

# **AM I AN ADULT?**

## **VIEWS OF URBAN INDIAN YOUTH**

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## **CERTIFICATE**

In accordance with O.Ph.D.:8 this is to certify that the research title “Am I an Adult? Views of Urban Indian Youth” has been carried out independently by Ms. Priyanka Chopra under the guidance of Prof. Shagufa Kapadia, in partial fulfillment of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Human Development and Family Studies and is her original work and bonafide work. The contents presented herein have not been submitted for the award of any other Degree or Diploma. Further Ms. Chopra has fulfilled the requirements regarding her attendance contained in O.Ph.D.:3(i)

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*I owe this thesis to  
my parents ...  
for bringing me in this beautiful  
world and  
making me the person I am...and to  
my  
mentor...Shagufta ma'am*

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## ABSTRACT

Emerging adulthood is a stage which covers the gap between adolescence and adulthood. Researches have revealed that culture plays an important role in shaping the conceptions of emerging adulthood. Non-western cultures are inclined to place greater emphasis on practices that lead to an early transition to adulthood, thus there may be a shortened period of emerging adulthood or no emerging adulthood at all. India is a diverse country where 40% of total population constitutes youth. Presently, the Indian society is experiencing a flux of social change, and young persons are particularly vulnerable to the powerful global and western influences. Factors such as increasing access to higher education, increased age for marriage and enhanced career aspirations are bringing about changes in life goals. These social and economic changes along with strong cultural beliefs and practices will influence young people. With this scenario, variations in the criteria of adulthood are expected. The study focused on Indian college students' in the age range of 18-25 years from Delhi and Vadodara cities in the northern and western regions of India respectively to find out whether the phase of emerging adulthood exists in the present day Indian context and the perspectives of young people regarding adulthood. The study is conducted in two phases. Phase I employed a quantitative approach using a survey questionnaire which was administered to 600 college students. Phase II adopted a qualitative approach wherein interviews were conducted with 30 college students. In both phases, the participants were equally divided by city, age and gender. Results revealed that half of the participants felt that they have not achieved adulthood and are in-between. Family focused categories were given most importance for being adult, nevertheless self-focused categories along with norm compliance were also emphasised. Overall the study enhances the understanding of how "emerging adults" in urban Indian society interpret this phase of their lives and how this may be influenced by socio-cultural orientations.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The researcher felt ambiguous about her own self-adult status when she considered the subject of her research. At the time of the study, she was over 25 years in age but was not earning nor thinking of marriage, instead she was busy focusing on her doctoral research. The researcher belongs to an upper middle class family in India and her parents had received higher education. At the age of 18 years she left her parental home for further studies, which made her responsible for her well-being and for taking day-to-day decisions. Yet, she needed constant parental guidance, not only in her professional life, but also personal life. She was not ready to take up any social responsibilities especially of marriage. However, she felt competent in her work, dealing with her friends and younger siblings. Based on her own experiences, she felt curious to know how peers of her age felt about such a transition. Whether peers like her need their parents' support or can they manage things on their own? Were they capable of taking responsibilities and understanding people and society at large or did they also feel less competent for the same? What were their experiences and feelings? Did they consider themselves adult or did they too feel confused about themselves?

The researcher's own perception is that the impact of globalisation is driving rapid social changes in the Indian society and such changes are significantly impacting youth's perceptions. Young people are more focused on new opportunities offered by the global world and in turn are challenging certain paradigms of the traditional system. According to Arnett (2000a) the increasing globalisation, will drive the spread of the phase of emerging adulthood across the world. Also Verma and

Saraswathi (2002) have observed that “standing at the crossroads of technological advancement and a global market economy, it is an opportune time to examine how tradition and modernity in socio-political and cultural factors have shaped and continue to influence adolescence in India” (p. 106). Such rapid changes make it interesting to study the perceptions about transition to adulthood among Indian youth.

It has been observed that most American young people in the age range of 18-25 years consider themselves as somewhere in between adolescence and adulthood (Arnett, 2000a). This is mainly due to the recent demographic shifts including the increased focus on higher education and consequently delayed marriage and parenthood that result into a longer transitional stage of adulthood in the United States and other industrialized societies (Arnett, 1998, 2004). This reflects the development of a new and distinct phase of life for young people from late teen through the twenties termed as “*emerging adulthood*” by Arnett (2000a, 2004). Five distinct characteristics define this period of human development. These characteristics include: identity exploration to understand personal and professional interests; instability in work and residence; being self-focused; feeling in between about their status (having crossed adolescence but not yet ready to take up adult roles), and exploring new possibilities in life (Arnett, 2000a, 2004, 2006a).

Emerging adulthood may not exist universally across all societies of the world. According to Arnett (2000a) “Emerging adulthood is not a universal period of human development, but a period that exists under certain conditions that have occurred only quite recently and only in some cultures” (p.21). Culture plays a significant role in determining and shaping the stage of emerging adulthood (2000a). This has been observed by researchers who have conducted studies in more religious cultures such

as Israel (Mayseless & Scharf, 2003) for instance, where criteria related to norm-abiding behaviour were endorsed more than the U.S. counterparts. The local culture influences the duration of the phase as well. For example, while typically the emerging adulthood phase is observed in youth aged 18-25 years, Chinese college students (Badger, Nelson and Barry, 2006) considered themselves adult indicating a significantly shortened emerging adulthood phase. Additionally, the extent to which various key characteristics of emerging adulthood (e.g., identity exploration, instability, self-focus, etc.) are prevalent is influenced by specific beliefs and practices within local cultures.

Transition to adulthood has been explored in various cultures and nations worldwide (e.g. United States, Arnett, 2003; Czech, Macek, Bejcek, & Vanícková, 2007; Canada, Cheah & Nelson, 2004; Argentina, Facio & Micocci, 2003). It is only recently that attention has been focused on India (e.g. a study conducted in both urban and rural areas within Coimbatore<sup>1</sup>) and results revealed that “emerging adulthood may exist for a segment, at least, of the population in India but there is great variation within India, in how it is experienced” (Seiter & Nelson, 2011, p. 27).

The main purpose of the present study was to find out whether the phase of emerging adulthood exists in select urban contexts of India, specifically the northern and western regions. The study focused on young individuals, 18-26 years to examine (a) if they feel they are adult (i.e., “age of feeling in-between”), (b) the criteria they deem necessary for becoming an adult, and (c) the preferences they give to individualistic or collectivist attributes. Furthermore, the study examined how these aspects of emerging adulthood may vary as a function of gender, city (Delhi and Vadodara) and age group (18-20 years and 21-25 years).

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<sup>1</sup> A city in Southern India.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The chapter reviews literature related to the concept of emerging adulthood, its evolution, and its applicability in non-western contexts followed by a description of the Indian cultural context, both traditional and contemporary.

The chapter is organized in the following sections:

- Emerging Adulthood
  - Evolution of the term emerging adulthood
  - Important five feature of emerging adulthood
- Emerging Adulthood across cultures
  - Empirical evidence of emerging adulthood in American and European context
  - Empirical evidence of emerging adulthood in non-western context
- The Indian context
  - Traditional cultural notion of youth
  - The Indian psycho-social orientation
- Contemporary Indian context
- Relevance of emerging adulthood in Indian context
  - Features of emerging adulthood in India context
- Highlights of reviews
- Rationale for the study
- Conceptual framework
- Broad and specific research questions

## **Emerging Adulthood**

There have only been a few contributions to the theoretical framework for transition to adulthood by eminent western theorists such as Erikson (1950, 1968), Keniston (1971) and Bockneck (1986). Most of these works are decades old and rapid socio-economic changes over these years make the above mentioned theories inadequate to portray the life of young people in the current scenario. More recently Arnett (2000a, 2006a) has addressed this theoretical gap and put forward a new stage of emerging adulthood, as a way to conceptualize the development of youth 18-25 years in western, industrialized societies.

### **Evolution of the term “emerging adulthood”.**

There is a significant evolution in the markers of adulthood over a period of time. Historically, the period of adulthood was marked by youth attaining legal adulthood at the age of 18 years. Youth over 18 years old were expected to complete education, take-up work responsibilities and get married (Macek et al., 2007). However, over a period of time there has been a transformation in the perception of adulthood, especially in industrialised societies. There has been a significant delay in transition to adulthood with a variety of educational and employment opportunities available for young people. The effects of globalisation, technological advances, and widespread economic development are the principal drivers of such transformation (Nugent, 2006).

A key factor in the shift in traditional normative markers of adulthood is the extension in education, with youth pursuing a variety of professional and vocational courses in

search of a lucrative career and a subsequent delay in age of entering work life. Even on entering work life, ambitious youth tend to change jobs in search for an aspired job option. There is consequently a delay in the age when a young individual attains financial independence and considers marriage and parenthood (Arnett, 2000a, 2004). This leads to an enlarged transitional stage, whereby youth remain subject to an ambiguity about their adulthood status.

“Many young people today, certainly, feel lost and cannot relate with either adolescent or adult typical phenomena, attributes, or subjective feelings” (Arias & Hernández, 2007, p. 477). Though psychological, sociological, and anthropological models suggest different terms: late adolescence, young adulthood, and transition to adulthood, according to Arnett (2000a, 2004) these terms are too vague and do not fit into this phase. He has provided explanation for why each of these terms does not fully represent this phase.

During “late adolescence”, individual are in the pubertal age and have not developed full reproductive maturity unlike in the youth phase. Moreover, they have parental control or supervision, and cannot leave parents’ home and live independently. On the other hand young people above 18 years in age have a right to vote and indulge in independent decisions which is not the case for adolescents (Arnett, 2000a, 2004).

The term “young adulthood”, indicates young people have already attained their adulthood whereas there is ambiguity in the youth in this phase about the attainment of adulthood. However, this term relates more to the young people in thirties who have undertaken adult responsibilities while still young (Arnett, 2000a).

The phase “transition to adulthood” implicitly suggests that the period between adolescence and young adulthood is momentary and hence referred to as a transition. This is not the case as the period is longer (18-25 that is seven years) than the other stages of development, so it should be definitely studied as a separate stage of life (Arnett, 2004).

The concept of “emerging adulthood” was thus introduced as it seems to offer a new stage of human development and is being increasingly accepted globally. Emerging adulthood is described as a unique period of development between adolescence and adulthood, with five distinct characteristics: (i) it is the period of identity exploration, specifically exploration of love relationships, work responsibilities and world views; (ii) it is the period of instability, as young people tend to change their jobs as well as residence rather frequently; (iii) it is the period where young people are rather self-focused as they intend to become independent individuals; (iv) it is the period of feeling in-between, as young people believe that while they have crossed the stage of adolescence, they are not yet fully prepared to take adult roles; (v) it is the period of possibilities for young people to fulfil their aspirations making difference in their lives (Arnett, 2000a, 2004, 2006a). The following section describes each characteristic in detail.

### **Important five feature of emerging adulthood.**

#### ***Identity exploration.***

According to Erikson's theory of life-span (1950) identity formation is established in the adolescent stage to avoid role diffusion and identity confusion - a stage where an



individual must establish a sense of personal identity through self-exploration, specifically in the areas of love, work and ideology. However, Arnett (2000a) debated that identity exploration continues into emerging adulthood phase and in fact, it is the most important feature of this period of development. Arnett referred to Erikson's (1950, 1968) belief in a “prolonged adolescence” in many industrialized societies, allowing young adults to self-explore. Arnett argues that this is in fact applicable to most young people today in industrialised societies, and to a significant extent, identity exploration takes place during the emerging adulthood phase (Arnett 2000a, 2004, 2006b).

The three pillars of identity formation including love relationships, work responsibilities and world views, start during adolescence but continue into emerging adulthood (Arnett 2006a). With respect to love, romantic relationships for adolescents are momentary and uncertain in contrast to the emerging adulthood phase where such relationships gain more focus and are part of identity exploration (Arnett 2004).

Similarly, in the area of work, emerging adults are more serious and focused about their work, in order to explore their career goals, whereas work for adolescents is generally for a shorter duration, and often to utilize their spare time in order to fulfil short term desires such as new clothes, bikes, cosmetics, entertainment, etc. (Arnett, 2004; Steinberg & Cauffman, 1995). And it is during the emerging adulthood phase that youth decide upon their own beliefs and values, independently of parents and other influences. Therefore, emerging adulthood is also considered as an important period for development of worldviews as it helps in the development of individual identity (Arnett, 1997, 1998, 2004, 2006a).

These identity explorations of love relationships, work responsibilities and world views for emerging adults also involve risk factors as they can come across rejection, failure and non-formation of their own beliefs during exploration (Arnett & Jensen, 2002). This also leads to substance use, drinking and involvement in crime (Schulenberg, Malley, Bachman & Johnston, 2005).

***Period of instability.***

The identity explorations in areas of love, school and work, make this period of human development, the age of instability. In search for the right answer, emerging adults frequently change their choices in terms of selection of educational fields, career paths or romantic partners (Arnett, 2006a; Tanner, Arnett & Leis 2008). This also results into frequent residential changes during this period, for example, moving out of parental household, residing in hostels or with friends for education, mobility for work, moving to live together with their partner or moving back to their parental home for temporary stay (Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1999 cited in Arnett, 2006a; Arnett, 2004, 2006a). Such mobility in residential status peaks during the ages 20 -30 years, especially for Americans, making emerging adulthood an unstable period (Rindfus, 1991; Jang & Snyder, 2012).

Important signs of instability include significant changes and variation in school and work patterns. There could be frequent variations in school-work combinations in search for the most suitable option (Arnett 2006b). Notably the degree of instability tends to decrease with time, particularly, as youth starts feeling more mature and satisfied with their prospective career and they take over more adult roles (Arnett, 2004).

### *Self-focused age.*

Emerging adulthood is a distinctive phase where youth tend to be more self-focused than any other period, - it is also known as a self-focused age. The phase is marked by unique characteristics of being relatively less regulated and at the same time there are lesser duties and obligations towards others. The adolescent phase is highly controlled by rules and regulations set by parents and school authorities. In comparison, during young adulthood phase, people aged 30 and beyond are bound by several obligations and duties which they have to follow while performing adult roles such as being a spouse, being a parent or an employee, and these duties regulate and absorb most of their time. However, only during emerging adulthood period, youth with relatively higher degree of freedom to take decisions and free of responsibilities towards spouse, children and employers are able to enjoy much more leisure and personal time (Arnett, 2004, 2006a; Tanner, Arnett & Leis, 2008; Seiter, 2009).

Some researches consider the self-focused youth as selfish. In Japan, unmarried young people in their twenties are associated with term 'parasite singles' (Rosenberger, 2007) and in America, most college students are considered to be narcissistic (Twenge, 2006). However, Arnett argues that this is likely due to the advantages of their self-focused freedom to travel, live anywhere they desire and to do any kind of job so as to gain experience before entering adult roles (Arnett 2006c). Furthermore, Arnett (2006c) argues that it is a myth to consider emerging adults as selfish, since they are more considerate, able to understand perspective of others effectively and are less egotistic in comparison to adolescents or adults. Emerging adulthood is a self-focused time of life as during this phase most youth leave parental homes and start living independently, which gives them an opportunity to focus on

their self-development both educationally and professionally in order to attain self-sufficiency (Arnett (2004, 2006a, 2006c). Notably, such experiences also enable them to enhance their skills to do daily chores, understand their priorities for life and start developing a base for their adult lives (Arnett 2004). Therefore, emerging adulthood is a phase, wherein a person develops his own identity, according to his own terms and conditions and with limited influence from parents and other related people (Arnett, 2000a, 2006a, 2006b; Seiter, 2009).

### ***Feeling in-between.***

Emerging adulthood is the period of feeling in-between, wherein emerging adults are neither adolescents nor adults. They do not consider themselves adolescents, because they believe that they have crossed that age post the hormonal changes at puberty, they are not restricted by parental rules, many of them live away from home independently and moreover they have completed their secondary education. On the other hand, they do not consider themselves as adults because they think that they are not fully prepared to take all adults roles and responsibilities (Arnett 2004, 2006a; Tanner, Arnett & Leis, 2008). This is also evident from numerous studies in the United States as well as in other industrialized countries, when emerging adults were asked about their attainment of adult status, then a majority of them responded as “in some ways yes, in some ways no” instead of stating “yes” or “no” for their adult status (Arnett, 2001, 2003; Mayseless & Scharf, 2003; Facio & Micocci, 2003).

For most young people, this feeling of in-between remains for the period till they satisfy the criteria they deem as important for being an adult. A key question is which are the criteria that are given the highest level of preference as markers of adulthood.

It is surprising that traditional transition markers such as finishing education, marriage and parenthood are not regarded necessary for being an adult, and rather preference is given to intangible and individualistic criteria such as accepting responsibility for self, being able to make decisions independently and gaining financial independence (Arnett, 1998, 2000a, 2004, 2006a; Nelson et al., 2007). Almost all studies in the United States and other countries, including various regions, social classes and ethnic groups ranked above criteria as the top most important characteristics for being an adult. Since the criteria are indefinable unlike traditional markers therefore are obtained gradually, resulting in gradual attainment of adulthood (Arnett, 1998, 2001, 2004, 2006a).

***Period of possibilities.***

Lastly, emerging adulthood is the age of possibilities: (i) it is time of high optimism and great expectations and (ii) it is the age of possibilities as it provides an opportunity for people with difficult backgrounds to make differences in their life (Arnett 2006a). Emerging adulthood is the time for high hopes as young people work on their aspirations and make effort to fulfil them. It is an opportunity to transform themselves into an individual they wish to be rather than being a parent's image (Arnett, 2004). Even if their present life is stressful and difficult, they believe that adulthood will turn out well for them. They have great expectations of finding a well-paying and satisfying job through which they are able to represent their identity well, as well as a reliable life partner who would become a soul mate and a lifelong partner (Tanner, Arnett & Leis, 2008).

Emerging adulthood is a time of possibilities especially for people from deprived and dysfunctional families (Arnett, 2004, 2006a). It is also revealed by Arnett (2000b) that youth from lower socio-economic backgrounds, express more optimism about their future versus youth from higher socio-economic backgrounds (Eskilson & Wiley, 1999). Children and adolescents are truly reliant on their parents and have to live in the environment provided by their parents, even if it is unhealthy and incompetent. On the other hand emerging adults have an opportunity to not only leave their parents and their problems behind but also have a chance to re-direct their lives and take their own decisions, which in turn transform them for the positive future before attaining adulthood (Arnett, 2004, 2006a).

The above section discusses the term emerging adulthood and its evolution and significance, with reference to the western context. It is relevant to know how much this phase is relevant across world, the applicability of the term and the way the phase of emerging adulthood is conceptualized across cultures. All these aspects are addressed in the following section.

### **Emerging Adulthood across Cultures**

Emerging adulthood is not a universal phase of human development, but a stage that has become more prevalent in recent times under certain social and economic conditions which are gradually becoming pervasive due to globalisation. Therefore, emerging adulthood tends to exist mostly in industrialized and post-industrial nations which include countries from the west, such as the United States of America as well as European and Asian countries (Arnett, 2000a, 2004). Within developed countries, it is most likely to be prevalent in those segments of society (upper and middle

classes) which are economically stable and that allow an option for youth to delay their adult roles, ensuring economic support in the phase of exploration (Arnett, 2000a, 2004). In particular, the phenomenon is most prevalent in individuals who can pursue higher level of education essential for rewarding professional careers, providing them time for exploration, instability and self-focus, increasing future options (Arnett, 2000a; Seiter, 2009).

Emerging adulthood tends to exist more prominently in countries where the median age of entering marriage and parenthood is relatively high, typically in late twenties or early thirties. This delay in marriage and parenthood provides sufficient time for emerging adults to explore their own self, consider various possibilities and experience the related feeling of instability before entering into marriage or parental responsibilities (Arnett, 2000a, 2004). The age of marriage in traditional cultures was mostly fixed by family members according to certain set norms and expectations, however, this trend is changing with youth having more control over the resources, thereby giving more opportunity to take independent decisions of their own life transitions (Arnett 1998). Such changes are observed to a higher extent in industrialised and post-industrialised countries, where the youth has managed to delay the timing of marriage, given their ability to regulate their resources in their own ways (Arnett, 2000a).

