളത്ര സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യം വീട്ടിൽനിന്ന് ലഭിക്കുന്നുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Do you always tell the truth? നിങ്ങൾ എല്ലായ്പ്പോഴും സത്യം പറയാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Do you have a good relationship with your mother? നിങ്ങളുടെ അമ്മയുമായി നിങ്ങൾക്ക് നല്ല സൗഹൃദബന്ധം ഉണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	Are you usually tensed or anxious? നിങ്ങൾക്ക് പതിവായി ഉത്കണ്ഠയോ, മനസ്സിനു പിരിമുറുക്കമോ അനുഭവപ്പെടാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	Are you as strong and healthy as most people are? മറ്റു പലരേയും പോലെ നിങ്ങൾക്ക് കരുത്തും ആരോഗ്യവും ഉണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	Do you enjoy learning? പഠനം നിങ്ങൾക്ക് ആനന്ദപ്രദമായകം ആകാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	Do you have a good relationship with your father? നിങ്ങളുടെ പിതാവുമായുള്ള നിങ്ങളുടെ ബന്ധം സൗഹൃദപ്രദമാണോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	Is it difficult for you to express your views and feelings? നിങ്ങളുടെ അഭിപ്രായവും വികാരവും പ്രകടിപ്പിക്കുവാൻ നിങ്ങൾക്ക് ബുദ്ധിമുട്ടുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	Do you often feel ashamed of yourself? നിങ്ങളെപ്പറ്റി പലപ്പോഴും സ്വയം ലജ്ജ തോന്നാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21	Are you pretty good about doing homework on time? ഗൃഹപഠനം കൃത്യസമയത്തിനുള്ളിൽ ചെയ്തുതീർക്കാൻ നിങ്ങൾക്ക് മിടുക്കുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	Are you doing as well in school as you would like to do? നിങ്ങൾ ഉദ്ദേശിക്കുന്ന രീതിയിൽ സ്കൂളിലെ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ നിർവ്വഹിക്കാൻ നിങ്ങൾക്ക് സാധിക്കാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23	Are you ever shy? നിങ്ങൾ സദാ ലജ്ജാശീലൻ/ലജ്ജാശീല ആണോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sl. No.	Statements	Yes	No
24	Are you a failure? നിങ്ങൾ ഒരു പരാജയമാണെന്ന് തോന്നാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25	Are you popular with other people of your age? നിങ്ങളുടെ സതീർത്ഥ്യരുടെ ഇടയിൽ നിങ്ങൾ സുസമ്മതനായ വ്യക്തിയാണോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26	Is it hard for you to meet new people? പുതിയ ആളുകളെ പരിചയപ്പെടാൻ ബുദ്ധിമുട്ടുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27	Are you often upset about something? എന്തെന്ന് അറിയാത്ത ഒരു ഉത്കണ്ഠ പലപ്പോഴും നിങ്ങളെ അലട്ടാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28	Do not people respect your views? നിങ്ങളുടെ അഭിപ്രായങ്ങൾ മിക്കപേരും പരിഗണിക്കാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29	Are people your age smarter than you are? നിങ്ങളുടെ സമപ്രായക്കാർ നിങ്ങളെക്കാൾ കാര്യക്ഷമത ഉള്ളവരാണോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30	Are you uncomfortable in groups of people? ആൾക്കൂട്ടത്തിൽ നിങ്ങൾ പരുങ്ങാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31	Are you ever sad? നിങ്ങൾ എപ്പോഴും ദുഃഖിക്കാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32	Is it hard for you to find the energy to do things? കാര്യങ്ങൾ നടത്താനുള്ള