Importantly, emerging adulthood is more closely associated with cultural environment than geographies. Within any given country, there may be certain cultures (socio-economically more developed classes) where emerging adulthood exists, while in others (belonging to minority class) it may not exist or exist over a shortened period in others (Arnett, 2000a, 2004). For example, youth from minority groups within a

country typically have lesser prospects available for exploration in their late teens and early twenties in comparison with youth from more developed classes (Arnett, 2000a, 2004). For example, for Mormons, age of marriage and parenthood is relatively low in comparison to other communities in America and thus they have limited period to self-explore, before entering adult roles (Arnett, 2000a, 2004).

The concept of emerging adulthood is currently being structured globally. Researches have been conducted in both western as well non-western countries. An overview of findings from such researches is discussed in the following two sections.

### **Empirical evidence of emerging adulthood in American and European context.**

Numerous researches have been conducted in the United States (focused on American majority culture) to know how young people conceptualize the transition to adulthood (e.g., Arnett, 1994, 1997, 1998, 2001). The main results of these studies were: i) a significant proportion of emerging adults felt ambiguous about their status and did not consider themselves as adult (Arnett, 1994, 1997, 2001); ii) significance of traditional markers like finishing education, marriage and parenthood has been observed as diminishing criteria for adulthood, iii) preference were given to individualistic criteria for adult status and the three most widely endorsed characteristics were a) "accept responsibility for the consequences of your actions", b) "financial independence from parents" and c) "ability to decide on personal beliefs and values independently of parents or other influences" (Arnett, 1994, 1997, 1998, 2001). Similar evidences are available from other researches, which imply that the transition to adulthood occurs in more psychological and individualistic terms, as young people predominantly



endorsed more personal qualities like self-sufficiency as their preferred criteria for adulthood (Arnett, 2004, 2006a, 2007; Greene, Wheatley, & Aldava, 1992; Scheer, Unger, & Brown, 1994).

A recent study in Canada by Molgat (2007) focused on self-conceptualization in adulthood. The results revealed that out of 45 respondents, most respondents (25-29 years) identified themselves as adult (24), whereas some of them either had ambiguous stance (15) or clearly did not identify as adults (six). Further, the respondents linked their individual notions with their life events such as leaving home, finding a job, forming a couple, parenthood and even financial obligations.

Researchers have lately focused their attention on European countries in order to find out views prevalent therein about emerging adulthood. Due to wide diversity across Europe, the concept of emerging adulthood has varying parameters across different countries, but at the same time it also has some common features (Bhul & Lanz, 2007). For example, European countries like Czech Republic, Austria and Romania show similarities in perception of emerging adulthood. In all three countries, majority of young people did not consider themselves to be adults but they felt "in between" about their status and widely endorsed individualistic criteria as markers of adulthood. These studies also revealed that in both Austria and Romania, individualism is followed by norm compliance, and in Czech Republic and Romania special emphasis is given to feeling of freedom, enabling youth to leverage all available opportunities (Macek et al., 2007; Sirsch, Dreher, Mayr, & Willinger, 2009; Nelson, 2009).

Researches were conducted in other European countries such as Spain (Arias & Hernández, 2007) to identify if the traditional markers of adulthood have changed and

how adulthood is conceptualized in their context and Welsh (Leo & Marion, 2010) to examine the concept of emerging adulthood.

Arias and Hernández (2007) conducted a research on the perception of the concept of adulthood in Spain and Mexico, focusing on the views and experiences of youth (16-34 years) about transition to adulthood and also to understand the influence of cultural and developmental differences between the two countries. Results revealed that both “Mexicans and Spaniards seem to be rather sure about adolescence’s end, but they have doubts about adulthood’s onset, personally and by age” (p.501). Seven factors (adulthood postponement, instability, autonomy, exploration, possibilities, worries and identity moratorium) related to transition to adulthood indicating different patterns according to age and country were revealed by the factor analyses performed on the data from both countries. For example, with older age, there is decrease in the postponement of adulthood and instability whereby autonomy increases, and exploration followed an inverted U pattern. Spaniard young individuals displayed more instability and identity moratorium, whereas Mexicans young people displayed more determinate future, possibilities, and postponement of adulthood. The results on parameters such as autonomy, exploration, and worries were relatively similar across the two countries.

Recently Leo and Marion (2010) conducted a research among Welsh young people to know how they perceive the concept of emerging adulthood. Young individuals 17-20 years who were working or unemployed (i.e., not in higher education) were interviewed about their lifestyles and their perceptions of being adult. Results indicated that many participants perceived themselves as adult and other people also perceived them as adult.

Other studies were conducted in Italy (Lanz & Tagliabue, 2007) to discern the influence of romantic partnership have on emerging adults, and in Germany (Buhl, 2007) to know the influence of entry into the working world. Lanz and Tagliabue (2007) investigated the impact of romantic relationships on emerging adults in Italy. Results revealed that young people considered romantic relationships as a pioneer marker to adulthood because marriage is a primary reason to move out of the parental home. There were differences in thinking and opinion about future plans, leaving home and influence of relationships which leads to different pathways among young people in Italy. Further, Buhl (2007) conducted a longitudinal research focusing on the influences of work life on participants' well-being and relationship with parents in Germany during the end of emerging adulthood. Results concluded that young people's well-being and relationship with parents improved upon entering work life.

### **Empirical evidence of emerging adulthood in non-western cultural contexts.**

Numerous researches in traditional and non-western cultures have been conducted to understand perceptions of transition to adulthood among emerging adults. The core focus of such researches has been to understand the impact of globalisation as well as that of indigenous cultural beliefs and values on emerging adulthood. For example, Arnett (2003) studied conceptions of the transition to adulthood in three different minority groups that is African-Americans, Latinos and Asian-Americans. The study revealed the effect of globalisation, as young people in these ethnic minority groups emphasized on bi-cultural conceptions of transition to adulthood whereby giving importance to both individualistic criteria for transition to adulthood as well as greater significance on obligations toward others, which is influenced by values of their

ethnic minority cultures (Arnett, 2003). Another research done on a highly religious sub-culture, the Mormons in America, revealed that influence of indigenous cultural beliefs make their transition to adulthood distinct from the majority culture of the country, as the emerging adulthood phase is generally shorter and more structured in comparison to the majority cultures (Nelson, 2003).

Studies conducted in Argentina (Facio & Micocci, 2003) and Israel (Mayseless & Scharf, 2003) revealed both similarities as well as differences between perceptions of adulthood among youth from western and non-western cultures. Key similarities in Argentina (still constituting a large proportion of impoverished people) emerged with western cultures (e.g., Americans) were: (a) existence of a distinct period of emerging adulthood among most young people, (b) instability indicated by frequent changes in jobs and romantic relationships, (c) importance for education including higher studies and (d) ambiguity about their status (45% felt in between and 46% felt they have reached adulthood), and (e) importance to individualistic criteria as markers to adulthood. However, despite the above mentioned similarities, the influence of indigenous culture was observed through prominence of family capacities, interdependence and norm compliance as important markers of adulthood (Facio & Micocci, 2003).

In Israel (Mayseless & Scharf, 2003) similar to American culture, emphasis was on psychological attributes as important markers of adulthood which included individualistic criteria like accepting responsibility for consequences, ability to decide upon personal beliefs and establishing relationship with parents on equal status, while, external markers such as biological transition as well as role transitions of marriage

and parenthood were viewed as much less important. However, the influence of culture leading to differences between America and Israel were observed as Israelis endorsed significantly higher importance to norm-abiding behaviour (such as driving safely and avoiding getting drunk) and to role transitions (such as being employed full time or getting married) versus young people in America.

Nelson, Badger and Wu (2004) provided evidence for cultural influences on perceptions of adulthood. They conducted a survey on college students in China, and found that majority of Chinese college students felt that they have reached adult status in their early twenties, indicating that there may be a materially shorter emerging adulthood phase in the culture. The criteria deemed necessary for adulthood had similarities as well as differences versus those observed amongst young people in Western majority cultures. Chinese young people gave importance to accept responsibility for one's actions and become financially independent from parents similar to Western culture. However, they also strongly endorsed criteria that reflected the collectivistic culture such as becoming less self-oriented, developing greater concern for others, and becoming capable of supporting parents financially different from western culture. Results also revealed more norm-abiding behaviour (e.g., avoiding getting drunk, using illegal drugs, and shoplifting) and less exploration than their American counterparts, indicating the reflection of their culture in many ways (Nelson, Bager, & Wu, 2004).

The above section has described the relevance of emerging adulthood in non-western cultures. The following section focuses specifically on the Indian society and the relevance of emerging adulthood in India.

## **The Indian Context**

India is a culturally diverse country wherein a significant proportion of the population comprises of youth 13-35 years (37.9%<sup>2</sup>). With the changes driven by globalisation, the emergence of the phase of emerging adulthood is particularly likely in the urban Indian context. The manner in which this phase of life is interpreted and understood is influenced by several socio-cultural and economic factors such as culture and religion, gender, level of education and family background. Similar to other non-western cultures, there could potentially be marked differences in the perception of the concept of emerging adulthood compared with western cultures such as the United States. The Indian culture lays great emphasis on family and hence its role is very important in influencing the behaviour of individuals, their attitudes and future perspectives, unlike in the western culture where the emphasis is on the individual (Kakar, 1981; Madan, 1993). To further consider this issue, it is important to briefly discuss the Indian cultural context that is likely to influence transition to adulthood and the psychosocial experience of youth throughout this period.

### **Traditional cultural notions of youth.**

Hinduism is a major predominant religion in India. It has a significant influence on all features of daily life of an individual - ideas, beliefs and practices for his/her development. Hence Hinduism is defined more as a way of life than a religion. The Hindu culture defines the values for children and goals and set principles for child / parenting (Saraswathi & Ganapathy, 2002).

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<sup>2</sup> Source: Indian Youth: Demographics & Readership, 2010

According to the Hindu model of *asramadhrama*, human life is conceptualised in four stages whereby in each phase of life, Hindus ought to follow a set sequence and time frame. These are called "ashramas" and every man should ideally follow life as per these stages: The first stage is *brahmacharya*, a time for formal education and preparation for future professional life, as well as for the family, social and religious life. This is followed by *grhasthasrama*, when a person should get married, *Vanaprastha* or the retirement stage and *sanyasa*, where one should renounce all relationships (Kakar, 1981; Saraswathi, 2005; Menon, 2012). *Brahmacharya* has been a stage for youth development in ancient India where a person learns all duties and responsibilities of each of the four "ashramas" (Kapadia & Bhangaokar, 2012).

According to Saraswathi (1999) the process of transition to adulthood is gender and class-based, and in most traditional settings, the adolescent phase has little relevance and no clear definition given the continuity between childhood and adulthood. Since childhood, individuals are prescribed roles for adulthood and are expected to fulfil them accurately. However a marked discontinuity is observed between childhood and adulthood in contemporary Indian society, given the ongoing social-economic changes. This is more evident in adolescents in higher social classes, specifically because of two leading factors: (i) they have better opportunity to experience new lifestyle and avenues while seeking higher education, and (ii) more adaptation to youth culture due to greater influence of mass media (Saraswathi, 1999; Verma & Saraswathi, 2002) This has significant relevance for the emerging adulthood phase in modern India.

## **The Indian psycho-social orientation.**

### ***Importance of family.***

Family is of paramount significance in the Indian culture and is considered to influence the psycho-social experiences of the children (Verma, 2000). Family is considered and referred as an ideal homogenous unit, which acts as a primary source of socialization for a child. It is expected to inculcate values, understanding of rituals and norms in children, such as respecting and obeying their elders, and most importantly differentiate between right and wrong to enable one to fit into the society (Kapadia, 2008; Sonawat, 2001). Great emphasis is laid on adoption of certain distinguishable features of the Indian family system such as family integrity, family loyalty, and family unity (Sachdeva & Misra, 2008; Chadha, n.d.).

The relationship between the child and parents captures the most central position in the hierarchy of family relationships, as parents are considered to be the primary source of all the perceptions and behaviours of a child. In the Hindu-Indian culture, a child is considered to be a gift of God and is highly welcomed; parenting undertakes deep moral and religious duties of steering the life of a child in the "right" direction. Parents are expected to take responsibility for all problems of a child in his/her nascent stages, and they are expected to resolve all issues related to the child (Kapadia & Shah, 1998; Kapadia, Karnik & Ali, 2005).

In traditional India, both parenthood and family lineage played a significant role in deciding one's career and employment. Within this pre-defined set up, children used to try and master the same professional skills as pursued by parents / family. This limited choice of careers used to constraint individualism and self-realization. Beyond



profession, parents, and family also had a significant influence on personal decisions, in particular the decision to select a life partner. Family and parents used to take decisions with respect to the life partner based on criteria set by the caste system. Here again, individualism was curtailed, as parents' decision with respect to marriage was followed, as they had the responsibility of maintaining the institutional norms of family structure and practices (Saraswathi, 1999; Singh, 2004).

Traditionally, India has been a male-dominated society. Even in modern India, while educated families are promoting independence for women including educational opportunities as well as career, however the social norms related to marriage even now provide men with a privileged position. Such dynamics have promoted favouritism towards a boy child. There was a clear division of roles for men and women in traditional India whereby men were the bread earners and women were the home makers. There have also been instances of oppression of women within families, which can potentially negatively influence young minds, who are susceptible to following similar discrimination against women in their adulthood (Saraswathi, 1999; Mane, 1991). Overall the family collective is upheld and has a significant influence on socialization of children also affecting their self.

### ***Interdependent self.***

According to Greenfield, Keller, Fuligni and Maynard (2003) the course that a person takes for development could be either interdependent or independent. In the former, social obligations, duties and social responsibilities are given a priority over individual choices, while the latter is diametrically opposite; in that priority is given to individualistic self and choices over others, and focus is on own internal attributes (Kitayama & Markus, 1995).

Roland (1988) has put forth a conceptualization of self in India as spiritual self and familial self which encompasses interdependence, high level of empathy and receptivity to others and denotes experimental sense of self as “we-self” that is in line with traditional culture of defining self in India. In this context of the interdependent self in the Indian society, Ramanujam also observed in his work (cited in Mishra, Akoijam & Mishra, 2009), that individuals in the Hindu society endeavour to fit into the social norms and the culture where one represents self as secondary to the society. The individual constantly seeks the approval of the society which in turn hampers individualistic identity or the independent self of the individual/ an adult. Furthermore, he also states that the interdependence of an individual should not be construed a complete merger of the independent self. However, to achieve interests of the society, the individual needs to diminish one’s individual or independent self and prioritise the interdependent self.

A research on interpreting moral discourses in India revealed that the concept of self is greatly influenced by gender and individual’s position in the hierarchy, as most respondents both men and women, understood their self, primarily through their positions / hierarchy, and in context of the roles they played in family and society (Bhangaokar & Kapadia, 2009).

### ***Co-existence of collectivistic and individualistic self.***

The Indian society is predominately associated with collectivism where people are interconnected and possess collectivistic values and behaviour. Therefore, as discussed earlier, it emphasizes on the interdependent self where the independent self is diminished in order to seek acceptance from the society (Triandis, 1995).

However, Sinha and Tripathi (1994) observe that “both individualistic and collectivistic orientations can co-exist within individuals and culture” (p.193). They supported their belief by mentioning the co-existence of both elements since ancient India. For example, in Hindu ethic, *moksha* (salvation) and *dharma* (duty) along with *artha* (wealth) and *kama* (sexual pleasure) are considered important values for a person and determined their self. This means both duties of a person, as well as pleasure can go together, which signifies co-existence of both individualism and collectivisms. Yet another example is of *Karma* (one’s action) which is associated with individual deeds both in present and past life. Thus an individual is solely responsible for his fortune and any distress caused by his actions in present or even past life. Thus *Karma* of an individual signifies individualistic orientations. Further, the results of their studies prove that Indian culture and psyche did not clearly favour collectivism or individualism but rather a mix of both orientations. For example, when respondents were asked if they will give importance to their own happiness versus others’, most of the respondents gave preference to happiness of both/all.

In another study by Sinha, Sinha, Verma and Sinha (2001) the co-existence of collectivism and individualism were also observed in the Indian psyche and found that the Indians being culturally sensitive use individualistic behaviour with a collectivistic intention most, followed by a purely collectivistic response. For example, a person wants to fulfil his ambitions, in order to provide good support to his parents and family. Gender, place of residence (urban-rural) and level of education were crucial factors which determined the person’s orientation (C/I) for any given situation.

Mascolo, Misra and Rapisardi (2004) also examined self in India. They observed that Indians' perception of self is multi-dimensional and complex, because it comprises

both individual experiences and relationships with other. They have put forth the concept of *encompassing* self for Indians, where self is rooted in relationship - this can be observed in hierarchical relationships with active participation of each person like parent-child, husband-wife, and boss-subordinate. Both, the subordinate and the superior have moral obligations in relation to one another; the superior is responsible for protecting the subordinate and the latter plays a role in actively respecting, obeying and acknowledging the care provided by the other.

### **Contemporary Indian Context**

The Indian society is in a transformation phase. Globalisation has been a key driver of certain socio-economic changes in the country including a booming globalised economy, increasing focus on education in general and particularly for women and youth from lower castes, increasing awareness of public events through free media and exodus of young generation to urban cities (Verma, 2000). Nevertheless, the role of family in nurturing the youth remains intact. The trends of individuation and disengagement with family that are commonly observed in the west are not yet observed in India, despite ongoing social changes (Verma, 2000; Larson, Verma & Dworkin, 2003). While it is increasingly common for youth including girls to leave parental household in search of quality education, they still are affiliated to the parental home and it is not common for youth to move out of the parental home.

Recently, a growing trend of nuclearisation of families has been observed, primarily driven by urbanisation of Indian population and availability of better job opportunities in certain parts of the country (Singh, 2004, 2010). Moreover, nuclear families enable mobility and are therefore suitable for people who intend to seek opportunities

irrespective of geography to enhance career prospects or where a person's job involves a requirement for mobility. This has been one of the primary reasons for the diminishing importance of extended families. Other reasons include: global cultural influences, rural to urban migration, difficulties in child rearing and bearing due to formal sector employment. Nevertheless, there are still many Indian families who live in marginal joint family system, if not a proper one, that is, choosing to live in neighbouring area and continuing to have common bank account for their family (Singh, 2004, 2010; Pias, 2006). This nuclearisation of the Indian family also provided a chance for husband and wife to get closer and have more intimate relationship, consequently empowering women within families (Singh 2002). However, certain key features of joint family system such as patriarchal hierarchy and respect toward elders still remain prevalent (Singh 2004, 2010).

These changes in the structure of the families due to modernisation are relevant to a larger extent to urban middle and upper middle classes. Such changes have driven changes in the lifestyles including parenting, and have created an atmosphere wherein members of the family share more equal status than was prevalent in the joint family system (Verma, 2000). Therefore, youth belonging to such sub-sections of the society that have more options and resources make their transition to adulthood relatively more easily versus other sub-sections of the society. It is becoming prevalent for youth to pursue specialized education, with the aim of achieving lucrative jobs and satisfying careers, and in the process youth have been observed to purposely delay marriage and parenthood (Saraswathi, 1999).

Modernisation in India has particularly influenced the age of getting married, especially for girls. Also lately the age gap between marriage partners has been

observed to be decreasing. Such changes are influenced by the increasing importance of education and professional training for the youth of the country (Chattopadhyay & Ganguly, 2004). Young people today select life-partners on the basis of their intellectual and emotional compatibilities, rather than on the basis of qualities of conventional 'homely' housewives (Chattopadhyay & Ganguly, 2004). However, these changes have not yet materially affected the arranged marriage system in contemporary India, as it is still the predominant form of finding a mate (Sarswathi, 1999). There have been a few variations in the process of arranged marriages, particularly as youth have significantly higher say and involvement in the selection of life partner which was less so in earlier times (Singh, 2004; Kashyap, 1996; Shukla, 1994).

This transition has been observed in a study done on transition in marriage partner selection where matrimonial advertisements have emerged as a new way of partner selection, indicating an alteration in the mode of partner search. However, the process of partner selection follows the same traditional arranged marriage pattern of taking into account caste, horoscope, family background, and organising "face to face" meetings of the prospective partner, it reflects a blending of individual related characteristics with efforts to incorporate the "say" of the family, with greater emphasis on the former. This portrays the new emerging pattern of the psychological constructs- individualism and interrelatedness/collectivism (Shukla & Kapadia, 2007).

While globalisation is impacting India, the extent of impact may vary depending upon the type of city and region. In addition, the context such as social class and region along with culture plays a significant role in the development of an individual. For example in a metro city like Delhi which is the capital of India, the impact of

globalisation is expected to be much stronger because people are in greater proximity to global influences compared to a mid-sized city like Vadodara. For example, the annual growth rates of different states between 1999 and 2008, reveals strong economic disparities in the country as per the data, as Gujarat (8.8%) is ahead of Delhi (7.4%) (“Economic disparities,” 2012). But if per capita income (PCI) is considered then Delhi is among the top three States/Union Territories in terms of per capita income (Rs. 1,16,886 in 2009-10) compared to Gujarat’s per capita income (Rs. 63,961 in 2009-10). However, Gujarat’s per capita income (PCI) is second highest among the major states of India (“Gujarat per capita,” 2011).

With regard to literacy and sex ratio, according to census 2011, Delhi’s literacy rate is 86.34% of total population and sex ratio is 866 females per 1000 males that is below national average of 940 as per census 2011 (Office of Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India, 2011). On the other hand, Vadodara’s literacy rate is 81.21% of total population and sex ratio is 934 females per 1000 males (Office of Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India, 2011). The average age of marriage according to census 2001, for Delhi, it is 23 years for boys and 19 years for girls and for Gujarat, it is 22 years for boys and 19 years for girls (Cited in Unicef, n.d.). The differences in the two cities in terms of per capita income, socio-economic development, population, literacy and sex ratio, are likely to have a major influence on psychosocial orientations.

Globalisation is causing significant alteration in the Indian society in terms of changes in life style and perceptions of people. Another important psychological consequence of globalisation is the change in one’s identity. This is discussed in the next section which also focuses on the relevance of emerging adulthood in India.

### **Why Emerging Adulthood is Relevant in the Indian Context**

Arnett (2002) stated that the transformation of one's identity is caused as a significant psychological consequence of globalisation in terms of how people think about themselves in a societal context. There are four major issues in relation to identity which are influenced by globalisation. The first issue is development of bi-cultural identity in people across the world, whereby part of one's identity is rooted in their local culture while another part is highly influenced by awareness of one's relationship with the global world. This means in addition to their local culture, young people develop a sense of world culture by developing a global identity. A good example of this can be seen among the educated youth in India who typically follow deep rooted traditional Indian values, such as preference for an arranged marriage and caring for parents in their old age, despite being integrated into the global fast paced technological world (Verma & Saraswathi, 2002).

The second issue is that of identity confusion, which is mostly prevalent among youth in non-western cultures. Youth in these cultures find it difficult to adapt to these rapid changes that is growing bi-cultural identity and global culture which on the other hand is weakening their own cultural values and systems. Therefore, they start thinking that they do not fit into either of the two cultures and feel isolated and excluded (Arnett, 2002). Identity confusion among young people may be reflected in problems such as depression, suicide, and substance use. These problems have been seen in a variety of cultures including India because of the rapid move towards joining the global culture. In a study on suicide mortality in India: A nationally representative survey by Patel, Ramasundarahettige, Vijayakumar, Thakur, Gajalakshmi, Gururaj, Suraweera, and Jha (2012), it was found that a large proportion of adult suicide deaths were found to occur between the ages of 15 years and 29 years, especially in women.



The third change driven by globalisation is a growing prevalence of self-selected culture. Some individuals, who do not like to be part of a global culture, tend to see more meaning and structure in their own culture. Values of global culture including individualism and consumerism attract most people worldwide (e.g., attraction to pop music, fast food, exotic vacations and blue jeans). However, some people refuse to join the crowd and make their own group with like-minded people in order to have an identity that is not affected by the global culture and its values (Arnett 2002). There may be several instances of self-selected cultures in India among various communities who typically promote people not to get affected by the global culture and its implications. For example, people in various communities today also prevent girls from wearing jeans and keeping mobile phones (Siddiqui, 2012).

Finally, the fourth effect of globalisation is the spread of emerging adulthood, whereby significant delays in the timing of adulthood through postponement of adult roles such as employment, marriage and parenthood have been observed in most parts of the world. In developing countries, emerging adulthood is more prevalent within wealthier segments of society, mainly in urban areas (Arnett, 2000a). In the economically less developed and rural parts of the developing societies, there is typically a continuity between childhood and adulthood and the emerging adulthood phase or even adolescence phase is less prevalent in such societies (Sarawathi, 1999). This is also observed by Saraswathi and Larson (2002) in that the lives of middle class youth in India, South East Asia, and Europe have more similarities with each other than with poor youth of their own countries.

Globalisation is affecting India in many ways, resulting in diverse changes in socio-economic structure which may lead to the spread of emerging adulthood in the India

society. The next section focuses on the application of features of emerging adulthood in the Indian context.

### **Features of emerging adulthood in the Indian context.**

As previously discussed, the traditional Indian culture is highly influenced by cultural paradigms such as significance of family, parent-child relationship, marked gender difference and the collectivistic nature of the society. However, due to globalisation, similar to other developing societies, there have been considerable socio-economic changes in the last two decades. A few examples of such socio-economic changes include: higher incomes, enhanced focus on education and particularly focus on education for girls and lower socio-economic strata people, reduction in gender gap and increasing employment opportunities for women (Verma, 2000). Therefore, it is fair to assume that the effects of these cultural paradigms are likely to play a crucial role in defining emerging adulthood in India.

### ***Feeling in-between.***

The effect of globalisation as discussed earlier is also seen in India which is causing change in educational aspirations. The possible reason is that in today's environment, education provides individuals with a better chance of employment, which in turn leads to a better lifestyle, power and status (Chinnammai, 2005). Therefore, today young people focus more on their education and tend to study until their mid-twenties. This in turn may make them feel that they are not prepared to take adult roles therefore it is possible that they may feel in-between, similar to youth in the western contexts such as United States.

### ***Criteria for adulthood.***

The collectivistic nature of society and the Hindu model in India are likely to have an influence on the criteria deemed important for adulthood in India. In traditional India, *grhasthasrama* stage of development marked the adulthood stage, signifying a strong correlation between role transitions (e.g., marriage and parenthood) and adulthood (Saraswathi & Ganapathy, 2002). The delay in such role transitions due to higher education (becoming increasingly prevalent today), could lead to a feeling of being in-between.

### ***Individualistic / collectivistic preferences.***

As an effect of the traditional Indian model, it is likely that Indian youth endorse collectivistic criteria for adulthood, whereby one has to adopt all cultural and social rules and responsibilities within the family (Saraswathi & Ganapathy, 2002; Mascolo et al., 2004). While there has been a growing trend of nuclearisation of families in modern India, yet there is prevalence of hierarchical structure so youth need to discuss their major decisions with parents and they are inclined to support their parents in old age (Singh, 2004). This may result into Indian youth endorsing more collectivistic criteria for adulthood (e.g., “become less self-oriented” and “become financially capable to provide for parents”). However, at the same time India is going through myriad changes leading to high prevalence of bi-cultural identity (Verma & Saraswathi, 2002) which may influence the perceptions of youth, especially the ones belonging to the wealthier segment of society. This is likely to lead to an endorsement of individualistic criteria (e.g., "accept responsibility for the consequences of your actions", "financially independent from parents", and “decide on personal beliefs and values independently of parents or other influences”).

### ***Gender.***

Traditionally gender bias has been a predominant social issue in the country.

Historically, there has been a significant distinction between ascribed roles of men and women. Birth of a son traditionally and even today is celebrated as birth of a future earning member as well as someone who could carry the family name forward, while a daughter is considered a burden because of the prevalence of “dowry”: a social paradigm wherein parents of the bride need to pay significant money and assets to the family of the groom at time of marriage (Mane, 1991; Saraswathi, 1999).

Women’s only importance was for their ability to bear a male-child (Singh, 2004).

Men were expected to take responsibility of providing financial resources to cover the needs of the family, and women’s role was typically restricted to the household chores. However, in the globalised India significant on-going changes are observed with increasing trend of women attaining education and seeking professional roles at par with men. So it would be interesting to observe the impact that the globalisation has on the way young men and women view the traditional criteria necessary for adulthood.

### ***Age.***

According to Hindu life stages, as mentioned earlier, *brahmacharya* is a stage for youth development where individual attained formal education and prepared for future professional life, as well as for the family, social and religious life. On the hand *grhasthasrama* is a stage, where individual attained full adulthood as one gets married, has children and undertake responsibilities of a householder. Therefore young people who are between 18-20 years will be those preparing themselves for

professional life and attaining formal education and young people between 21-25 years will be those who would get married and attain full adulthood according to Hindu life stages. To know the extent to which of these criteria continue, the present study has included two age group 18-20 years and 21-25years.

### **Highlights of the Review**

- Emerging adulthood is a subjectively distinct period which is marked by postponed adulthood.
- Emerging adulthood is not a universal phase of human development, but a stage that has become more prevalent in recent times under certain social and economic conditions.
- Emerging adulthood tends to exist more prominently in countries where the median age of entering marriage and parenthood is relatively high, typically in late twenties or early thirties.
- Emerging adulthood has five unique features: identity exploration, period of instability, being self-focused, feeling in between, and period of possibilities in life.
- European countries have highlighted the presence of emerging adulthood in their culture and the emerging adults have given preference to individualistic criteria.
- Some non-western cultures have also endorsed this stage, but both individualistic and collectivistic criteria are given importance.

- Contemporary India is in a transitional phase where globalisation has a significant impact on Indian culture resulting in modernization of society as well as changes in the outlook of young people.
- Globalisation has been a key driver of certain socio-economic changes in the country including booming economy, increasing focus of education in general including woman and exodus of young generation to urban cities.
- The trend of nuclearisation of families has been observed, primarily driven by urbanisation of Indian population. This has changed in structure of families and it has also driven to changes in the lifestyles of young people.
- This transition in Indian society has also delayed the age of marriage and criteria for partner selection wherein selection is not done on the basis of one's conventional roles but on the basis of one's intellectual and emotional compatibility with the person. However, arranged marriage system is still a major form of finding a partner in contemporary India with youth have being more actively involved in the process.
- Nevertheless, certain key features of joint family such as togetherness, respect towards elders and patriarchal hierarchy are still prevalent. Also the significant role of family and parent-child relationship in nurturing the youth remains intact. Though young people leave parental house for better education, yet they remain closely connected with their parents.

- Gender difference in India is still predominant today also as birth of a son is celebrated and is highly welcomed while a daughter is considered as a burden for the family.
- The relevance of emerging adulthood can be seen in India due to influence of globalisation and rapid changes in the Indian society.

### **Rationale of the Study**

The area of emerging adulthood is well-researched in the western context, however not much research has been done in the Indian context. There exists a significant opportunity to learn more about the perceptions of Indian youth, particularly in light of India being one of the largest and fast developing nations in the world, with significant recent socio-economic changes in the era of globalisation.

The Indian society is changing at a rapid rate, leading to the occurrence of discontinuity between childhood and adulthood, giving rise to the stage of adolescence, at least in urban context (Verma & Saraswathi, 2002). Along similar lines it would be interesting to know whether the societal changes are resulting in the emergence of the stage of “emerging adulthood” in urban India. Importantly, the changing context with its changing demands may influence the way young individuals define adulthood and also the criteria they endorse as important marker of adulthood. Are individuals inclined more towards collectivistic criteria in line with the India psychosocial orientation or there is a change in terms of adopting individualistic criteria?

Arnett's research has concluded that youth in non-western cultures tend to place greater emphasis on traditional practices that lead to an earlier transition to adulthood implying shortened period of emerging adulthood or no emerging adulthood at all (Arnett, 2000). This study aimed at understanding if such trends are evident among Indian youth.

The Indian society has wide regional diversity. For example, Delhi is located in the northern region of India which tends to be more tradition-bound, and yet being the country's capital and a metro city, it is in the midst of global influences. On the other hand, Vadodara is a fast growing mid-sized city, with a more open-minded attitude and a character of close social relationships among people. Both backdrops will impact the likelihood of the emergence of emerging adulthood and the interpretation of adulthood. The inclusion of the two different cities would lead to enhanced understanding of the effect of regional variations in young individuals' perception about transition to adulthood in multi-cultural India.

Studies related to emerging adulthood have been conducted in various non-western cultures. The findings from such studies have indicated that along with criteria similar to those highlighted in the western context, participants also expressed culture specific criteria, for example, participants endorsed norm abiding behaviour to a higher extent versus western countries. Such findings have contributed to expansion of the understanding of adulthood and importantly the cultural meaning attached to this phase of life. At a broader level, the present study will also contribute to the understanding of culture as it influences human development.



## Conceptual Framework

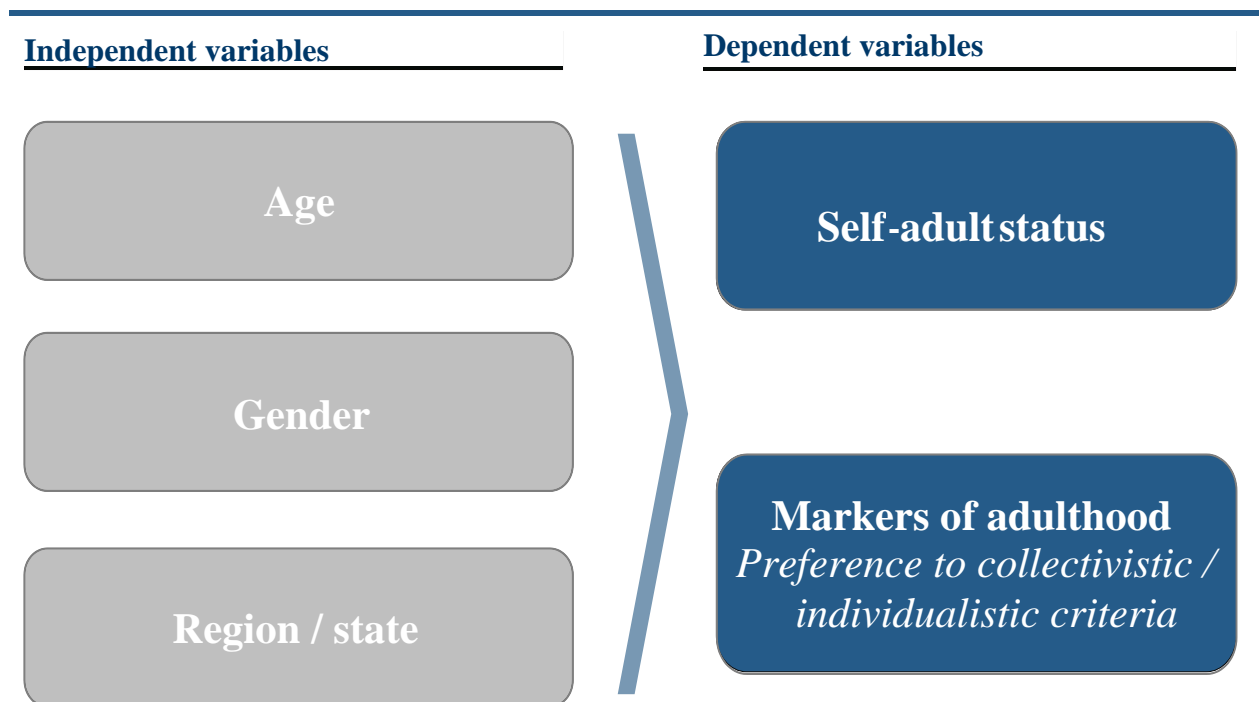


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study

The study was conceptualised to understand the impact of independent variables such as age (sub-categories within the 18-25 years categories), gender (women versus men, especially to understand the potential impact of gender in light of the Indian context outlined in Figure 1) and region/state on perception of self-adult status and markers of adulthood. Notably, one of the core objectives is to understand if the markers of adulthood are more individualistic as observed in the west or collectivistic as influenced by the Hindu family system and societal norms.

### **Broad Research Questions**

- Does the phase of emerging adulthood exist in the Indian context?
- What are the perceptions of young people regarding adulthood?
- What according to them are the markers of adulthood?

### **Specific Research Questions**

- How do Indian youth define adulthood (i.e., what criteria are deemed important for an individual to be classified an adult)?
- What is the relationship between the criteria deemed important for adulthood and individuals' own self-adult status?
- What are the different markers of emerging adulthood in the contemporary Indian context?
- To what extent do the young people endorse collectivistic versus individualistic criteria for adulthood?
- To what extent is Indian youth's perception of adulthood influenced by age and gender?
- How do the perceptions of youth in northern Indian city of Delhi (national capital) vary from the perceptions of youth in western Indian city of Vadodara (mid-sized city, close to commercial capital Mumbai)?

## CHAPTER 3

### METHOD

#### Research Design

The purpose of this study was to understand the perceptions of young people aged 18-25 years about transition to adulthood. A descriptive comparative design was used.

The study was conducted in two phases. The first phase followed a quantitative approach using a survey questionnaire to identify the markers of adulthood considered important by youth. The aim of this phase was to obtain a descriptive picture of the Indian youth's perception. The second phase adopted a qualitative approach and used in-depth interviews with young people. The aim of this phase was to obtain insights about the experiences and feelings of youth in select urban areas in contemporary India.

#### Location of the Study

The study was conducted in two cities in India: (i) **Delhi** is the national capital located in Northern India wherein mainly students from the Delhi University<sup>3</sup> were included, and (ii) **Vadodara** is a cosmopolitan city in Western India, wherein students from the Maharaja Sayajirao University<sup>4</sup> of Baroda were included.

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<sup>3</sup> Delhi University in particular is one of the most sought after universities in India with a vast range of courses available.

<sup>4</sup> One of the largest universities in Gujarat with a variety of courses on offer.

Delhi is one of India's most developed metropolitan cities, with a diverse cultural environment which is a blend of traditional and modern outlooks. A significant impact of globalisation can be observed in the city, particularly in terms of focus on education with significant educational options being available for the youth in the city, and consumerism. Delhi is a city that attracts youth from across the country for educational opportunities. Such diversity in the participants group was expected to lead to interesting variances in the opinions of youth on transition to adulthood.

Vadodara is a cosmopolitan city in the Western Indian state of Gujarat (3<sup>rd</sup> largest city in Gujarat after Ahmedabad and Surat). The city is relatively close to the commercial capital of India, Mumbai. The city is often referred to as the “cultural capital” of Gujarat. The M. S. University is one of the largest universities in the state of Gujarat and offers a variety of courses attracting students from various parts of the country.