ശക്തി ആർജ്ജിക്കാൻ നിങ്ങൾക്ക് ബുദ്ധിമുട്ട് അനുഭവപ്പെടാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33	Do you feel as though your friends have a lot of confidence in you? നിങ്ങളുടെ സുഹൃത്തുക്കൾക്ക് നിങ്ങളെ വലിയ വിശ്വാസമാണെന്ന് തോന്നാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34	Do you like your ideas? നിങ്ങളുടെ ആശയങ്ങൾ മറ്റുള്ളവർക്ക് ഇഷ്ടപ്പെടുന്നുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35	Do your parents say that you are a failure? നിങ്ങൾ ഒരു പരാജയമാണെന്ന് നിങ്ങളുടെ അച്ഛനമ്മമാർ പറയാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36	Is it hard for you to give yourself credit when you do a good job? നിങ്ങൾ ഒരു നല്ല കാര്യം ചെയ്താൽ സ്വയം അംഗീകരിക്കാൻ നിങ്ങൾക്ക് പ്രയാസമുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37	Do you have trouble talking to other people? മറ്റു ആളുകളോട് സംസാരിക്കുവാൻ നിങ്ങൾക്ക് ബുദ്ധിമുട്ടുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38	Do your parents love you? നിങ്ങളുടെ അച്ഛനമ്മമാർക്ക് നിങ്ങളെ ഇഷ്ടമാണോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Sl. No.	Statements	Yes	No
39	Do you find it hard to make up your mind and stick to it? സ്വയം തീരുമാനം എടുക്കാനും അതിൽ തന്നെ ഉറച്ചു നിൽക്കാനും നിങ്ങൾക്ക് ബുദ്ധിമുട്ട് ഉണ്ടാകാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40	Do you like yourself very much? നിങ്ങൾക്ക് നിങ്ങളെ തന്നെ തൃപ്തി ആണോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41	Do you have friends you can confide in? നിങ്ങൾക്ക് വിശ്വസ്തരായ സുഹൃത്തുക്കൾ ഉണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42	Do you feel as though your family trust you? നിങ്ങളുടെ കുടുംബത്തിന് നിങ്ങളിൽ വിശ്വാസം ഉണ്ടെന്ന് തോന്നാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43	As a girl do you feel that you are a burden to your family? ഒരു പെൺകുട്ടിയായതിനാൽ നിങ്ങളുടെ കുടുംബത്തിന് നിങ്ങൾ ഒരു ബാധ്യതയാണെന്നു തോന്നാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44	Have you ever felt your parents getting worried about your dowry? നിങ്ങൾക്കു സ്ത്രീധനം നൽകുന്നതിനെ ചൊല്ലി അച്ഛനമ്മമാർ വേവലാതിപ്പെടുന്നത് കണ്ടിട്ടുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45	Do you feel that it is better to be born as a boy? ഒരു ആൺകുട്ടിയായി ജനിച്ചിരുന്നെങ്കിൽ എന്തു തോന്നാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
46	Do you feel that women are destined to be subordinate to men? സ്ത്രീകൾ എന്നും പുരുഷന്മാരുടെ തണലിൽ ജീവിക്കാൻ വിധിക്കപ്പെട്ടവരാണെന്നു തോന്നാറുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
47	Do you agree with the notions that girls shouldn't speak aloud or walk faster? പെൺകുട്ടികൾ ഉറക്കെ സംസാരിക്കാനും വേഗത്തിൽ നടക്കാനും പാടില്ല എന്ന് നിങ്ങൾ കരുതുന്നുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
48	Do you agree with wife and mothering as goals of women's lives? സ്ത്രീ ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ ലക്ഷ്യം ഭാര്യയും അമ്മയുമാകുന്നതാണെന്നു അഭിപ്രായത്തോട് നിങ്ങൾ യോജിക്കുന്നുണ്ടോ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**APPENDIX II**  
**INVENTORY ON CHALLENGES FACED BY**  
**ADOLESCENT GIRLS**