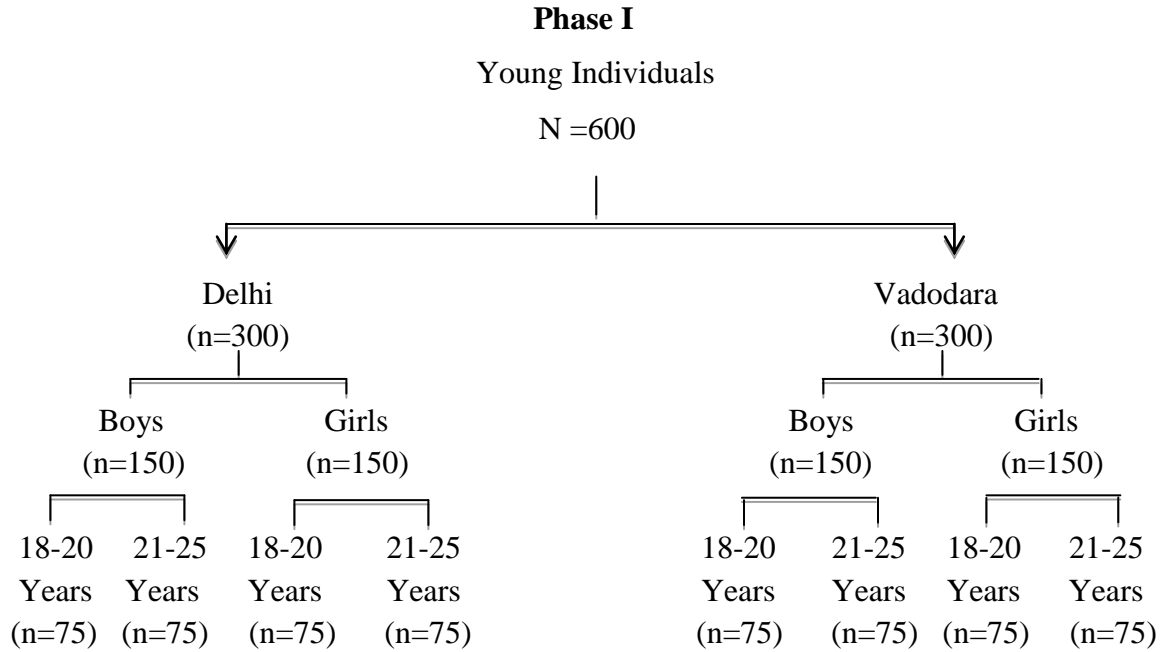
### **Research Participants**

The total sample of the study consisted of 630 individuals. Below is an illustration describing the samples selected for the two phases of the research:

#### **Phase I.**

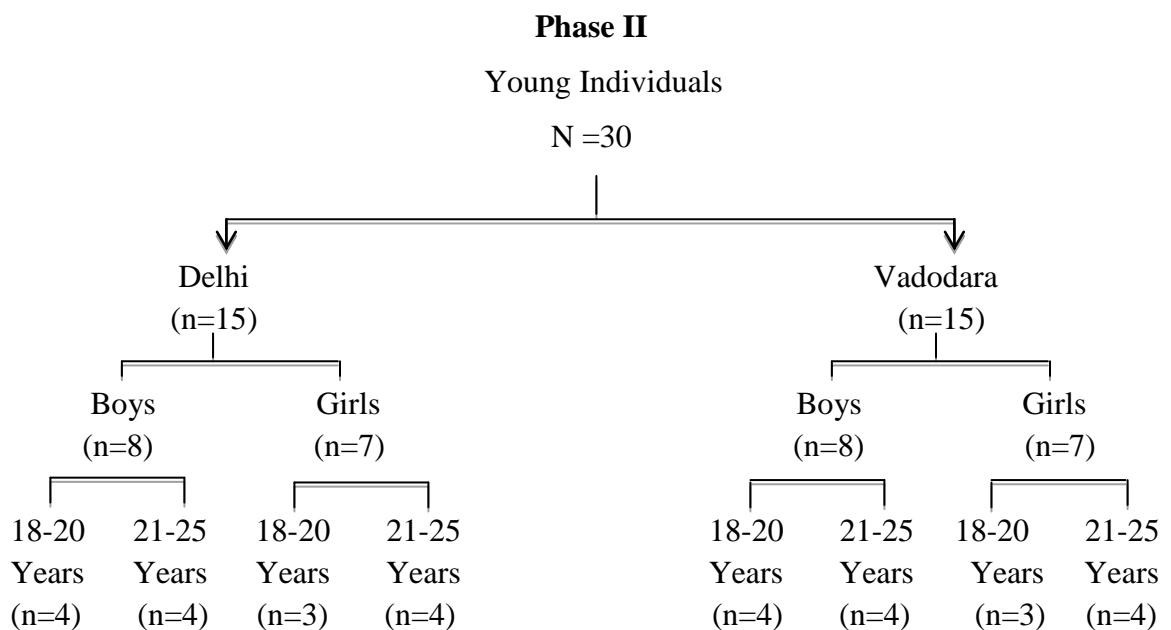
The sample comprised 600 participants, including 300 from Delhi and 300 Vadodara.

The sample description is illustrated below:



## Phase II.

The sample consisted of 30 participants, 15 from Delhi and 15 from Vadodara distributed as follows:



## **Criteria for Sample Selection**

### **City.**

The study aimed to understand youth's perception of transition to adulthood in two cities located in two different regions of India, northern and western. India being a large and diverse nation in terms of culture and religion, it was expected that the youth from the two regions will portray variation in their perception of transition to adulthood. Hence sample groups were selected from these two cities, Delhi in the north and Vadodara in the west, to investigate the differences or similarities that may exist between the two regions.

### **Age.**

In traditional Indian culture, young people in the age group 21-25 years are expected to perform all adult roles and considered adult in comparison to young people in the age group 18-20 years. To find out if there are such developmental differences in perceptions of early and late young people, the sample comprised young adults from two age groups; the early young people were in the age group of 18-20 years and the late young people were in the age group of 21-25 years, respectively.

### **Gender.**

Gender is a significant variable shaping individuals' views on different issues. In order to understand the influence of gender on perception of transition to adulthood, equal numbers of boys and girls from each age group have been included.

## **Sample Selection**

The sample groups for both phases of the study consisted of young unmarried individuals belonging to middle, upper-middle and upper social classes. For phase I, stratified random sampling was used and for phase II, participants were recruited via personal contacts of the researcher using snowball and convenient sampling techniques. An attempt was made to include young people with varied educational backgrounds pursuing a variety of courses<sup>5</sup>.

## **Tools**

### **Phase I.**

In this phase, a questionnaire and rating scale were used, divided into three major sections as follows:

#### ***Demographics.***

The participants were asked to provide demographic information that specified their age, gender, city, educational qualification, parent's education as well as employment, living with parents, living away from parents, number of years lived away from the family and family income.

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<sup>5</sup> Including business administration, law, medicines, chemistry, physics, biology, bio-chemistry, family & community sciences, mass communication, accountancy, fine arts, psychology, sociology, Sanskrit, Hindi, and English

***Criteria for Indian adulthood questionnaire.***

The participants were surveyed on the Criteria of Indian Adulthood Questionnaire (CIAQ) which is an adapted and expanded version of Arnett's Criteria for Adulthood Questionnaire (CAQ, 2003). The participants indicated their conception of transition to adulthood on the questionnaire. The CAIQ is based on CAQ and uses more simplified language and is also translated into Hindi for convenience of the participants. Specifically with respect to the Indian context, the CAIQ contains 10 additional criteria under the new domain "family related", that was understood as particularly relevant for Indian youth (e.g., "show obedience and respect towards elder").

The questionnaire consisted of 49 items and asked two primary questions. In the first question, participants were asked to indicate whether or not they believed the listed criteria were necessary for transition to adulthood, using a yes (i.e., necessary for adulthood) or no (i.e., not necessary for adulthood) response code. In the second set of questions, participants were asked to opine on the *importance* of each of the listed characteristics in determining if a person had reached adulthood. Participants could rate each criterion on a 4-point scale ranging from "not at all important" to "very important". The main domains on the questionnaire were: Independence, Interdependence, Role Transitions, Norm Compliance, Biological Transitions, Chronological Transitions, Family Capacities and Family Related (refer Appendix B).



***Criteria for self-adulthood status.***

To identify self- adult status of the participants, they were asked the question: “Do you think that you have reached adulthood?” The participants could respond in "yes", "no", or "in some respects yes, in some respects no". Participants were also asked using an open ended format, before giving the questionnaire to comment on “In your own words, please describe what you think are the most important characteristics in determining if a person has reached adulthood” (Badger, Nelson and Barry, 2006).

**Cultural validation of the tool.**

Field testing and pilot studies were conducted with a few participants prior to performing the study, in order to determine if all the items included in the tools were understandable by participants or if there was need for any clarifications or additions to the questionnaire in order to better reflect the Indian cultural perspectives. Moreover it helped the researcher to get acquainted with the tool and process of collecting data, to check the amount of time required for administering the tool and to understand the relevance of the term emerging adulthood in the Indian context.

Accordingly, a series of pilot studies were conducted using the self- administered questionnaire:

- I. In first pilot, ten boys and ten girls were included. It revealed that the overall tool was applicable in the Indian context. Young people took approximately 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire and were largely able to understand the tool.

However, there were a few items which needed to be presented in simplified language, for example, the item that was written as "married" needed to be clarified as “a married person is an adult”.

- II. A second pilot was conducted with five girls and five boys. Open ended questionnaire with boys and focused group discussion with girls were held. The objective was to understand if there were any items which were missing from the tool to appropriately reflect Indian cultural perspectives. A new domain “Family Related” was added to the tool after this pilot phase. The new items were: “have ability to understand parental view”; “show obedience and respect towards elder”, “be able to support their parents in old age with social, psychological and economic needs”, “an adult is one who spends quality time with their family”, “an adult is one who has responsibilities towards home”, and "decide to marry a person of his/her choice ".
- III. Yet another pilot was conducted with two boys and two girls to test the validity of the interview schedule for Phase II. They were asked open-ended questions with background information related to the domains discussed below. The pilot indicated that the interview guideline worked well with the young people.

### **Phase II.**

In phase II, since the study focused on understanding the conception of adulthood among the Indian youth, it was important to take into account the subjective importance of self-

experience of young people. Hence an open-ended interview schedule was prepared to help the researcher to engage in interactive discussions with young people. It also helped to provide an insightful understanding of their perspectives about transition to adulthood.

The interview schedule was prepared based upon related literature (Macek, et.al, 2007; Molgat, M., 2007) as well as a pilot research conducted with two girls and two boys. This ensured the validity and clarity of the tool. There were six major domains in the interview schedule:

### ***Demographics.***

The participants were asked to provide demographic information specifying their age, gender, city, educational qualification, parent's education and employment, living with parents, living away from parents, number of years lived away from the family and family income.

### ***General concept of adulthood and perception of one's own adulthood.***

This domain focused on questions relating to the features and characteristics deemed important for an adult person, and the advantages and disadvantages of being an adult. Furthermore, they were asked to describe their self-adult status (i.e., if they considered themselves adults or not).

***Experiences in the present life stage versus earlier times.***

Participants were asked about their perceptions of important markers of adulthood in the current scenario in comparison to earlier times and how the life period they were experiencing was different from earlier times.

***Views about parent's expectations and marriage.***

This section focused on the participants' perceptions of their parents' ideas of transition to adulthood and their expectations from an adult son/daughter. Additionally, they were also asked to provide their views about marriage and to discuss what they think as the right age for getting married.

***Feeling of autonomy and commitments.***

These questions concentrated on the notions of independence and self-reliance as explained by the participants and also when would one attain independent status. In addition, they were asked to mention about obligations and responsibilities that they regard to be important in relation to their future (refer Appendix C).

**Procedure**

**Phase I.**

In phase I, the data was collected from the students of different colleges in the two cities, Vadodara and Delhi (medicine, family and community sciences, fine arts, psychology,

sociology, architecture; management and arts). Prior to approaching students, consent was taken from the respective heads of the departments and deans of the faculties (in written) as well as from the students (orally) to conduct the survey (refer Appendix A). They were provided with information stating the purpose of the study and procedure for completing the survey.

All tools were self-administered in the presence of the researcher and the students were asked to give their own responses and not to get influenced by their peers or friends. Clarifications were made by the researcher if participants had any queries. The students took about 30-40 minutes to complete the survey. The entire data for phase I was gathered over four months allocating two months for each city.

## **Phase II.**

In phase II, young people were individually interviewed. The researcher first contacted a few young people known to her in both the cities and the remaining participants were sampled through snow ball technique. Prior to the interview, the participants were explained the topic of the study, its purpose, its output and then their oral consents were obtained. An appointment for the interview was fixed with each young adult who agreed to participate in the study. The detailed interview was conducted at the participants' department or any other place convenient to both, participant and the researcher with no outside interruption. Being in the similar age group, the researcher could establish a good rapport and level of comfort with the young people which were helpful to conduct the interviews.

The interview was conducted in English or Hindi as per the participant's convenience. Most of the interviews lasted approximately 60-90 minutes, but a few took longer. All the interviews were tape recorded as well as field notes were taken. It took one month in each city to conduct all the interviews.

During the data collection phase, the researcher came across some unique and interesting experiences while interacting with the youth. For example, some of them really appreciated the form and its novelty, they also mentioned that it is an insight for them to think about this issue; some were curious to know why the researcher was conducting this survey and its ultimate use; why the researcher traveled to Delhi specifically for this survey and how research on this topic will benefit the society? In general most of the participants had not thought of anything like this before. Lastly they requested if the researcher could share the results of the study with them.

## **Analysis**

### **Phase I.**

#### ***Statistical Analysis.***

- Self-adult perceptions of the participants were analyzed by calculating frequencies and percentages.
- Chi-square was computed to know the relationship between self-adult perception and background variables such as age, gender, city, participants' education, parents'

education and occupation, living with parents and living away from parents and participants' employment status.

- Means and standard deviations were computed to evaluate the relative importance of the markers of adulthood.
- To test for differences in scores on the eight domains (Independence, Interdependence, Role Transitions, Norm Compliance, Biological Transitions, Chronological Transitions, Family Capacities and Family Related) based upon the city, age and gender as three independent variables, multivariate general linear modeling (GLM) was computed.

## **Phase II.**

### ***Qualitative Analysis.***

- The interviews with young people were transcribed and translated into English.
- Typical key words and phrases were retained in the local language of the participants to retain the original meaning.
- Data reduction charts were prepared to get the summary of the interviews.
- The data was coded by sorting through data and attaching short words or phrases (Miles & Huberman, 1994), for example
  - Re- Adt: Reasons for being an adult
  - Ch-Adt: Characteristics for being an adult

- The conceptual categories of qualitative responses were formulated. For instance, an exhaustive list of all the coded responses for reasons for being an adult was prepared. Then similar responses were clustered together (Miles & Huberman, 1994).
- Salient themes were elicited after carefully going through the data (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). For example, while analyzing the responses of young adult for the characteristics of being an adult, two broad themes emerged namely 'self-focused' and 'family and society focused related'. These two broad themes were further divided into sub-themes. For instance, 'self-focused' included sub-themes such as responsibility, self-sufficiency, maturity etc.
- The major themes were presented in the form of matrices, graphs, and frequency tables to provide a summary of the emerging themes.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS**

The results of the study are presented in the following two phases:

Phase I aimed at finding out the self-adult status and important markers of adulthood using a quantitative approach. Its purpose was to explore the self-adult status, that is, how many of the study participants considered themselves as adult and to know their perceptions about important characteristics of an adult and how are these criteria related to variables of city, age and gender.

Phase II is a follow up of phase I. Using a qualitative approach it describes the views and experiences of individuals regarding their self-adult status as well as their perceptions about their parents' views.

#### **Phase I**

It includes two sections:

Section I presents the socio demographic profile of the participants.

Section II describes quantitatively the participants' perceptions of self-adult status and also illuminates the important criteria of adulthood under the following sections:

- A. Participants' perception of adulthood
- B. Important criteria for adulthood

## Section I

### Socio-Demographic Profile of the Participants

This section presents the socio-demographic information about the participants, namely, city, age, gender, educational level, parents' education and occupation, living with family, living away from family, duration of living independently, employment status and family monthly income.

Table 1

*Socio-Demographic Profile of the Young Persons (N=600)*

<b>Background Variables</b>	<b>Delhi</b>	<b>Vadodara</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>City</b>	50	50	100
<b>Age (in years)</b>			
18-20	50	50	50
21-25	50	50	50
<b>Gender</b>			
Women	50	50	50
Men	50	50	50
<b>Educational Level</b>			
Graduation	56	54	55
Post-Graduation	44	46	45
<b>Mother Education</b>			
Secondary	12	12	12
High School	19	32	25
Graduate	45	41	43
Post Graduate	24	15	19
<b>Father Education</b>			
Secondary	3	6	4
High School	12	19	16
Graduate	43	51	47
Post Graduate	42	24	32

<b>Mother Occupation</b>			
Working	26	21	23
Non-Working	74	79	76
<b>Father Occupation</b>			
Service	43	47	44
Business	35	39	36
Professional	22	14	17
<b>Living with Parents or Family</b>			
Yes	60	62	61
No	40	38	39
<b>Years Lived Independently</b>			
None	57	52	54
1-5 years	31	36	34
6 years and above	12	12	12
<b>Employment</b>			
Yes (Full time)	1	2	2
Yes (Part time)	8	7	7
No	92	91	91
<b>Family's Monthly Income</b>			
Rs.15,000-20,000	46	42	45
Rs.20,000-30,000	51	48	49
Rs.30,000 and above	3	10	6

All the participants were equally divided across age, gender and city. Slightly more than half were pursuing graduation or dual graduation (55%) and the remaining participants were doing post-graduation. More than half of the participants lived with family (61%), a common practice in India. Most of the participants were not employed (92%), and belonged to families where the parents were graduates and above. Higher percentages of participants' mothers were home makers (76%) and most fathers were professionals or self-employed.

## **Section II**

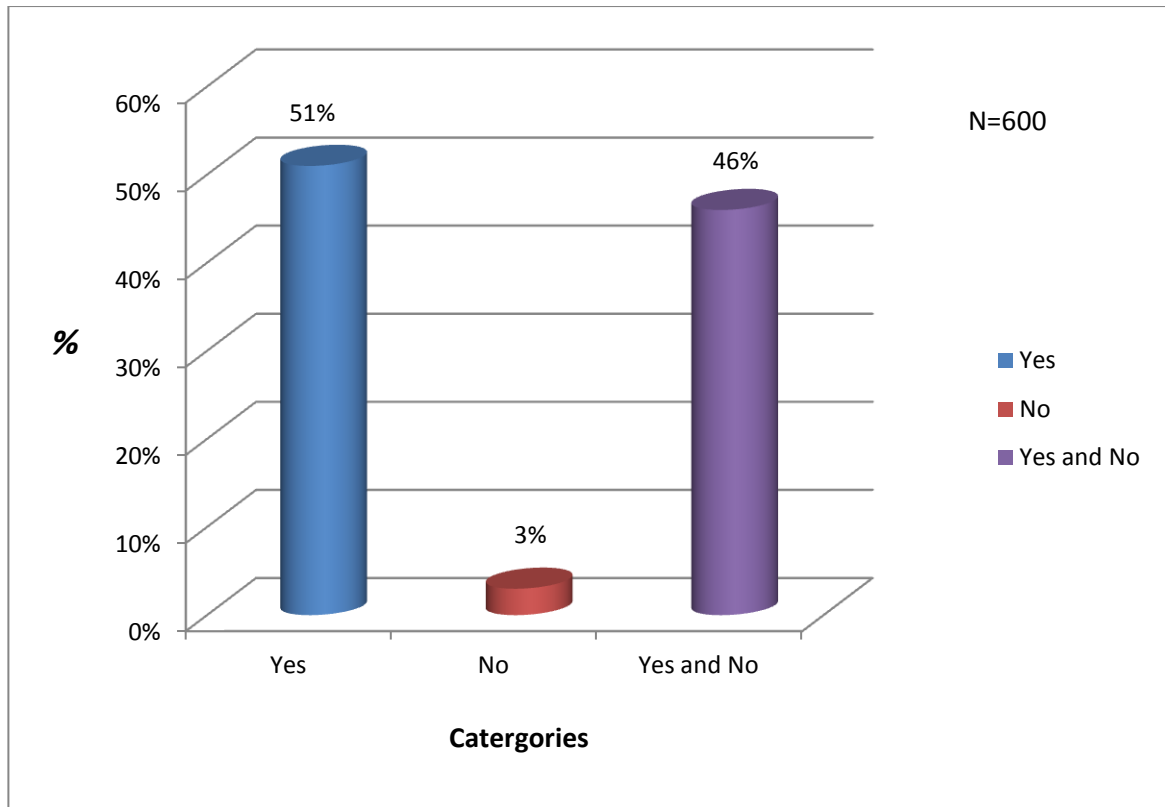
### **Perceptions about Adulthood**

This section is divided into two parts, part A focuses on perception of adulthood and part B focuses on criteria for adulthood.

#### **Part A. Perception of Adulthood**

This section focuses on participants' perceptions of their own adult status. The influence of key variables city, gender and age in defining their adult status is also addressed. Further the impact of other variables like participants' education, parents' education, and living with family or living away from family are also noted (see Figure1 and Tables 2 and 4).

To determine whether young individuals from Vadodara and Delhi considered themselves as having attained adult status, responses to the question "Do you think that you have reached adulthood?" were examined (see Figure 2).



*Note:* “Yes and no” indicates response in some respects yes and in some respects no

*Figure 2.* Perceptions of participants regarding self-adult status

Figure 2 shows that 51% participants considered themselves as adult, whereas 46% participants portrayed a sense of ambivalence about their adult status. This indicates that emerging adulthood as a period is being experienced by nearly half of the participants in the Northern and Western parts of India, whereas for more than half of the participants, the transition to adulthood has already occurred.

Table 2

*Self-Adult Perceptions of Participants across Age, Gender and City (N=600)*

Do you consider yourself as an adult?	City		Gender		Age	
	Vadodara	Delhi	Boys	Girls	18-20 years	21-25 years
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	56	47	61	42	41	62
No	3	3	2	4	4	2
In some respects yes, and in some respects no	41	51	37	54	55	36
Differences between variables $\chi^2$ (df, N) p	6.065(2, 600) $p < .04$ .		20.38 (2, 600) $p < .001$		25.75 (2, 600) $p < .001$	

Table 2 shows the respondents' self-definition as adult by age, gender and city. All three variables were significantly related to self-definition as adult. Higher percentages of Vadodara participants (56%) affirmed adult status compared to Delhi participants. More boys (61%) considered themselves to be adult than girls. Majority of the participants from the older age group (62%) felt that they have become adult. The feeling of being in-between was felt by more Delhi participants, girls and younger participants. This may be because Delhi being a metro city and the capital of India is more directly influenced by the global world and in turn impacts the experiences of young participants more closely. Girls have relatively less freedom than boys and live in a protective environment which might have influenced their status of feeling in-between. The younger participants who have just crossed their adolescence and have entered college and living with their family could be the reason for their ambiguous status.

Table 3

*Self-Adult Perceptions of Participants by Background Variables (N=600)*

Do you consider yourself as an adult?	Education		Mother Education				Father Education				Living Status	
	G	PG	G	PG	High	Sec& Sec	G	PG	High	Sec& Sec	AF	WF
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	44	<b>61</b>	47	39	<b>64</b>	<b>63</b>	54	43	<b>56</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>63</b>	44
No	3	3	3	6	1	0	3	4	0	0	3	3
In some respects and in some respects no	<b>53</b>	36	<b>50</b>	<b>55</b>	35	35	<b>43</b>	<b>53</b>	43	31	35	<b>52</b>
Differences between variables $\chi^2$ (df, N) p	17.03 (2, 600) $p < .001$		27.64 (2, 596) $p < .001$				13.59 (2, 594) $p < .034$				21.19 (2, 600) $p < .001$	

Note, G=Graduation; PG=Post Graduation; AF= Away from family; WF= With family

Table 3 shows percentages and chi-squares for each background variable with participants' perception of adult status. It reveals that background variables are significantly related to participants' perceptions of reaching adulthood. Higher percentages of participants' pursuing post-graduation considered themselves as adult compared to participants' pursuing graduation. Interestingly those participants who considered themselves as adult had mothers who were educated till higher secondary in comparison to participants whose mothers had higher education. Similar trends were noted with respect to fathers' education. Further, more participants who lived away from family believed themselves to be adult than participants who stayed with their parents. Background variables like parents' occupation, employment status and monthly income show no significant influence on participants' perception of being an adult. These results indicate that parents who are less educated might have raised their children in more conforming environments which may give less

opportunity to explore their self, hence feelings of ambiguity may not have the scope to manifest. On the other hand participants pursuing higher qualification and living away from family may have experienced and explored themselves to larger degree, therefore they tend to consider themselves as adult whereas participants who are living with parents and pursuing graduation felt ambiguous with need to explore further.

### **Part B. Criteria for Adulthood**

To investigate the criteria that young people deem necessary for adulthood, responses on the CIAQ (Criteria for Indian Adulthood Questionnaire) were examined. It aimed to know both, most preferred (highest “yes”) and least preferred (lowest “yes”) criteria for adulthood. This is shown in Tables 4 and 5 respectively.



Table 4

*Highest Preferred Criteria Necessary for Adulthood across City, Age and Gender (N=600)*

Criteria for Adulthood	Vadodara					Delhi			
	18-20		21-25			18-20		21-25	
	years		years			years		years	
	All	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Accept responsibility for the consequences of his/her actions. (Independence, item 1.)	99	97	99	96	100	100	97	99	100
Be able to support their parents in old age with social, psychological and economic needs. (Family Related, item 45.)	97	91	100	100	97	92	96	99	97
Show obedience and respect towards elder. (Family Related, item 44.)	96	92	99	93	99	95	97	96	99
Have ability to understand parental views. (Family Related, item 43.)	96	89	99	96	96	96	99	97	95
Capable of caring for children (woman). (Family Capacities, item 23.)	95	97	96	93	97	93	91	97	93
Avoid using illegal drugs. (Norm Compliance, item 13.)	94	92	97	95	97	92	95	92	92

Majority of the participants have given preference to the criteria related to family which indicates significance of family for young individuals in India (see Table 4). The criterion “capable of caring for children (woman)” was endorsed by greater number of boys than girls. This reflects boys’ stereotypical notions, whereby they feel that women should be capable of caring for children more than a man. This also indicates that culture plays an important role in developing perceptions of young individuals as participants’ gave high

preference to criteria which linked to family duties and responsibilities. Across the two cities, the criterion “accept responsibility for the consequences of his/her actions” was given highest responses by majority of the participants. This implies that participants also gave importance to independence as a criterion of adulthood, thereby pointing to the co-existence of collectivistic and individualistic orientations in the Indian psyche (Sinha & Tripathi, 1994).

Table 5

*Least Preferred Criteria Necessary for Adulthood across City, Age and Gender (N=600)*

Criteria for Adulthood	Vadodara					Delhi			
	18-20		21-25			18-20		21-25	
	years		years			years		years	
	All	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A married person is an adult. (Role Transition, item 29.)	36	61	49	25	29	31	33	30	24
Not deeply tied to parents emotionally. (Independence, item 42.)	34	37	36	51	36	27	32	42	14
An adult should have at least one child. (Role Transition, item 30.)	29	42	29	25	29	23	28	38	18
An adult would have had sexual intercourse. (Biological Transition item 46.)	27	47	27	29	23	23	21	37	11
Obtaining driver's license means you are an adult. (Legal Transition, item 40.)	26	41	31	22	27	23	11	32	19
No longer living in parents' household. (Independence, item 48.)	20	33	23	20	21	12	17	24	10

Table 5 indicates that participants gave least preference to the criterion role transition such as marriage and child bearing. Girls gave least preference to the criteria “an adult would have had sexual intercourse” and “not deeply tied to parents emotionally” than boys. Topics related to sex continue to be taboo in India and the interactions of this view with gender stereotypic characteristics may be a factor explaining the greater frequency of girls not endorsing this criterion. The criterion “no longer living in parents’ household” was ranked lowest by majority of the participants. This reflects the traditional Indian practice of living in the family until marriage for girls and until the need to move to another city either for education or for employment in case of boys, the latter being increasingly seen also for girls. On the other hand, the traditional practice of getting married early and bearing a child soon after marriage as criteria signifying adulthood appears to be decreasing as according to participants, these criteria are not important for being an adult. Results also show changes in perceptions of girls with reference to emotional attachment to the natal family. Emotional detachment from parents which was earlier prioritised as a major socialisation goal for preparing the girl towards her adult duties after marriage, did not emerge as a significant criteria for adulthood in the present study (refer Appendix D for the detailed list of percentages for all criteria).

The next set of analysis examined the responses to the item, “How important is this criterion for adulthood?” The responses available for this criterion were, “not at all important,” “not very important,” “fairly important,” and “very important”. The means and standard deviations were examined for the sub-scales of the criteria for adulthood across city, age and gender as shown in Table 6.

Table 6

*Means and Standard Deviations for Markers of Adulthood Subscales in Young Persons across City, Age and Gender*

Markers of Adulthood	Vadodara								Delhi							
	18-20 years				21-25 years				18-20 years				21-25 years			
	Boys		Girls		Boys		Girls		Boys		Girls		Boys		Girls	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Norm Compliance	3.32	.51	3.60	.35	3.19	.64	3.52	.45	3.11	.68	3.41	.58	3.25	.63	3.15	.68
Family Related	3.21	.50	3.17	.39	3.27	.47	3.32	.38	3.25	.50	3.20	.41	3.30	.46	3.34	.33
Family Capacities	3.13	.57	3.53	.33	3.21	.46	3.33	.55	3.00	.71	3.13	.52	3.29	.48	3.05	.67
Interdependence	2.96	.54	3.00	.52	3.01	.64	2.94	.63	2.75	.65	2.75	.61	2.97	.60	2.61	.63
Independence	2.77	.52	2.86	.42	2.87	.42	2.70	.46	2.60	.40	2.60	.42	2.82	.47	2.74	.36
Biological Transition	2.76	.64	2.75	.62	2.56	.74	2.39	.75	2.32	.79	2.31	.64	2.52	.73	1.94	.65
Role Transition	2.73	.60	2.61	.65	2.35	.71	2.38	.73	2.25	.81	2.26	.68	2.38	.78	2.05	.67
Legal Transition	2.68	.83	2.70	.67	2.11	.91	2.40	.81	1.94	.83	2.09	.79	2.35	.82	2.09	.73

Table 6 shows that norm compliance, family related and family capacities emerged as the top three markers of adulthood across the two cities. Majority of girls across cities and age groups favoured norm compliance and family capacities as compared to boys. However boys of age group 21-25 years from Delhi were an exception. Larger number of younger boys (18-20 years) and older girls (21-25 years) irrespective of city favoured family related domain as compared to older boys (21-25 years) and younger girls (18-20 years). These results reflect the traditional socialization of girls in India where they are expected to excel in household chores and other family responsibilities. Additionally, it is expected from both boys and girls to behave in accordance with the set norms of the society. On the other hand, due to the patriarchal structure of the society, boys are conferred more freedom. However, living in a metro city like Delhi which is a blend of both modern and traditional outlooks,

the perceptions of older boys (21-25 years) in Delhi may be more influenced by cultural norms and traditional socialisation of a person. Hence they endorsed domains such as norm compliance and family capacities (capable of caring for children (woman), (97%). As girls grow older there may be greater desire to fit in with culturally expected norms and given that younger boys were mostly living with their parents (58%) or only recently shifted away could be the reason for their endorsement of family related domain.

Means and standard deviations were also calculated for each criterion of adulthood to know which criteria were given most importance. Table 7 shows the six most important criteria that emerged in the both cities.

Table 7

*Means and Standard Deviations for First Six Criteria in Young Persons across City*

(N=600)

Criteria for Adulthood	Vadodara		Delhi	
	M	SD	M	SD
Be able to support their parents in old age with social, psychological and economic needs. (Family Related, item 45.)	3.73 (1)	.56	3.69 (1)	.64
Avoid using illegal drugs. (Norm Compliance, item 13.)	3.73 (2)	.64	3.60 (3)	.85
Avoid drunk driving. (Norm Compliance, item 12.)	3.67 (3)	.73	3.61 (2)	.81
Capable of caring for children (woman). (Family Capacities, item 23.)	3.60 (4)	.71	3.48 (5)	.75
Accept responsibility for the consequences of his/her actions. (Independence, item 1.)	3.46 (6)	.70	3.56 (4)	.61
Show obedience and respect towards elder. (Family Related, item 44.)	3.56 (5)	.68	3.44 (6)	.72

Results revealed that participants in both the cities endorsed similar criteria on importance but differ in ranking as shown in Table 7. It is also seen that Vadodara participants have higher mean scores on all criteria than Delhi participants, except on the criterion “Accept responsibility for the consequences of his/her actions”. This maybe a reflection of the context in that Vadodara is a smaller city compared to Delhi and hence individuals may be more aware of their social responsibilities (refer Appendix E1 and E2 for the detailed list for means and standard deviations for each criterion for two cities).

To test for differences in markers of adulthood between age, gender, and city, multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) was computed. Further Scheffe’s post-hoc test was applied on all significant interaction effects. The mean scores of the eight domains of markers of adulthood (i.e., independence, interdependence, role transitions, norm compliance, biological transitions, legal transition family capacities and family related) served as the dependent variables, while city (Vadodara and Delhi), age group (18-20years and 21-25years), and gender (men and women) served as the independent variables.

### **One way interaction effects.**

One way interaction effects were computed in order to know the comparison on age groups (18-20years and 21-25years), gender (men and women) and city (Vadodara and Delhi) with reference to the degree of importance participants placed on each criterion of adulthood (see Tables 8, 9 and 10).

Table 8

*Comparison of Young Persons on Markers of Adulthood for Age*

Markers of Adulthood	Age				Type III Sum of Squares	df	F	Sig.
	18-20		21-25					
	years		years					
	M	SD	M	SD				
Independence	2.71	.45	2.78	.43	.837	1	4.425	.036 <sup>a</sup>
Interdependence	2.86	.59	2.88	.64	.051	1	.141	.708
Role Transition	2.46	.72	2.29	.73	4.546	1	9.112	.003 <sup>b</sup>
Norm Compliance	3.36	.56	3.28	.62	1.001	1	3.028	.082
Biological Transition	2.53	.71	2.35	.76	5.049	1	10.393	.001 <sup>c</sup>
Legal Transition	2.35	.85	2.24	.83	1.949	1	3.031	.082
Family Capacities	3.20	.58	3.22	.56	.072	1	.238	.626
Family Related	3.21	.45	3.31	.41	.342	1	1.863	.173

Notes.

<sup>a</sup> Participants aged 18-20 years showed significant difference in preference than participants aged 21-25 years at  $p < 0.036$ .

<sup>b</sup> Participants aged 18-20 years showed significant difference in preference than participants aged 21-25 years at  $p < 0.003$ .

<sup>c</sup> Participants aged 21-25 years showed significant difference in preference than participants aged 18-20 years at  $p < 0.001$

Significant differences were observed on markers of development as a function of age (see Table 8). The interaction effect of age was significant for independence ( $F(1, 592) = 4.425$ ,  $p < .03$ ), role transition ( $F(1, 592) = 9.112$ ,  $p < .003$ ), and biological transition ( $F(1, 592) = 10.393$ ,  $p < .001$ ) (see Table 8). An examination of the means revealed that older participants ( $M=2.78$ ,  $SD=.43$ ) gave more importance to independence than younger participants ( $M=2.71$ ,  $SD=.45$ ). However participants in the younger age groups gave more important to role transition and biological transition ( $M=2.46$ ,  $SD=.72$  &  $M=2.53$ ,  $SD=.71$ ) versus participants in the older age group ( $M=2.29$ ,  $SD=.73$  &  $M=2.35$ ,  $SD=.76$ ). Higher percentages of older participants (21-25 years) were living away from their family (62%) and pursuing higher education. This may have influenced their perception which is reflected in their emphasis on independence.

Table 9

*Comparison of Young Persons on Markers of Adulthood for Gender*

Markers of Adulthood	Gender				Type III Sum of Squares	df	F	Sig.
	Boys		Girls					
	M	SD	M	SD				
Independence	2.77	.46	2.72	.42	.285	1	1.505	.220
Interdependence	2.92	.62	2.83	.61	1.400	1	3.835	.051
Role Transition	2.43	.75	2.33	.71	1.547	1	3.101	.079
Norm Compliance	3.22	.62	3.42	.55	6.164	1	18.642	.000 <sup>a</sup>
Biological Transition	2.54	.74	2.35	.72	5.532	1	11.387	.001 <sup>b</sup>
Legal Transition	2.27	.89	2.32	.79	.403	1	.626	.429
Family Capacities	3.16	.57	3.26	.56	1.683	1	5.595	.018 <sup>c</sup>
Family Related	3.26	.48	3.26	.38	.007	1	.041	.840

Notes.

<sup>a</sup> Girls showed significant difference in preference than boys at  $p < 0.001$ .

<sup>b</sup> Boys showed significant difference in preference than girls at  $p < 0.003$ .

<sup>c</sup> Girls showed significant difference in preference than boys at  $p < 0.018$ .

Table 9 revealed a significant gender difference with respect to domains of adulthood. Boys and girls were significantly different on norm compliance ( $F(1, 592) = 18.642, p < .003$ ), biological transition ( $F(1, 592) = 11.387, p < .001$ ), and family capacities ( $F(1, 592) = 5.595, p < .01$ ). An examination of the means revealed that girls gave more preference to norm compliance ( $M=3.42, SD=.55$ ) and family capacities ( $M=3.26, SD=.56$ ) than boys [ $(M=3.22, SD=.62)$  &  $(M=3.16, SD=.57)$ ] whereas boys ( $M=3.54, SD=.74$ ) gave preference to biological transition compared to girls ( $M=3.35, SD=.72$ ). As mentioned earlier, these findings are in line with traditional gender roles prescriptions for girls in India. Boys gave more preference to biological transition signifying freedom to experience sexual relationships and responsibility to promote family lineage along patriarchal lines.



Table 10

*Comparison of Young Persons on Markers of Adulthood for City*

Markers of Adulthood	City				Type III	df	F	Sig.
	Vadodara		Delhi		Sum of			
	M	SD	M	SD	Squares			
Independence	2.80	.46	2.69	.42	1.714	1	9.061	.003 <sup>+</sup>
Interdependence	2.98	.58	2.77	.63	6.240	1	17.090	.000 <sup>+</sup>
Role Transition	2.51	.69	2.24	.74	11.866	1	23.787	.000 <sup>+</sup>
Norm Compliance	3.41	.52	3.23	.65	4.648	1	14.057	.000 <sup>+</sup>
Biological Transition	2.61	.70	2.28	.73	17.346	1	35.701	.000 <sup>+</sup>
Legal Transition	2.47	.84	2.12	.80	18.892	1	29.372	.000 <sup>+</sup>
Family Capacities	3.30	.51	3.12	.61	4.804	1	15.968	.000 <sup>+</sup>
Family Related	3.24	.44	3.27	.43	1.498	1	8.156	.004 <sup>*</sup>

Notes.

<sup>+</sup>Vadodara's participants show significant difference in preference to all the domains than Delhi participants;  $p < 0.05$ .

<sup>\*</sup>Delhi's participants show significant difference on family related domain than Vadodara's participants;  $p < 0.05$ .

An interaction effect of city was also statistically significant as shown in Table 10. Both Vadodara and Delhi participants were significantly different on all markers of adulthood namely, independence ( $F(1, 592) = 9.061, p < .003$ ), interdependence ( $F(1, 592) = 17.09, p < .001$ ), role transitions ( $F(1, 592) = 23.79, p < .001$ ), norm compliance ( $F(1, 592) = 14.06, p < .001$ ), biological transitions ( $F(1, 592) = 35.70, p < .001$ ), legal transitions ( $F(1, 592) = 29.37, p < .001$ ), family capacities ( $F(1, 592) = 15.97, p < .001$ ) and family related ( $F(1, 592) = 8.16, p < .004$ ). An examination of the means revealed that Vadodara participants gave higher preference to all the domains in comparison to Delhi participants, except the family related domain. The probable reason could be that more Vadodara participants have defined themselves as adult compared to Delhi participants, therefore Vadodara participants show higher mean scores on all the domains except family related. On the other hand, Delhi participants endorsed more family related aspects maybe because as mentioned earlier, people in Delhi in the northern region tend to be more traditional in their social orientation as compared to people in Vadodara.

### Two way interaction effects.

The two way interactions effects were computed to obtain comparisons on two groups- city x gender; gender x age group and city x age group with reference to the degree of importance they place on each of the criteria (See Tables 12, 13 and 14). Scheffe's post-hoc test was applied on all significant interaction effects.

Table 11

*Comparison of Young Persons on Markers of Adulthood for City and Gender*

Markers of Adulthood	Vadodara				Delhi				Type III Sum of Sq.	df	F	Sig.
	Boys		Girls		Boys		Girls					
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD				
Independence	2.82	.47	2.71	.45	2.78	.44	2.67	.40	.000	1	.001	.977
Interdependence	2.98	.59	2.86	.63	2.97	.58	2.69	.62	.947	1	2.592	.108
Role Transition	2.54	.68	2.32	.79	2.49	.70	2.16	.68	.513	1	1.029	.311
Norm Compliance	3.25	.58	3.18	.65	3.56	.40 <sup>+</sup>	3.28	.64	1.622	1	4.907	.027 <sup>a</sup>
Biological Transition	2.66	.70	2.42	.77	2.57	.71	2.13	.67	1.612	1	3.317	.069
Legal Transition	2.39	.91	2.15	.85	2.55	.75	2.09	.76	1.697	1	2.639	.105
Family Capacities	3.17	.52	3.15	.62	3.43	.47 <sup>++</sup>	3.09	.60	3.780	1	12.564	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Family Related	3.28	.46	3.23	.49	3.33	.35	3.19	.40	.340	1	1.853	.174

Notes.