Dear Student,

This inventory consists of 36 statements. After reading each statement carefully, please record your response by marking (✓) in the respective column. The responses will be strictly kept confidential and will be used for research purpose only. Hence, feel free and honest in giving responses.

Yours faithfully,

Nisha.P  
 Research Scholar

**Personal Data Sheet**

Name : \_\_\_\_\_ Name of school: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Locale : Rural/Urban \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Management: Govt./Aided/Unaided \_\_\_\_\_  
 Religion : Hindu/Muslim/Christian \_\_\_\_\_

Sl. No.	Statement	Yes	No
1.	While going out I am scared of being attacked by anti-social elements പുറത്തുപോകുമ്പോൾ ഏതെങ്കിലും തരത്തിലുള്ള ആക്രമണത്തിന് വിധേയമാകുമോ എന്ന് ഞാൻ ഭയപ്പെടുന്നു.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	I am disturbed by staring and peeping eyes on the road and public places റോഡിലും മറ്റു പൊതുസ്ഥലങ്ങളിലും നിന്നുള്ള അശ്ലീലനോട്ടവും സംസാരവും എന്നെ അലോസരപ്പെടുത്തുന്നു.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	I don't know what to do and whom to approach in case of safety issues ഏതെങ്കിലും തരത്തിലുള്ള സുരക്ഷാപ്രശ്നങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടായാൽ ആരെ സമീപിക്കണമെന്നോ എന്തുചെയ്യണമെന്നോ അറിയില്ല	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	I am scared of white discharge വെള്ളപ്പോക്ക് എന്നെ ഭയപ്പെടുത്താറുണ്ട്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	I am confused about the right age of getting married and right age of becoming pregnant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sl. No.	Statement	Yes	No
	വിവാഹിതയാവാനും ഗർഭം ധരിക്കാനുമുള്ള ശരിയായ പ്രായം ഏതെന്നതിനെക്കുറിച്ച് എനിക്ക് സംശയമുണ്ട്.		
6.	I am doubtful whether the use of sanitary pad and wearing jeans lead to infertility ജീൻസ് ധരിക്കുന്നതും സാനിറ്ററി പാഡിന്റെ ഉപയോഗവും വന്ധ്യതയ്ക്ക് കാരണമാകുമോ എന്ന് ഞാൻ സംശയിക്കുന്നു.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	I often feel that my mobility and freedom of opinion are restricted because I am a girl പെൺകുട്ടിയായതിനാൽ എന്റെ സഞ്ചാരസ്വാതന്ത്ര്യവും അഭിപ്രായസ്വാതന്ത്ര്യവും പലപ്പോഴും നിയന്ത്രിക്കപ്പെടുന്നതായി തോന്നാറുണ്ട്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	I want to be treated the same as my brothers with regard to mobile and internet usage. മൊബൈലും ഇന്റർനെറ്റും ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്നതിൽ സഹോദരന്മാർക്കു തുല്യമായ സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യം ലഭിക്കാൻ ഞാനാഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നു.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	I often think that if I were a boy, I could run around and play on my courtyard and school ground ഒരാൺകുട്ടിയായിരുന്നെങ്കിൽ എനിക്ക് വീട്ടുമുറ്റത്തും സ്കൂൾ ഗ്രൗണ്ടിലും ഇഷ്ടംപോലെ ഓടിക്കളിക്കാമായിരുന്നു	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	I am curious to know more about intercourse and sexuality ലൈംഗികബന്ധത്തെക്കുറിച്ചും ലൈംഗികതയെക്കുറിച്ചും കൂടുതലായി അറിയാൻ എനിക്ക് ആകാംക്ഷയുണ്ട്	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	I cannot justify premarital and extramarital sex relations വിവാഹപൂർവ്വവും വിവാഹബാഹ്യവുമായ ലൈംഗികബന്ധങ്ങളെ എനിക്ക് ന്യായീകരിക്കാൻ കഴിയില്ല.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	I am not sure whether masturbation is a sin or not സ്വയംഭോഗം ഒരു പാപമാണോ അല്ലയോ എന്നറിയില്ല	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	I am confused with the notion that women must finish domestic chores before going out for work ജോലിക്ക് പോകുന്നതിനുമുമ്പ് സ്ത്രീകൾ വീട്ടുജോലികൾ പൂർത്തിയാക്കണമെന്നു പറയുന്നതിനോട് എനിക്ക് യോജിക്കാൻ ബുദ്ധിമുട്ടാണ്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	Cleaning and cooking should not be considered as responsibilities of women only വൃത്തിയാക്കലും പാചകവും സ്ത്രീകളുടെ മാത്രം ഉത്തരവാദിത്വമായി കണക്കാക്കപ്പെടേണ്ടവയല്ല.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	I doubt whether employed women will be able to take care of their children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sl. No.	Statement	Yes	No
	ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥയായ സ്ത്രീക്ക് കുട്ടികളെ പരിപാലിക്കാൻ സമയം ലഭിക്കുമോ എന്ന് ഞാൻ സംശയിക്കുന്നു		
16.	I am easily irritated and often get angry എനിക്കു പെട്ടെന്നു ദേഷ്യവും സങ്കടവും വരാറുണ്ട്	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	I feel depressed and lonely at home വീട്ടിലായിരിക്കുമ്പോൾ എനിക്ക് ഏകാന്തതയും വിഷാദവും അനുഭവപ്പെടുന്നു.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.	I feel inferior in being a girl പെൺകുട്ടിയായി ജനിച്ചതിൽ എനിക്ക് അപകർഷതാബോധമുണ്ട്	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.	I am scared of being cheated in the social networking sites സോഷ്യൽ നെറ്റ് വർക്കിംഗ് സൈറ്റുകളിലെ ചതിക്കുഴികളെ എനിക്ക് ഭയമാണ്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20.	I would like to watch TV as long as possible ഇഷ്ടമുള്ളത്രയും സമയം ടി.വി കാണാൻ എനിക്കാഗ്രഹമുണ്ട്	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21.	My parents scold me for my lengthy chat over mobile phone കൂടുതൽ സമയം ഫോണിൽ സംസാരിക്കുന്നതിന് അച്ഛനമ്മമാർ എന്നെ വഴക്കുപറയാറുണ്ട്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22.	I am confused as how to maintain good relationship with opposite sex ആൺകുട്ടികളുമായി നല്ല ബന്ധം പുലർത്തേണ്ടതെങ്ങനെയെന്ന് എനിക്കറിയില്ല.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23.	I believe there is nothing wrong in having healthy relation with boys ആൺകുട്ടികളുമായി ആരോഗ്യകരമായ ബന്ധം തെറ്റല്ലെന്ന് ഞാൻ കരുതുന്നു.