<sup>a</sup>  $F(1,592) = 4.91$ ,  $p < 0.027$

<sup>b</sup>  $F(1,592) = 12.56$ ,  $p < 0.001$

<sup>+</sup> Delhi boys showed significant difference in preference from Delhi girls, Vadodara boys and Vadodara girls at  $p < .001$ .

<sup>++</sup> Delhi boys showed significant difference in preference from Delhi girls, Delhi boys and Delhi girls at  $p < .001$

Results showed that the city  $\times$  gender interaction was significant for norm compliance ( $p < .027$ ) and family capacities ( $p < .001$ ) as shown in Table 11. Scheffe's post-hoc comparisons revealed that Delhi boys differed significantly at  $p < .01$  on norm compliance and family capacities in comparison to all other participants across city and gender. This indicates that Delhi boys gave higher preference to norm compliance and family capacities when compared to all other participants. As mentioned earlier, the relatively greater traditional orientation of the northern region may be a mediating factor in this perception.

Table 12

*Comparison of Young Persons on Markers of Adulthood for Gender and Age*

Markers of Adulthood	Boys				Girls				Type III Sum of Sq.	d f	F	Sig.
	18-20		21-25		18-20		21-25					
	years		years		years		years					
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD				
Independence	2.69	.47	2.84	.44	2.73	.44 <sup>+</sup>	2.72	.41	1.018	1	5.381	.021 <sup>a</sup>
Interdependence	2.85	.61	2.99	.62	2.87	.58 <sup>++</sup>	2.78	.64	2.108	1	5.773	.017 <sup>b</sup>
Role Transition	2.49	.75	2.36	.74	2.43	.68	2.21	.72	.358	1	.717	.397
Norm Compliance	3.21	.60	3.22	.64	3.50	.48	3.34	.60	1.073	1	3.245	.072
Biological Transition	2.54	.75	2.54	.73	2.53	.66	2.17	.73	5.012	1	10.315	.001 <sup>c</sup>
Legal Transition	2.31	.91	2.23	.87	2.39	.79	2.25	.78	.174	1	.271	.603
Family Capacities	3.07	.64	3.25	.47 <sup>+++</sup>	3.33	.48	3.19	.63	3.869	1	12.860	.000 <sup>d</sup>
Family Related	3.20	.51	3.31	.44	3.27	.37	3.25	.39	.647	1	3.520	.061

Notes.

<sup>a</sup>  $F(1,592) = 5.38, p < .021$

<sup>b</sup>  $F(1,592) = 5.77, p < .017$

<sup>c</sup>  $F(1,592) = 10.32, p < .001$

<sup>d</sup>  $F(1,592) = 12.86, p < .001$

<sup>+</sup> Girls (18-20 yrs.) showed significant difference in preference from Boys (18-20 yrs.),  $p < .023$ .

<sup>++</sup> Girls (18-20 yrs.) showed significant difference in preference from Girls (21-25 yrs.),  $p < .030$ .

<sup>+++</sup> Boys (21-25 yrs.) showed significant difference in preference from Boy (18-20 yrs.),  $p < .001$

The gender  $\times$  age group interaction showed significant differences on independence ( $p < .021$ ), interdependence ( $p < .017$ ), biological transition ( $p < .001$ ) and family capacities ( $p < .001$ ) (see Table 12). Scheffe's post-hoc comparisons described that younger girls (18-20 years) differed significantly at  $p < .05$  on independence and interdependence from younger boys (18-20 years) and older girls (21-25 years) respectively. Older girls (21-25 years) differed significantly at  $p < .05$  on biological transition from all participants' of this group. Older boys (21-25 years) differed significantly at  $p < .05$  in their preference on family capacities from younger boys (18-20 years). This implies that younger girls gave higher preference to independence and interdependence than younger boys and older girls respectively. Older girls gave least preference to biological transition compared to all participants. And older boys gave high preference to family capacities than younger boys. The changing status of women in urban middle class settings is evident in the pattern of girls giving high preference to independence and older girls giving least preference to biological transition (capable of bearing children -woman). On the other hand, our culture is predominantly collectivist in nature. This may be the reason for younger girls' preference for interdependence. Further, older boys' preference for family capacities may indicate that they may better understand their roles and responsibilities toward family as compared to younger boys. With age, individuals may be more inclined to follow culturally endorsed criteria of adulthood, thereby indicating developmental differences.

Table 13

*Comparison of Young Persons on Markers of Adulthood for City and Age*

Markers of Adulthood	Vadodara				Delhi				Type III Sum of Sq.	d f	F	Sig.
	18-20 years		21-25 years		18-20 years		21-25 years					
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD				
Independence	2.81	.47	2.78	.44	2.60	.41	2.78	.42	1.736	1	9.182	.003 <sup>a</sup>
Interdependence	2.98	.53	2.97	.64	2.75	.63	2.80	.63	.100	1	.274	.601
Role Transition	2.67	.63 <sup>+</sup>	2.36	.72	2.26	.74	2.21	.74	2.460	1	4.931	.027 <sup>b</sup>
Norm Compliance	3.46	.45	3.35	.58	3.26	.64	3.20	.66	.055	1	.168	.682
Biological Transition	2.76	.63	2.47	.75	2.31	.71	2.24	.75	1.548	1	3.185	.075
Legal Transition	2.69	.75 <sup>++</sup>	2.25	.87	2.02	.81	2.23	.79	15.610	1	24.269	.000 <sup>c</sup>
Family Capacities	3.33	.51	3.27	.51	3.07	.62	3.17	.59	.958	1	3.185	.075
Family Related	3.32	.41	3.30	.41	3.15	.47	3.26	.42	.649	1	3.533	.061

*Notes.*

<sup>a</sup>  $F(1,592) = 9.18, p < .003$ ;

<sup>b</sup>  $F(1,592) = 4.93, p < .027$ ;

<sup>c</sup>  $F(1,592) = 24.27, p < .001$

<sup>+</sup>Vadodara participants (18-20 yrs.) shows significant difference in preference to Vadodara participants (21-25 yrs.),  $p < .004$ ; Delhi participants (18-20 yrs.),  $p < .001$ ; Delhi participants (21-25 yrs.),  $p < .001$ ;

<sup>++</sup>Vadodara (18-20 yrs.) showed significant difference in preference from Vadodara participants (21-25 yrs.); Delhi participants (18-20 yrs.) and Delhi participants (21-25 yrs.) at  $p < .001$ .

Further the age group  $\times$  city effect of interaction showed significant differences on independence ( $p < .003$ ), role transition ( $p < .027$ ) and legal transition ( $p < 0.001$ ) (see Table 13). Scheffe's post-hoc comparisons showed that Delhi participants (18-20 years) differed significantly at  $p < .05$  on independence from all participants' of this group. On the other hand, Vadodara participants (18-20years) differed significantly at  $p < .05$  on role transition and legal transition from all other participants of this group. This means that the Delhi participants (18-20 years) gave least preference to independence compared to all other participants across age and city. This may be because they are living with their family

(73%) and have just stepped out of adolescence. A similar explanation could be offered for the higher preference to role transition (getting married) and legal transition (attaining legal age) on part of younger Vadodara participants, 69% of whom were living with their family.

### **Three way interaction effects.**

Three way interaction effects were computed to know the combined influence of three independent variable age x gender x city with reference to degree of importance the participants placed on each of the criteria (see Table 14). Scheffe's post-hoc test was applied on all significant interaction effects. Results showed that the effect of age x gender x city interactions were significantly different on three domains of adulthood namely role transition ( $p < .035$ ), norm compliance ( $p < .02$ ) and legal transition ( $p < .01$ ). Scheffe's post-hoc test showed that the Vadodara boys (18-20years) differed significantly at  $p < .05$  in their preference for role transition while girls (18-20years) significantly differed in their preference for norm compliance and legal transition in comparison to all other participants. This means that Vadodara boys (18-20 years) gave higher preference to role transition while Vadodara girls (18-20years) have preferred norm compliance and legal transition in comparison to all other participants. The reason could be that higher percentages of both younger boys (65%) and younger girls (72%) in Vadodara lived with their family. Also, Vadodara being a smaller city the influence of parents could be stronger (Kapadia, Karnik, & Ali, 2005) as also a sense of responsibility to follow social and legal norms. Also as per gender specified roles, boys are expected to acquire a good job and traditionally girls were assumed to be grown up after they crossed puberty. These could be the reasons for younger boys (18-20 years) to favour role transition and younger girls (18-20 years) to favour norm compliance and legal transition as criteria for adulthood.

Table 14

*Means and Standard Deviations for Markers of Adulthood Subscales in Young Persons across City, Age and Gender*

Markers of Adulthood	Vadodara								Delhi								Type III Sum of Sq.	df	F	Sig.
	18-20years				21-25 years				18-20 years				21-25 years							
	Boys		Girls		Boys		Girls		Boys		Girls		Boys		Girls					
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD				
Independence	2.77	.52	2.86	.42	2.87	.42	2.70	.46	2.60	.40	2.60	.42	2.82	.47	2.74	.36	.314	1	1.660	.198
Interdependence	2.96	.54	3.00	.52	3.01	.64	2.94	.63	2.75	.65	2.75	.61	2.97	.60	2.61	.63	.618	1	1.692	.194
Role Transition	2.73	.60 <sup>+</sup>	2.61	.65	2.35	.71	2.38	.73	2.25	.81	2.26	.68	2.38	.78	2.05	.67	2.237	1	4.483	.035
Norm Compliance	3.32	.51	3.60	.35 <sup>++</sup>	3.19	.64	3.52	.45	3.11	.68	3.41	.58	3.25	.63	3.15	.68	1.802	1	5.450	.020
Biological Transition	2.76	.64	2.75	.62	2.56	.74	2.39	.75	2.32	.79	2.31	.64	2.52	.73	1.94	.65	1.559	1	3.208	.074
Legal Transition	2.68	.83	2.70	.67 <sup>+++</sup>	2.11	.91	2.40	.81	1.94	.83	2.09	.79	2.35	.82	2.09	.73	4.303	1	6.690	.010
Family Related	3.21	.50	3.17	.39	3.27	.47	3.32	.38	3.25	.50	3.20	.41	3.30	.46	3.34	.33	.073	1	.241	.623
Family Capacities	3.13	.57	3.53	.33	3.21	.46	3.33	.55	3.00	.71	3.13	.52	3.29	.48	3.05	.67	.027	1	.148	.701

*Notes.*

<sup>a</sup>  $F(1, 592) = 4.48, p < 0.035$

<sup>b</sup>  $F(1, 592) = 1.80, p < 0.02$

<sup>c</sup>  $F(1, 592) = 6.69, p < .01$

<sup>+</sup> Vadodara boys (18-20 yrs.) showed significant difference in preference from Delhi girls (21-25yrs.),  $p < .001$ ; Delhi boys (18-20yrs.),  $p < 0.021$ ; Delhi girls (18-20yrs.),  $p < .026$ .

<sup>++</sup> Vadodara girls (18-20yrs.) showed significant difference in preference from Vadodara boys (18-20yrs.),  $p < .001$ ; Vadodara boys (21-25yrs.),  $p < 0.09$ ; Delhi boys (21-25yrs.),  $p < .002$

<sup>+++</sup> Vadodara girls (18-20years) showed significant difference in preference from (Delhi boys (18-20yrs.),  $p < .001$ ; Delhi girls (18-20yrs.),  $p < .003$ ; Delhi girls (21-25yrs.),  $p < .003$ ; Vadodara boys (21-25yrs.),  $p < .005$ .

To know about the criteria for adulthood which emerged from participants' points of view, all participants (600) were asked to state the most necessary characteristics for being an adult before giving them the CIAQ (Criteria for Indian Adulthood Questionnaire). Table 15 displays percentages for the necessary characteristics as described by the participants.

Table 15

*Characteristics Necessary for Being an Adult (N=600)*

Criteria	Examples	%
<b>Self-Related Categories</b>		
Intellectual Skills	Mental ability/ have clarity/ broadmindedness/ clever sophist /well knowledge about ethics and values; knowing other aspects of life; understand everything in brief; experience of life; knowledge about sex	55
Personality	Growth/ initiator/ positive attitude/ self- confidence/ power of expression/ emotionally strong/ sincerity	55
Independence	Self-sufficient /leadership quality/ economic independent/ independent view	50
Decision Making Ability	Mature decisions/firm in his stands/Can take decision regarding future	38
Maturity	Acts as a matured person/ mentally strong/ not having childish thinking/ opinion matters in the family/	38
Responsibility	Take all type of responsibilities/ handling responsibilities-/ understands his responsibility/able to fulfil all duty & responsible	37
Legal Age	When he/she acquires the legal age 18.	11
Career Oriented	To decide his/ her priorities /serious about his/her career/the drive to complete their goals independently/understands what things he wants do	10
<b>Family-Focused Categories</b>		
Family Roles and Responsibility	Responsibility towards family/support parents	37
Social Adjustments	Social adaptability/ handle situation/ welfare for society/ respect/ ability to differentiate between right and wrong	36



Civic Responsibility	Responsible citizen/involving and understanding politics/ vote ability/ rights/empathetic towards others	25
Others	Desire for alcohol/ quality of adult/ able to cook/ being married/ self-centred/ reduce generation gap/ status/ physical strength	11
Criteria Not Signifying Adulthood	Age and height are not deciding factors for an adult /sex hormones do not means adult/ smoking/ drinking does not make manpower adult/.Adult doesn't mean growing up with beards or moustaches	7

*Note.*

Re. Percentages not totalling to 100 as multiple responses.

Table 15 shows that participants gave priority to intellectual skills, self- attributes, and independence as the important criteria for adulthood (50-55%). This was followed by responsibility (for both family and self), decision making ability maturity and social adjustments. The trends are in line with the responses from the qualitative interviews and reflect that along with taking responsibility of family and self, participants' also give importance to self- attributes. This indicates that participants gave preference to interdependent and independent attributes endorsing the presence of both individualistic and collectivistic criteria in their definitions of adulthood.

### **Conclusion of Phase I**

The study revealed that more participants felt that they have reached adulthood whereby more Vadodara participants felt that they have reached adult status. The reason may be that Vadodara being a mid-sized city, may be relatively less influenced by global forces in comparison to Delhi. Also since more Vadodara participants felt adult, this may have led them to endorse all the domains more than Delhi participants. Delhi is the national capital, with greater influence of globalisation, but nevertheless the traditional

orientation characteristics of the northern region is strongly persistent. This could be the reason for Delhi participants endorsing family related domain more in comparison to Vadodara participants. Gender differences are evident in perceptions of the participants, especially on part of boys more than girls. The possible reason behind these differences is the way boys and girls are socialized and the bias in favour of boys. Developmental difference is also evident in the present study. The likely reason for these differences is that a high proportion of younger participants live with their parents and on the other hand a high proportion of older participants live away from parents which may have influenced their perceptions of adulthood.

### **Summary of Results of Phase I**

- Slightly more than half of the participants felt that they have reached adulthood status and remaining participants felt ambiguous about their status.
- More Vadodara participants, boys and older participants (21-25 years) felt that they have reached adult status than Delhi participants, girls and younger participants (18-20years) who were ambiguous about their status.
- Background variables like city, gender, age and education, parents' education and living status have a significant influence on participants' self-adult perceptions.
- Participants gave high preference to norm compliance, family capacities and family related aspects as important markers of adulthood.

- The highly preferred criterion by participants was “accept responsibility for the consequences of his/her actions” and the lowest preferred criterion was “no longer living in parents’ household”.
- The influence of each of the independent variables on the markers of adulthood was as follows:
  - Age emerged significant for independence, role transition and biological transition. Older participants gave high preference to independence and younger participants gave high preference to the role transition and biological transition.
  - Gender emerged significant for biological transition, norm compliance and family capacities. Boys gave high preference to biological transition and girls gave high preference to the norm compliance and family capacities.
  - City emerged significant for all the domains of the adulthood. Delhi participants gave higher preference to family related domain, whereas Vadodara participants gave higher preference to all the others domains.
  - Age x gender emerged significant for independence, biological transition and family capacities. Younger girls gave higher preference to independence and interdependence than younger boys and older girls respectively, older boys gave high preference to family capacities than younger boys, and older girls gave least preference to biological transition than all other participants.

- Age x city emerged significant for independence, role transition and legal transition. Younger Vadodara participants gave higher preference to role transition and legal transition than all other participants and younger Delhi participants gave least preference to independence compared to all other participants.
  - City x gender emerged significant on norm compliance and family capacities. Delhi boys gave high importance to both the domains in comparison to all other participants.
  - City x age x gender emerged significant on role transition, norm compliance and legal transition where Vadodara boys (18-20 years) gave higher preference to role transition while Vadodara girls (18-20 years) have preferred norm compliance and legal transition in comparison to all other participants.
- Results also highlighted that participants gave preference to both interdependent and independent attributes, that is, taking responsibility of family along with specific self attributes to define adulthood.

## **Phase II**

Phase II is a follow up of Phase I. The main aim of Phase II was to take into account the subjective importance of the experience of young individuals in order to understand the conception of adulthood more deeply. In addition, its purpose was to elicit participants' own views about the criteria they considered important for adulthood which helped to provide an insightful understanding of their perspectives about transition to adulthood.

Phase II is presented in the following six sections:

Section I presents the socio-demographic profile of the participants.

Section II describes the perception of one's status.

Section III portrays advantages and disadvantages of being an adult.

Section IV illustrates experiences in the present life stage versus earlier times.

Section V provides views about marriage and their parents' perception of adulthood.

Section VI describes about the aspects of independence, self-reliance, and important duties.

## Section I

### Socio-Demographic Profile of the Respondents

This section presents the socio demographic information about the participants for phase II as shown in Table 13.

Table 16

*Socio-Demographic Profile of the Young Individuals (N=30)*

<b>Background Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>City</b>	
Delhi	15
Vadodara	15
<b>Age (in years)</b>	
18-20	14
21-25	16
<b>Gender</b>	
Women	14
Men	16
<b>Educational Level</b>	
Graduate	18
Post Graduate	12
<b>Mother Education</b>	
Secondary	2
High School	8
Graduate	16
Post Graduate	4
<b>Father Education</b>	
Secondary	1
High School	4
Graduate	12
Post Graduate	13
<b>Mother Occupation</b>	
Working	6

Non-Working	24
<b>Father Occupation</b>	
Service	16
Business	7
Professional	7
<b>Living with Parents or Family</b>	
Yes	8
No	22
<b>Years Lived Independently</b>	
None	6
1-5 years	20
6-yrs and above	4
<b>Employed</b>	
Yes (Full time)	3
Yes (Part time)	0
No	27
<b>Family's Monthly Income</b>	
Rs.20,000-30,000	14
Rs.30,000 and above	16

Participants were equally divided across the two cities. More number of participants were doing graduation and remaining were pursuing post-graduation. Majority of them lived away from home and were not employed. Large number of participants belonged to families where parents had higher educational qualifications (graduate and above). Higher numbers of participants' mothers were home makers and most fathers were professionals.

## **Section II**

### **Perception of One's Status**

This section describes the young individuals' perception about themselves as adult, the reasons for the same and the important characteristics required for it, as well as the gender difference therein. Results revealed that an equal proportion of participants described themselves as adult and were also ambiguous about their status while only six percent felt that they were not adult, whereby more boys and older participants felt adult than girls and younger participants. But unlike phase I, more Delhi participants felt adult than Vadodara participants. The section is divided into three parts:

- Criteria for adulthood
- First realization of being an adult
- Gender differences

#### **Criteria for Adulthood**

The participants who felt that they were adult and those who felt ambiguous about their status have given many reasons to define why they felt so. Two categories emerged: self-focused, and family and society focused.