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24.	I am not sure whether adolescent love affairs are to be discouraged or not കൗമാരപ്രണയത്തെ നിരുത്സാഹപ്പെടുത്തണോ വേണ്ടയോ എന്നതിനെപ്പറ്റി എനിക്ക് തീർച്ചയില്ല.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25.	Even when my friends do something wrong, I have to support them എന്റെ സുഹൃത്തുക്കൾ ചെയ്യുന്ന കുസൃതികൾ തെറ്റാണെന്നു തോന്നിയാലും ഞാനവരെ പിന്തുണക്കാറുണ്ട്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26.	I find it difficult to resist my friends when they compel me to have romantic affairs പ്രണയബന്ധത്തിലേർപ്പെടാനുള്ള സുഹൃത്തുക്കളുടെ നിർബന്ധത്തെ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sl. No.	Statement	Yes	No
	നിരസിക്കാൻ ബുദ്ധിമുട്ടാണ്.		
27.	I am worried for not having mobile phone like my friends എന്റെ കൂട്ടുകാരുടേതുപോലെ സ്വന്തമായി ഒരു മൊബൈൽ ഫോൺ ഇല്ലാത്തതിൽ എനിക്ക് സങ്കടം തോന്നാറുണ്ട്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28.	I am embarrassed at my rapid bodily changes പെട്ടെന്നുണ്ടായ ശാരീരികമാറ്റങ്ങൾ എന്നിൽ അസ്വസ്ഥതയുളവാക്കാറുണ്ട്	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29.	I feel that I am not attractive എന്നെ കാണാൻ ഭംഗിപോരാ എന്നെനിക്കു തോന്നാറുണ്ട്	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30.	I get much irritated by the monthly periods മാസമൂറ എന്നിൽ അസ്വസ്ഥതയുളവാക്കുന്നു	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31.	I am easily carried away by models in the limelight ദൃശ്യമാധ്യമങ്ങളിലെ സ്ത്രീകളെ അനുകരിക്കാൻ എനിക്ക് ഏറെ താല്പര്യമാണ്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32.	I am utterly confused as how to choose an appropriate career അനുയോജ്യമായ ജോലി തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കേണ്ടതെങ്ങനെയെന്ന് എനിക്ക് അറിയില്ല.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33.	My parents and I have different interest regarding choice of carrier ജോലിയുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട് എനിക്കും രക്ഷിതാക്കൾക്കും വ്യത്യസ്ത താൽപര്യങ്ങളാണുള്ളത്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34.	Dowry and marriage expenses are hurdles to higher education of girls സ്ത്രീധനവും വിവാഹ ചെലവുകളും പെൺകുട്ടികളുടെ ഉന്നതപഠനത്തിന് തടസ്സമാണ്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35.	My parents are of the opinion that it will be difficult to get bridegroom for educated girls കൂടുതൽ വിദ്യാഭ്യാസം നേടിയാൽ അനുയോജ്യനായ വരനെ കിട്ടുകയില്ലെന്നാണ് രക്ഷിതാക്കളുടെ അഭിപ്രായം	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36.	I doubt whether my parents would support my aspirations for professional education എന്റെ പ്രൊഫഷണൽ വിദ്യാഭ്യാസ താൽപര്യങ്ങളെ രക്ഷിതാക്കൾ പിന്തുണക്കുമോ എന്ന കാര്യത്തിൽ എനിക്ക് സംശയമുണ്ട്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**APPENDIX III**  
**INVENTORY ON GENDER ROLE PERCEPTION**  
**ADAPTED VERSION**

Dear Student,

This inventory consists of 20 statements. After reading each statement carefully, please record your response by marking (✓) in the respective column. The responses will be strictly kept confidential and will be used for research purpose only. Hence, feel free and honest in marking your responses.

Yours faithfully,

Nisha.P  
 Research Scholar

**Personal Data Sheet**

Name : \_\_\_\_\_ Name of school: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Locale : Rural/Urban \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Management: Govt./Aided/Unaided \_\_\_\_\_  
 Religion : Hindu/Muslim/Christian \_\_\_\_\_

Sl. No.	Statements	Yes	No
1	Girls and boys need equal education പെൺകുട്ടികൾക്കും ആൺകുട്ടികൾക്കും തുല്യ വിദ്യാഭ്യാസമാണ് നൽകേണ്ടത്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Both need to be given equal amount of food ഇരുകൂട്ടർക്കും ഒരപോലെയുള്ള ഭക്ഷണമാണ് കൊടുക്കേണ്ടത്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Both need to be given equal health care and medical attention അസുഖം വരുമ്പോൾ ഇരുകൂട്ടർക്കും ഒരേ രീതിയിലുള്ള ശുശ്രൂഷയാണ് നൽകേണ്ടത്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Both can be assigned the same duties and responsibilities ഇരുകൂട്ടരേയും ഒരേ രീതിയിലുള്ള ഉത്തരവാദിത്വങ്ങൾ ഏൽപ്പിക്കാൻ കഴിയും.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Both should be given same freedom ഇരുകൂട്ടർക്കും തുല്യ സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യം നൽകേണ്ടതാണ്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Both should be given equal time to play.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sl. No.	Statements	Yes	No
	ഇരുകൂട്ടർക്കും കളിക്കാൻ തുല്യ സമയം നൽകേണ്ടതുണ്ട്		
7	Both can perform all tasks equally well ഇരുകൂട്ടർക്കും എല്ലാ ജോലികളും ഒരേപോലെ ചെയ്യാൻ കഴിയും	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Both can have similar occupation ഇരുകൂട്ടർക്കും തുല്യ ഉദ്യോഗങ്ങളിൽ ഏർപ്പെടാം.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Men and women should be paid equal wages for equal work പുരുഷനും സ്ത്രീക്കും ഒരേ ജോലിക്ക് തുല്യ പ്രതിഫലം നൽകണം.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Both have same intelligence and abilities ഇരുകൂട്ടർക്കും തുല്യ ബുദ്ധിശക്തിയും കഴിവുകളുമാണുള്ളത്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Boys are good at technical skills whereas girls are good in homemaking skills ആൺകുട്ടികൾക്ക് സാങ്കേതിക കഴിവുകളും പെൺകുട്ടികൾക്ക് വീടു നോക്കാനുള്ള കഴിവുകളുമാണ് കൂടുതലായുള്ളത്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Household work must be shared by all members of the household വീട്ടുജോലികൾ വീട്ടിലെ എല്ലാ അംഗങ്ങളുടെയും കൂട്ടായ ഉത്തരവാദിത്വമാണ്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Women must get equal property rights as enjoyed by men. പുരുഷനെപ്പോലെ സ്ത്രീയും തുല്യ സ്വത്തവകാശത്തിന് അർഹയാണ്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Husband should respect wife in the same way he is respected by the wife. ഭാര്യ ഭർത്താവിനെ ബഹുമാനിക്കുന്നതുപോലെതന്നെ ഭർത്താവ് ഭാര്യയെയും ബഹുമാനിക്കണം	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	Wifehood and motherhood should be equated with husband hood and father hood ഭാര്യപദവിയും മാതൃത്വവും, ഭർത്തൃപദവികളും പിതൃത്വത്തിനും തുല്യമായി കാണണം.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	Women are equally good as men in decision making നിർണ്ണായക തീരുമാനങ്ങളെടുക്കാൻ പുരുഷനെപ്പോലെതന്നെ സ്ത്രീക്കും കഴിവുണ്ട്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	Political leadership should be equally shared by men and women രാഷ്ട്രീയ നേതൃത്വത്തിൽ പുരുഷനും സ്ത്രീക്കും തുല്യപങ്കാളിത്തം അനിവാര്യമാണ്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sl. No.	Statements	Yes	No
18	It is fair that men be breadwinners and women be housewives പുരുഷന്മാർ ജോലിക്കു പോകുന്നതും സ്ത്രീകൾ വീട്ടമ്മമാരായിരിക്കുന്നതുമാണ് നല്ലത്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	Economic independence are equally necessary for boys and girls സാമ്പത്തികസ്വാതന്ത്ര്യവും ആൺകുട്ടികൾക്കും പെൺകുട്ടികൾക്കും ഒരപേക്ഷിതമാണ്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	Husband and wife should take all decisions jointly സുപ്രധാന തീരുമാനങ്ങൾ ഭാര്യയും ഭർത്താവും ഒരുമിച്ച് ആലോചിച്ച് എടുക്കേണ്ടതാണ്.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## APPENDIX IV

### INVENTORY ON RESPONSE PATTERNS OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS

Dear student,

This questionnaire consists of 24 questions. After reading each question carefully. Please write down your responses briefly in the space provided below each question. The response will be strictly kept confidential and will be used for research purpose only. Hence, feel free and honest in giving responses.