#### **Self-focused category.**

The self-focused responses addressed different aspects related to self which are discussed below:



***Being self-sufficient.***

Young individuals feel that they can take care of themselves and so they feel that they are adults. Most of the respondents mentioned that they were living away from parents or family and they are managing everything on their own, therefore they are independent and self-sufficient which made them feel that they are adult. For instance, Mahek, age 18, shares, *“The first realization of being an adult was when I was sent to a hostel. Suddenly everything was on my shoulders. I had to do shopping, manage the money and do everything by myself. That made me realize that there is no one I can depend on a personal level. Actually I have to take all the decisions by myself. I was really scared at first and then I realized I am a grown up. This is when I started realizing that I have become an adult now”*.

Some of the respondents also said that when they started travelling and had to go to another city for their education, which involved having to take care of themselves and hence felt like an adult. For example Pooja, 22 years, expressed that when she was in class 10<sup>th</sup> then she started travelling alone and at that time she felt she was an adult. Similarly Sonali, age 18, comments that, *“I have the advantage of going anywhere I want and my parents do not stop me. I have practically roamed around in different places like clubs, parks, done some sightseeing in Delhi on my own”*.

***Decision making ability.***

Young individuals felt that decision making ability is one of the prime criterion for them to feel adult. For example, *“Taking your own decisions is one of the most significant*

*factors or indicators of being an adult” (Daljeet, age 24). Most of the respondents said that being able to make important decisions in day- to -day chores, in career and dealing with people made them feel like an adult. As Shrija, 22 years, commented, “Especially living away from my parents has made me take certain decisions independently, which one cannot take being with parents, as one requires some kind of assistance. After all, as an adult, you have to be on your own at some point of time in life; all decisions cannot be taken on the basis of other people's opinions. So this decision making power gives me the strength to say confidently that yes, I am an adult”.*

Some of the respondents who felt ambiguous about their status felt that they are not fully adult because they do not have the power of making some important decisions on their own and have to take the advice of their parents for the same. Daljeet, age 24 expressed that taking one’s own decision is one of the most significant factors or indicators of being an adult, but she too is ambiguous about the same as she says, *“But I do not have that liberty, I do not take all the decisions myself, I like to consult, sometimes I am really dependent on my parents or my friends to take some decision. So in this context I do not consider myself as an adult. But while thinking about different situations for example as far as opinions or social relationships are considered, I do consider myself as an adult”.*

Likewise Nisha, 19 years, also felt ambiguous about herself as she can take decisions for others, but when she wants to take her own decisions, she seeks guidance. In her words, *“Sometimes I do not take decisions that an adult would take and sometimes I do take mature decisions so I feel that I am an adult. But that is not often so sometimes ‘yes’ and sometimes ‘no’. There are times when we have to decide about choosing a career, we*

*have to decide on choosing a life partner, we have to decide about so many important things and also take so many small decisions. For instance, I am better at giving advice to people, I can judge other's problem easily, but when it comes to my own I can't. So at that point, I feel that I am not an adult. I need the advice of an adult".*

Correspondingly Mani, age 23, shares, *"In some respects I think that I am an adult because I can watch adult movies; I can marry anyone of my choice; I can take my decisions but I think I am not an adult yet because I still do not take all the decisions on my own. I go to my parents for minor decisions. I think I need some more time to be independent, then I can say confidently that I am really an adult".*

### ***Taking responsibilities towards self.***

When an individual understands his/her responsibility towards self and is capable of handling them, then one realizes that he/she is an adult. Like Durga, age 25 comments, *"Because I have been staying out on my own, taking my own decisions and so I am responsible".* Even Pooja, 22 years, realises her capability of handling responsibilities. She comments, *"As I already knew what is right and wrong for me and was clear about what I have to do in my life, I thought I was capable of handling responsibilities also".*

A few others felt more responsible after their graduation and have tried to fulfil their responsibilities in the best possible way, which led them consider themselves as adult. Some participants mentioned that as they are not capable of taking responsibilities so they feel ambiguous about their status. For example Sonali, age 18, says, *"But if you really see from the aspect of responsibilities, I do not think, I shoulder that exact*

*responsibility which an adult holds. Not that I am demanding for all the responsibilities but I am governed by my parents. I do what they ask me to do, where they ask me to go; I even come back home by the time given by them and so on and follow everything else as per their wish. But yes, I do have my freedom which is limited”.*

### ***Intellectual capability.***

Respondents also realized that as they had developed a “sound mind”, started thinking logically and understanding the ways of life, they felt like an adult. As stated by Shrija, age 22 *“Because an adult is a person who has a sound mind... That is the reason, I consider myself to be an adult”.*

Most of the participants also described that now they are conscious of what they are doing so they are not children anymore and hence cannot be betrayed by anyone. For example, *“I am conscious of what I am doing, and I am no more an innocent child, so I cannot be purely a child. I have lost that innocence, since I have understood ways of life and I know I have to struggle, that is one major reason that makes me a grown up”*(Sonia, 20 years).

Similarly Aryan, age 20, expresses, *“The level of thinking has improved now from the level I used to think before. Now it is more of a deep thinking and with profound focus which is the result of the knowledge that I have gathered from my studies and the worldly wisdom that I have experienced. Now I can see into the depth of things. I can think and perceive the things clearly and to some extent even understand people. So I*

*feel that nobody can ditch me so easily or can make a fool of me. So I think that I am an adult”.*

### ***Personality development.***

Respondents shared a few other responses that make them feel like an adult. For example, being confident in presenting themselves in public. According to Sonia, age 20, *“The way you dress up; the way you walk; the way you present yourself in college; that is what makes one behave like an adult”.*

### ***Maturity.***

Some of the participants also described that as they have attained maturity, they consider themselves adult. For example Farah, 20 years, says, *“At heart, I think I am still a child but when I look back at myself over the years gone by, I have grown and matured a lot, I have understood things, I know what I am supposed to do in life, knowing that I have matured enough to be an adult”.*

### ***Career oriented.***

A few participants shared that when they became focused on their respective careers, it was the point of realisation, when they started considering themselves as adult. Mohit, age 19 remarks, *“As a child, I did not know what I wanted to do in my life. But now I have certain goals which I want to achieve in future”.* Similarly Pooja, age 22 says, *“Now I have started taking life seriously and have set goals in life. I know what I want from my life”.*

### ***Legal age.***

Attaining the legal age for being an adult was also referred by the participants. For instance Mohit, 19 years, remarks, *“As per Indian law, a person over 18 years is considered to be an adult and he/she is allowed to take part in elections, vote in elections. So I consider myself to be an adult”*. But most of the participants gave importance to intellectual and emotional maturity as an important characteristic of being an adult. Anand, age 22, comments, *“Age doesn’t matters for adulthood, what matters is maturity to face the new difficulties or challenges in life”*.

### ***Emotional strength.***

Respondents also expressed emotional strength as a criterion for being an adult. This is described by Rohan, 21 years, as *“The question is why I consider myself an adult? It is because no matter what kind of situations arise, the required level of calmness and peace of mind that an adult needs to maintain, I can keep the same level of calmness, I can keep myself cool and face the situation. Hence I do consider myself an adult”*.

### **Family and society focused category.**

Young individuals also gave importance to family and society related characteristics of being an adult. The major ones are discussed below:

### ***Social competence.***

Young individuals expressed that now since they are capable of handling all situations of life and can deal with people and relationships effectively, they are adults. For example Ravi, 22 years, realized that the adolescence stage is over as he is capable of handling all the situations of life like dealing with people and relationships. He feels that because of these capabilities, he is now an adult.

Julie, age 19, became conscious of her adulthood when she was able to support and take care of her friend. She described, *“When I was in 12<sup>th</sup> standard and my friend’s sister passed away, the way I handled her with utmost maturity. It was a crucial time in our lives because our final examinations were going to start on third of March and the demise occurred on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February. I consoled her through the hard time, made her realize the importance of the exams, keeping respect and reverence to the mourning of her deceased sister. With great perseverance and comfort she pulled through well and that made me realize I am an adult”*.

Few participants pointed out that awareness of the importance of following cultural customs, traditions and duties and the ability to differentiate between what is right and what is wrong marks an adult. As Mohit, age 19, remarks, *“When you are an adult you are more social than when you are a child as you are free from all the social norms and customs. And when you become an adult you are supposed to get involved in all these things and follow them”*. On the other hand Nathasha, 25 years, commented that, *“I can now differentiate between right and wrong; hence I am an adult now”*. Darshan, age 22, expresses a similar vision, *“When people say that we should not do this or that, it is*

*wrong and it is not good in our society. I agreed with them not blindly or because I was influenced by them, but since I am an adult and mature enough to understand such things, and give my own opinion”.*

### ***Family roles and responsibilities.***

Participants believed that now they are able to support their family and perform all family responsibilities so they are adults. This is described by Vicky, age 18, as follows:

*“When I was in class 12<sup>th</sup>, I was helping my father with his business and also handling all outside chores of the house”. Similarly Gautam, 25 years, expressed, “My father made me do property related work, bank related work, he trusted me on that and I comfortably did that. I felt, I was helpful and very caring”.*

Few participants mentioned that it is their responsibility to take care of their families and support them in every possible way which makes them feel adult. As mentioned by Basant, age 23, *“When I was doing my graduation, I thought now it is time to take a plunge into doing a job, to give support to my parents as this would make things comfortable for the family. So I think from that time onwards I was an adult. It was second year of my graduation that I started to support my family that is it”.*

### ***Civic responsibilities.***

Young individuals think as they have become a responsible citizen of the country, they could now cast votes and also help people in need, so they are adult. For example Nalini, 22 years, shares, *“I feel that I am a good citizen, I also know that there is a lot more to*



*do, that is true; but little that I have done, I have worked for especially disabled children, I have been to rehabilitation centres. Therefore these are few a things which make me feel that I am an adult".* On the other hand, Nishant, age 22, describes, *"Because I have exercised my rights as an Indian citizen; I have voting rights as an adult and I realized it (adulthood status) when I first cast my vote".*

Some of the participants revealed that as they do not intend to harm anybody, rather they are considerate towards other people so they think that they are adult. In Bipin's words, *"To be able to survive happily that is my motto actually.... But laugh in a manner that it is not intended to harm anybody or life is not being made difficult or sarcastic for somebody else or people around me....I am dead honest and will not give a thought whether the truth I am revealing is going to shake you or not. But yes, after the truth is revealed then I ensure when I leave you than you are in proper frame of mind"* (age 25).

Similarly Shrija, 22 years, reveals, *"You should not feel that your opinion, your views should be the foremost. You have to give consideration to other's views, likes and dislikes also. For example if my roommates are not very comfortable with my behaviour, doing something which she does not like, then I will adjust with them and that gesture of consideration towards her make me feel adult".*

### ***Role model.***

Participants depicted that they could be a role model to their younger siblings and can explain things to them and so they feel they are adult now. For instance, Vikrant, age 20, comments, *"We should not do any wrong things in front of the younger individuals since it has a very bad influence on them and it can affect them. They can also blame us*

*by saying that our elder brother is doing wrong things like smoking or drinking. Thus we should not set bad examples for them, rather we should teach them good things, such responsibility make me feel as adult”.*

Correspondingly Mukesh, 18 years, remarks, *“I am the eldest in the family and right now I have to do something in my life so that I am able to improve the life of my younger brother and sister. If I succeed then I will try to do something better for them. The things which they didn’t get, I will provide it to them. This feeling makes me feel that I am an adult now”.*

### ***Rising expectations.***

Another unique reason for being an adult illustrated by participants is that societal expectations increase from an adult, and sense of such expectations and pressures made them feel adult. This was reflected by Mohit, age 19, *“As an adult, you have more family restrictions and the immense pressure of society, they expect more from you”.*

Mukesh, age 18, expressed similar ideas, *“Because... there are some expectations and hopes of my family on me that I have to fulfil that’s why I feel like an adult”.*

### ***Opinion in family matters.***

An important reason that emerged is that the family gives them importance, considers their opinions and they are consulted for important family decisions. Nalini, 22 years expresses the same, *“When my mom, my dad at times come up to me and ask that what should have been done, what is yet to be done, that is the time it strikes me that I am an adult and that is why they approached me and sought my decision”.* Likewise Pooja,

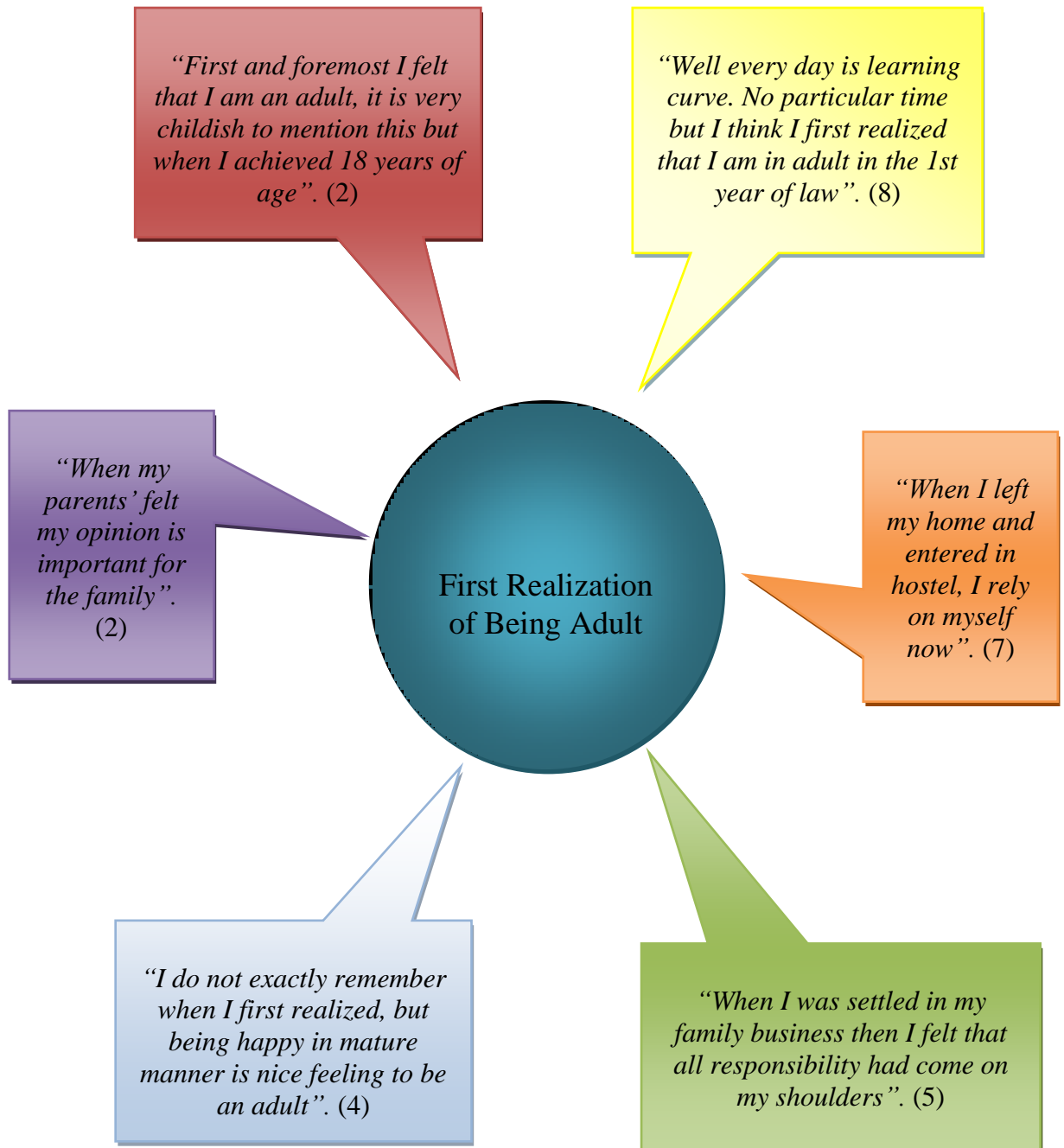
age 22, says, *“I think now my opinions matter a lot to my family. I am part of decision making in the family .... That is it”*.

Respondents also mentioned a few reasons why they do not consider themselves adult in some respects as they are still financially dependent on their parents and they lack money management skills. Moreover, with a childlike behaviour and care-free attitude they lead a careless, lazy and forgetful life and these weaknesses make them behave in an immature manner in certain situations. Some of them are still studying, hence they cannot shoulder the responsibilities and they are dependent on their parents for all the major decisions. They lack the ability to judge their own problems, requiring constant advice from parents in several situations.

Further with regards to city differences, participants portrayed similar differences of that of phase I as Vadodara participants gave more importance to almost all criteria compared to Delhi participants. Both self- focused categories like decision making, intellectual capability, personality development legal age, emotional strength and family focused categories like social competence, family roles and responsibilities, civic responsibility, rising societal expectations, voicing opinions in the family were more emphasized by Vadodara participants in comparison to Delhi participants.

The responses of the participants revealed that their reasons for being an adult not only displayed collectivistic criteria but also individualistic criteria. This is similar to the results of phase I. The unique characteristics which emerged for being an adult were individual opinions matters in the family, they should act as a role model for their younger siblings, fulfil expectations of family and shoulder civic responsibility. These are in line with the familial orientation wherein older siblings serve as role model for younger ones and responsibility toward family is of prime importance.

### First Realization of Being an Adult



*Note:* Number in brackets indicates frequency of respondents

**Figure 3.** First realization of being an adult

Participants were asked to share when it was that they first realized they were adult.

Figure 3 shows the participants' responses to this question which indicates that education plays a key role in defining adulthood in India, particularly when it involves leaving parental home to live in a hostel. Indeed this is the first opportunity for youth to live away from parents for the first time, and resultantly enjoy freedom to take most day-to-day decisions. The importance of educational transitions in defining adult status was also prominently observed in the phase 1 research results. The above responses also underline the collectivistic criteria for adulthood in the Indian society, as respondents considered parental recognition an important factor defining adult status. Youth start considering themselves adults when parents start considering their views as important in making family decisions or entrust them with the responsibility of managing the family business.

### **Gender Differences**

Young individuals referred to gender differences while describing important markers of adulthood. The gender differences reflect that though there have been changes in India due to modernization, yet traditional gender inequality continues to be predominant in today's India. For example when participants described that taking responsibilities is an important markers of adulthood, they (five participants including two boys and three girls) linked boy's responsibility to take care of their family financially and be independent, and two boys linked girl's responsibility with family chores and following traditions. For example Julie, 19 years, described about boys, *"When a boy turns into an adult, he starts thinking that he has to take initiative for the whole family progress, so he*

*actually takes the responsibility of the whole family. I have seen 3-4 friends of mine, they have this target in their mind that when he will turn 27, he wants his dad to retire and he should take whole responsibility and he wants his dad and mom to take rest and he wants to give them whatever they have given to him till then". And Basant, age 23, expressed about girls, "I think girls attain adulthood before boys because they tend to realize the responsibility that lies on their shoulders to abide by the family norms, tradition and customs".*

Similarly when young individuals mentioned that supporting the family is important for being an adult, then a boy participant pointed out that girls should support parents emotionally and help with domestic chores, whereas two girls and one boy mentioned that boys should support parents monetarily. They referred to this specific role differentiation because this is a general notion in the society. But then it was also evident that there is a progressive change in their perspective about gender roles when one of the boys mentioned that these roles of taking care of family both monetarily and emotionally can be performed by both girls and boys without any gender differentiation. For example, Basant, 23 years, remarks, *"For girls, the characteristics would be like emotional support as they are fragile they will help the mothers in daily routine and stuffs like cooking and cleaning. For boys it is different. They would help their fathers and the family by providing the money, working and lending support in terms of monetary stuff. But that does not imply that girls do not do that. Nowadays they do support the family financially but it's the general perspective of the society. My perspective is like there is no specific categorizing, if a girl can earn then she can move to boys' shoes and boys can also pretty much do that emotional support and all the help*

*that is done by a girl. There is no need to bring the gender factor while sharing responsibilities for your family. You can stand for your family whosoever you are, whether a boy or a girl”.*

Young individuals illustrated that marriage can be one of the characteristics of being an adult but it is not that only a married person can be considered an adult. However, if you get married then there are specific roles for boys and girls. Two of the boys stated that when boys get married then they have to be mature, solve problems and take care of their wives and share everything with wives. For example Ragav, age 18, says, *“Like for boys...It is not a saying that being an adult you should marry, it does not make a difference but I think after getting married you should be like, becoming more matured, thinking of your wife, caring and loving her, protecting her, interacting with her, may be solving a problem during bad times, as after marriage we find a companion in our wife with whom we could spend more time and share all the good and bad things that we have gone through”.*

On the other hand girls have to change their behaviour according to their husbands and have to follow rules and regulation as per the norms of the society (expressed by two boys’ participants). For example Mukesh, 18 years, comments, *“Like for girls.... when she gets married then she has to change her behaviour according to her husband. That’s a very difficult time to develop the thinking similar to her husband. If she is doing any professional course or some kind of a degree, she has to sacrifice because of her in-laws expectations or due to societal pressure. Also she is expected to behave nicely with all family members”.*

Being an adult, there are lots of pressures on an individual, which were also gender specified. According to one boy and one girl, girls have the pressure of getting married and boys have the pressure of making a career as fast as possible. In Durga's words, *"For girls... the time frame, which they get is very less as compared to that of boys, the pressure is more because her parents say that she can do whatever she want to do after her graduation for 2-3 years, but then she has to get married. And for boys that thing is not there but still they have a pressure of making a career as fast as possible"* (25 years).