Yours faithfully,

Nisha.P  
Research Scholar

### PERSONAL DATA SHEET

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Locale: Rural/Urban \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Management:Govt/Aided/Unaided  
Religion: Muslim/Hindu/Christian \_\_\_\_\_  
Questionnaire

1. If someone makes comments on your looks and body what will be your reaction?

ആരെങ്കിലും നിങ്ങളുടെ ശരീരത്തെയോ രൂപത്തെയോ കുറിച്ച് അശ്ലീലമായി സംസാരിച്ചാൽ എങ്ങനെ പ്രതികരിക്കും?

2. One of your neighbours invites you to his home when he is alone. You have felt uncomfortable in his presence earlier. What will be your decision?

നിങ്ങളുടെ അയൽക്കാരൻ അയാൾ തനിച്ചായിരിക്കുമ്പോൾ അയാളുടെ വീട്ടിലേക്ക് ക്ഷണിക്കുന്നു. അയാളുടെ സാമീപ്യം മുൻപ് അരോചകമായി തോന്നിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. നിങ്ങൾ എന്തുചെയ്യും?

3. What will you do when someone tries to abuse while travelling in a bus?

നിങ്ങൾ ബസ്സിൽ സഞ്ചരിക്കുമ്പോൾ ആരെങ്കിലും നിങ്ങളെ ശല്യംചെയ്യാൻ ശ്രമിച്ചാൽ, നിങ്ങളെങ്ങനെ പ്രതികരിക്കും?

4. What will be your reaction if your teacher behaves in an indecent manner?

നിങ്ങളുടെ അധ്യാപകൻ മോശമായി പെരുമാറിയാൽ എങ്ങനെ പ്രതികരിക്കും?

5. During monthly periods, how many times do you change pad at school/at house

ആർത്തവസമയത്ത് നിങ്ങൾ എത്ര പ്രാവശ്യം പാഡ്/തുണി മാറ്റാറുണ്ട്-സ്കൂൾ/വീട്

6. Who is the most appropriate person to discuss issues related with menstruation?

ആർത്തവസംബന്ധിയായ പ്രശ്നങ്ങൾ കൂടുതലും നിങ്ങൾ ആരുമായാണ് പങ്കുവെക്കാറുള്ളത്?

7. How would you overcome the restraints relating to your freedom of mobility as well as your freedom of opinion?

നിങ്ങളുടെ സഞ്ചാരസ്വാതന്ത്ര്യത്തിനും അഭിപ്രായസ്വാതന്ത്ര്യത്തിനുമുള്ള വിലക്കുകളെ എങ്ങനെ മറികടക്കുന്നു?

8. How do you confront/face the restrictions related to the usage of mobile phones?

മൊബൈൽഫോൺ ഉപയോഗവുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട നിയന്ത്രണങ്ങളെ നിങ്ങളെങ്ങനെയാണ് അഭിമുഖീകരിക്കുന്നത്?

9. Whom do you discuss matters related to sexuality?

ലൈംഗികമായ കാര്യങ്ങളെപ്പറ്റിയുള്ള സംശയങ്ങൾ ആരുമായാണ് ചർച്ച ചെയ്യാറുള്ളത്?

10. How do you resolve doubts/queries relating to your gender roles?

ലിംഗപദവി റോളുകളുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട സംശയങ്ങൾ നിങ്ങളെങ്ങനെയാണ് ദൂരീകരിക്കാറുള്ളത്?

11. How do you do to reduce mental stress?

മാനസികപിരിമുറുക്കം കുറയ്ക്കാൻ നിങ്ങളെന്തൊക്കെയാണ് ചെയ്യാറുള്ളത്?

12. What will be your next reaction after arguing with your friends or family members?

വീട്ടുകാരോടോ കൂട്ടുകാരോടോ ദേഷ്യപ്പെട്ടു സംസാരിച്ചുകഴിഞ്ഞാൽ നിങ്ങളുടെ അടുത്ത പ്രതികരണം എന്തായിരിക്കും?

13. If you feel attracted towards a boy what will you do?

ഒരാൾക്കുട്ടിയോട് ഇഷ്ടം തോന്നിയാൽ നിങ്ങൾ എന്തുചെയ്യും?

14. How will you react when you get missed calls from an anonymous number?

അജ്ഞാതനമ്പരിൽ നിന്ന് നിങ്ങൾക്ക് ഒരു മിസ്ഡ് കോൾ ലഭിച്ചാൽ, എങ്ങനെ പ്രതികരിക്കും?

15. What will you do when your internet friend start flirting with you?

നിങ്ങളുടെ ഇന്റർനെറ്റ് സുഹൃത്തിന്റെ സമീപനത്തിൽ ലൈംഗികചുവയുണ്ടെന്ന് തോന്നിയാൽ നിങ്ങളെന്തു ചെയ്യും?

16. How do you resist your fascination/obsession to television shows/programmes?

ടി.വി. പ്രോഗ്രാമുകളോടുള്ള അമിതാകർഷണം നിങ്ങൾ ഒഴിവാക്കുന്നതെങ്ങനെ?

17. If your parents insists you not to have any friendship with boys what will you do?

ആൺകുട്ടികളുമായി സൗഹൃദം പാടില്ലെന്ന് നിങ്ങളുടെ രക്ഷിതാക്കൾ വിലക്കിയാൽ എങ്ങനെ പ്രതികരിക്കും?

18. How will you overcome the fascination to lead a luxurious life like that of your friends?

കുട്ടുകാരുടേതുപോലുള്ള ആഡംബരജീവിതം നിങ്ങളെ മോഹിപ്പിക്കാറുണ്ടോ? ഉണ്ടെങ്കിൽ അതിജീവിക്കുന്നതെങ്ങനെ?

19. If your friends force you to take drug, How will you react ?

മയക്കുമരുന്നുപയോഗിക്കാൻ സുഹൃത്തുക്കൾ നിങ്ങളിൽ സമ്മർദ്ദം ചെലുത്തിയാൽ എന്തു ചെയ്യും?

20. Your friends compel you to have love affairs with boys. What would you do?

പ്രേമബന്ധത്തിൽ പെടാൻ കുട്ടുകാർ നിങ്ങളെ നിർബന്ധിക്കുന്നു. എന്തു ചെയ്യും?

21. How did you cope up with the sudden physical changes in your body at the time of puberty?

കൗമാരകാലത്തെ പെട്ടെന്നുള്ള ശാരീരിക മാറ്റങ്ങൾ ഉൾക്കൊണ്ടതെങ്ങനെ?

22. You want to become a model and you get a chance, but your parents couldn't allow to go, what will be your response?

ഒരു മോഡൽ ആകുന്നതാണ് നിങ്ങളുടെ ആഗ്രഹം. അതിന് ഒരവസരം ലഭിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു. പക്ഷെ രക്ഷിതാക്കൾ അതിനനുവദിക്കുന്നില്ല. നിങ്ങളെങ്ങനെ പ്രതികരിക്കും.

23. If your parents insist you to get married without going for higher studies, what will be your response?

പഠനത്തിനു പോകാതെ വിവാഹം കഴിക്കാൻ മാതാപിതാക്കൾ പ്രേരിപ്പിച്ചാൽ എന്തുചെയ്യും

24. If you happen to witness a girl being abused (eve-teasing, physical abuse, misuse of mobile, sexual abuse etc), how will you react?

പെൺകുട്ടി ഏതെങ്കിലും തരത്തിലുള്ള ശല്യപ്പെടുത്തലിന് (പുറംഗലം, മൊബൈൽ ദുരുപയോഗം, ശാരീരികപീഡനം, ലൈംഗിക അതിക്രമം മുതലായവ) വിധേയയാകുന്നതായി കണ്ടാൽ നിങ്ങളെങ്ങനെ പ്രതികരിക്കും?