There were a few characteristics according to young individuals which were specifically associated with boys and girls for being an adult. For example four girls and one boy mentioned that boys have to be financially independent with a well-settled job or profession. Their life is not as easy as that of girls, so they should focus on their priority rather than partying and enjoying all the time. For example Mahek, 18 years, shares, *"As for the boys, I think their life is much tougher than ours. Basically what all girls have to do is graduation and then they can always get married. But guys have to earn money, I guess so any given day I feel adult girls have a much better life"*. This is also described by Farah, age 20, *"In case of guys, I think the day they realize that there are more things in life rather than partying and such stuff, then they have to set their priorities in life, they have to earn their own income and have to have a well settled job and look after their parents"*.



Being career oriented is another very important characteristic associated with boys as indicated by two boys and one girl. For example, Rohan, age 21, comments, *“So when a boy reaches age of 21- 22, he should have the ability to understand what he is supposed to do and how he is supposed to react towards different things. As far as we talk about career, a career obviously is very important. He has to be independent on the basis of his career also. He has to decide when he will be having his own kids. He should also realize that his kids would be dependent on him so he should be much serious about his career”*.

On the other hand, the characteristics of being an adult which are associated with girls illustrated by two girls and two boys are that she should have sacrificing, compromising and pleasing nature as a marker of adulthood. She should understand everyone’s needs and act maturely. She should try to adjust in every situation, that is, she should know that in certain situations she has to compromise and she has to choose her family over her own self. For example Farah, 20 years, says, *“As an adult we get our independence, but at the same time, we actually understand what our mothers have taught us, I guess that is the kind of maturity that we achieve. And of course it’s a time when a girl realizes that in certain things she has to compromise. I mean sometime family comes first. I think that is the kind of maturity expected from girls when they are adults”*.

Likewise, Julie, 19 years, also shared that when a girl gets matures, she becomes somewhat sacrificing. She starts understanding that if she is not married, then she knows what her parents are expecting from her and if she is married then she knows what her husband and his family are expecting from her. So these are the characteristics that a girl develops as an adult and which tend to inculcate a powerful sacrificing nature.

Girls were also supposed to behave in accordance with the social situation and capable of handling all situations of everyday life as mentioned by Aryan, age 20. He says, *“They must be strong enough to tackle situations in daily life. They must not complain about each and every thing happening with them, they must try to adjust with things. I am not saying that in each and every condition but a certain level of tolerance that is expected, they must adjust up to that level and after that I can say that they can act in their own way as they want to”*.

Likewise, Ravi, age 22, commented about handling people as follows, *“In case of girls, I feel that girls till 12<sup>th</sup> class they are very childish in nature. And once they come for graduation to other cities and they have settled themselves there, I think dealing with people is probably the most important thing for them. And the second thing is knowing a person and avoiding them sometimes is also very important for girls. They should avoid quarrelsome behaviour”*.

Young individuals also referred to motherhood as an important characteristic of being an adult. One boy and one girl mentioned that girls should be able to bear a child as well as be able to take proper care of the child. They should also take all household responsibilities of cooking, cleaning and budgeting. For example, Shirja, 22 years, says, *“Girls are considered adults when they can reproduce children. If you see the rural or an urban scenario, the girls are considered an adult when they can cook, clean, sweep the house and along with all these things when they can earn a living”*. Similarly Ragav, age 18, describes about the caretaker role as, *“May be for girls, they should keep doing the housing responsibility more than what the male would do and should take proper care of their babies than what their husbands would do, in short they are expected to do with all other roles the nursing role”*.

Participants specifically girls on the other hand also mentioned about the changes they want to see and which have already begun to observe in gender roles like girls should be earning members of the family and try to grasp all the opportunities whereas boys should be helping with household chores and not be restricted to the role of the bread-earners of the family. For example Daljeet, age 24, says, *“For girls I would especially like to mention that of course females are getting career oriented, they have various chances and opportunities but still they should keep on moving ahead in their life. It is very important to be financially stable on the girls’ part and for boys I would say that they should not stick to the stereotypical role of being a breadwinner but they should also show their interest in some household work; or help out mother or sister or wife in their homes. Thus helping out members in the family is also a sign of being an adult”*.

Similar gender differences were predominant in Phase I results also, where boys gave preference to criteria where they have freedom to indulge in sexual activities and are capable of fathering children and girls gave preference to criteria where they should behave in accordance with the society and excel in performing family roles and responsibilities. From this we can conclude that gender specified roles are still prevalent in modern India where boys are welcomed children in comparison to girls. Female foeticide still exists not only in rural but also in urban areas. On the other hand, participants, girls especially mentioned about their desire to eliminate this discrimination. Phase I results also show a glimpse of this as girls preferred criteria related to independence and gave least preference to biological transition (capable of bearing child).

### Section III

#### Advantages and Disadvantages of Being an Adult

This section described the advantages and disadvantages of being an adult which are broadly divided into two categories, that is, self-focused and family and society focused.

Interestingly there are many characteristics of being an adult which young individuals mentioned as an advantage, but at the same time those characteristics have a disadvantageous aspect too. For example, if an individual is considered as grown-up then that is an advantage, but if by being an adult, one is forced to display maturity at all times then that is a disadvantage. Described below are the characteristics which display both advantageous and disadvantageous aspects.

#### Self-Focused Categories

##### Freedom vs. denial of carefree attitude.

Freedom was the primary characteristic described by participants as an advantage. Individuals have the freedom to be on their own, freedom to do whatever they want freedom to take decisions and freedom to earn their living. There were neither any restrictions on them nor did anyone impose anything on them. Individuals had their own space and liberty. For example, Aryan, age 20, elaborates, *“The feel of independence is the main advantage; you can do things according to your will. You can go wherever you want to go, take your own decisions. You do things as per your comfort level and you do*

*not have to answer and give explanation to others. This is the main advantage of being an adult. Best part is that you start earning at this stage, so you can spend your money according to your will”.*

Although as an adult one is allowed to do whatever one wants, but at the same time, at this stage one has to be cautious or think about what one is doing. This is felt by Mahek, 18 years, *“Like I am independent but you are still bound by change, it may not be a physical one; but it’s a mental change holding you back”.*

Adults plan their options keeping in mind the repercussions and hence one cannot have a carefree approach. Rohan, age 21, expresses similar thoughts, *“An adult will always take a calculated risk... He will not be able to rise up to a higher level since he does not have the ability to forget the fear of result and then just do what he feels or wants to do, which infact is the ability found only in a child. This is another disadvantage of being a complete adult”.*

### **Maturity vs. expectation to act maturely.**

Participants felt that having maturity is an advantage of being an adult as one understands things and takes them seriously. One is able to recognize the situation and behave accordingly. For instance, Ragav, age 18, mentions, *“You get matured. You take things very seriously. You work hard. You perceive things differently than a child. You satisfy everyone who comes in contacts with you”.*

And Farah, 20 years, talks about how being an adult, an individual reaches a level of maturity where one can differentiate between good or bad for oneself. She says,

*“Obviously when you are an adult and you reach a certain sense of maturity, you will be able to gauge a situation quite well. It is not like you just think about a certain thing and instantly go on and do it”.*

This characteristic of being mature also has a downside as one is expected to behave in a mature manner all the time. Therefore one cannot behave like a child and is not allowed to commit silly mistakes. This affects one’s personality as one tends to lose one’s innocence. Farah, 20 years, says, *“When you are an adult, people tend to judge you and if you do something foolish or you tend to make a silly mistake, obviously people tend to throw judgments on you. I think that is the disadvantage of being an adult, because you are always in the company of adults and they will judge you as an adult not as a child. So you cannot do something foolish or silly which you did as a child, I guess. I think it has another disadvantage as, when you realize that you have grown up so soon and there are certain things which you think that you have missed out in life but you cannot redo them again as your age hold you back”.*

### **Handle responsibilities vs. increased responsibilities.**

When an individual becomes an adult, one realizes one’s responsibilities and prepares to handle them. For example Pooja, age 22, describes, *“Being an adult, you have certain responsibilities that are an advantage. As a child you always used to say “elders say*

*that". But being an adult you are in those shoes and you have to perform whatever you used to think as a child, the adults had to do. So I think the biggest advantage is that you get a chance to implement as adults, what we thought when we were children that adults should do. I mean for me responsibility is an advantage in itself. I mean as a child you cannot do certain things, when you become an adult you can take responsibility and do them".*

On the other hand being an adult increased one's responsibilities as one has to handle the responsibility of family as well as for one's own self. One also has to be responsible for one's own actions and cannot get rid of responsibilities, even if one wants to. Therefore Mani, age 23, does not want to become an adult ever because she does not want to handle these responsibilities. So she comments, *"Lot of responsibility comes and then you feel that you do not get the liberty, you feel like in some ways imprisoned, that you are supposed to do all these things and cannot run away from any of them. So basically my idea is that I never want to become an adult"*.

Shrija, 22 years, feels that when an individual becomes an adult then one has to be responsible enough for one's actions. One cannot have carefree attitude because if anything goes wrong then society will point out one's mistakes and blame one's actions. She comments, *"Another disadvantage: as a child, you are carefree; there is no tension in life; you do not have to think about anything- food, drinks, living or anything else. As an adult you are responsible for everything. You are the sole responsible person for all the things you do. People will blame you"*.

**Independent decision making vs. no one to fall back on in the event of mistake.**

Another advantage of being an adult is that one can make one's own decision. One can make one's own choices at any time. In the words of Nalini, age 22, *"Decision taking – all the time you have the liberty to take the decisions yourself like what you want to choose as your subject, how much you want to study. Like if you want to pursue higher education, go for it, there are no barriers or fortification for it, so this is a big thing, one of the biggest advantages of being an adult"*.

Being decisive as an adult has drawbacks also as now one has to be liable for one's own decision and if at all one has committed a mistake then one is accountable for it. One cannot blame anyone else for one's own fault nor can one fall back on anyone for the same. Ravi, 22 years, conveys similar views, *"Once we say 'yes' to whatever decisions we have taken, we have to bear the brunt from both the sides even if we fail or if we pass. So this is most likely a disadvantage because no one is going to guide and advise you. So I think this is the most important disadvantage as during our childhood period our parents used to say- no (to guide us) do not do this it will turn back on you. You will not get this right after some time, so do not do this. But after being an adult I think we have to take our own decisions"*.

**Self-awareness vs. confused state of life.**

Respondents mentioned that being an adult makes one conscious about oneself. One became aware of what one has to do and what one should not do, that is, what is good



and bad for oneself. One also becomes attentive and responsive towards one's family.

Bipin, age 25, remarks, *"One advantage that I believe in being an adult, in the true sense of the word, is that when you are an adult you know which thing you can do and you cannot, what will make the life smoother and keep the oiling intact"*.

But on the other hand, the adult stage is the most perplexing stage when one has all kinds of influences, so it is possible that one feels lost and is not able to decide about what one has to do and what one should not. For example, Mahek, 18 years, expresses, *"You have this feeling inside that I am an adult, so I can do anything but doing anything does not mean you do wrong things. Also being an adult means lots of confusion, it's a path where you cannot decide; it's the most confusing stage of life; also you have all kinds of influences. You do not know what to do; you do not know whom to listen, whom not to listen to"*.

### **Intellectual vs. cannot act foolish.**

Another important advantage of being an adult is that now one becomes more sensible.

An individual starts perceiving more intellectually and thus becomes more critical in one's outlook. One starts experimenting with things and is able to predict the future as well. This makes one's feel proud of oneself as now one can stand among intellectuals.

According to Farah, 20 years, adulthood brings with it a critical outlook, *"Being critical in your outlook, this trait comes with adulthood hence you do not accept things the way they are. You even question what the truth is, what's the fact; you question the authenticity or veracity of the facts also. That is very important for an individual"*.

Similarly Durga, age 25, stated that one could experiment with his/her career only after

being an adult. Sharing her views, she says, *“You are more experimental with things in this age than in the past ages. As earlier it was not possible to be as experimental with the career or with anything as of today where you can think beyond the set parameters”*.

Being an adult, if one is sensible enough then one is expected to take logical action and not act foolishly. An individual is able to give an explanation for one's actions so that one's identity remains intact. This is portrayed by Rohan, 21 years, in his words, *“An adult will only think about those things for which there is explanation available or those for which there is a definite sign set, which he could see and understand. When there is no specific explanation available I do not think an adult would be relying on his belief because that may cause problems”*.

#### **Career oriented vs. increased pressure and stress.**

According to participants being an adult makes an individual focused towards one's career. One sets one's own goals and starts working on it. A person thinks of proving oneself to the whole world and obtains success. For example, *“Being an adult, you have your own set of goals in front of you that you need to work upon which is apparently not there when you are not an adult. There is a career path in front of you on which you have to work to obtain success”* (Basant, age 23).

As of now an individual has to focus on one's career goals, so the pressure of getting a job increases and if one gets a job then work pressure along with the societal pressures increase and an expectation to achieve something in life builds. This is a disadvantage. Moreover all these pressures also make one busy in work to the extent that there is no

time for oneself nor for one's family. In this vein, Gautam, age 25, comments, *"The pressure of making a successful career increases. Especially for a person from middle class family needs to hike out and struggle for a better career, and to fulfil his dreams, one needs to think big so that he can handle the pressure. And as one grows the pressure increases too, till the time one gets the job and even after that the pressure mounts on. As such also life is very stressful in our country for an adult individual"*.

Darshan, 22 years, describes how during childhood, young individuals were free birds unlike in this phase. He remarks, *"In childhood we could do things as we like, we had no pressure of work, no tension of earning money, there were no responsibility and we were tension free. But in adulthood, it is not so. Thus I think it is a disadvantage to be an adult"*.

On the other hand, Shrija, age 22, refers to societal pressure in her comments as follows: *"But as an adult, I do not think you are allowed to do those (child-like) things because of the societal pressures. It is not that you will be penalized or you are fined. But what I have observed is we, human beings are more scared of society rather than of law. We are answerable to society rather than law. So this is where it stops us, I feel this is a disadvantage"*.

### **Personality development vs. appropriate social behaviour.**

Respondents described that being an adult helps in developing one's personality. Now an individual has his/her own identity and can deal with people in a proper manner. One has developed a positive attitude and maintained the required level of seriousness

whenever it is expected from him/her. In words of Mohit, 19 years, *“You have your own identity. As an adult, you are more sensible, you deal with people in a proper manner. You create a more formal relationship with people”*.

Likewise, Rohan, age 21, mentions about the sincerity of an adult as an advantage. He remarks, *“When I am doing work, I am supposed to maintain a required level of seriousness. If I do not have this feature of an adult, I think, I will not be able to do the task well on time and in the required manner. My attention would be diverted like a child who gets quickly distracted from his activity towards a squirrel passing by. So focusing on work or prioritising and maintaining the level of sincerity whenever it is required is another feature of an adult which he holds and which is an advantage”*.

On the other hand, it is expected from an adult to behave in a culturally appropriate manner. Correspondingly Anand, 22 years, describes that being an adult compels one to develop one’s personality in such a manner that one can achieve success. He shares, *“Even if you do not want to change your behaviour, then also you are forced to change it as per the norms of the society. That is the disadvantage of being an adult, you would also have to change the way of dressing. If you will not change the way of talking then it will reflect your personality and will affect your success in life, hampering the chances to get a good job. And thus making it difficult to fulfil your desires and wishes”*.

One has to be careful about everything, for example, the manner in which one speaks, the way one presents oneself, and the way one is expected to address and react to a situation with calmness. One has to take care of one’s gesture and behaviour in public

and has to adapt oneself according to the preferred behaviour even if one does not want to. For example, Nisha, age 19, comments, *“You have to take care of the words you speak because now being an adult you cannot say anything. You cannot blabber, you cannot flatter. You have to be very careful while using your words because it might harm your relationship. It might hamper your personality”*.

### **Family and Society Focused Categories**

#### **Importance of one’s opinion in family matters vs. conflict with parents’ views.**

Applicants felt that now as an individual has become an adult so he/she is allowed to express his/her views and no one restrains his/her thoughts which is an advantage of being an adult. Also, one’s opinion is considered important and taken seriously by others. An individual is also asked to convey one’s ideas in major decisions of one’s life as well as in family matters. According to Nalini, 22 years, her mother does not advise her any more, instead she can follow her own views. She says, *“Initially, every small thing was prompted by my mother, “this is this, and you should do this, and you should not do that”*. Now it is absolutely different. For a simple instance, the things I wear, initially mummy used to say that wear this, you will look good in this but now I have my own perception. I know in what clothes do I look good. So this is an advantage, obviously”.

Daljeet, age 24, focuses on the importance of one’s opinions in the family. She explains, *“When you become an adult, people ask for your views also. In the family, your views are also considered for some important decisions. Earlier they used to think that I was a*

*child; but now even my decisions are taken by my parents. I think from past 7-8 years, whenever my parents wanted to take a decision, it might be regarding which colour to choose for the house or a vehicle they wanted to buy, or the investment of money in my name, they would tell me that these were the options and ask me to give my opinion about what should be done. So I think this is also one of the advantages that your opinions are taken seriously”.*

Having one’s own views leads to disadvantage also, as one’s views may be different from one’s parents and society due to generational gap and create conflict between an individual and his/her parents. For example, Durga, 25 years, shares, *“It creates a rift between parents and kids as in if the youngsters, when they consider themselves as adults, they think that they are always right. They do not want to understand the perspective of the parents even if parents are right”.*

### **Become a role model vs. regulating one’s emotions.**

Another significant advantage illustrated by participants of being an adult was that one served as a role model to one’s younger siblings through shouldering responsibilities like advising the younger siblings in their day-to-day living, giving guidance in their respective study subjects (e.g. commerce, science, arts, sports, music) and helping them in their studies. For instance, Nisha, age 19, comments, *“You can talk to your younger sisters, brothers and give them advice, if you are an adult. If you are not an adult, they would ask you and you will be dumb headed. You would remain blank because you do not know yourself what to advise them”.*

There is a downside also while acting as a role model in front of one's younger siblings as one's feel hesitant to express one's inner feelings. Even if there is an emotional or sad situation one cannot express one's emotions. An individual has to be strong and handle all situations. This is shared by Pooja, 22 years, *"I mean if you want to cry for instance but because you are an adult and you cannot portray emotions, I mean in front of the world; so you will not cry. As a child it is very easy to cry, that is a big disadvantage; our emotions .... you cannot be care-free and express your emotions in front of others"*.

### **Social competence vs. adherence to social customs.**

Respondents experienced that now an individual has become socially competent, one has one's own social life and knows how to maintain one's relations and friendships. One is also aware of how to deal with problems and is conscious of all the rules and customs of the society and follows it. This is elaborated by Nalini, age 22, in the following remarks, *"Being a child, when I was at school, I did not have much of social life. But now that I am in college, I have a social life, I know people, I go out, talk to them, I learn new things which did not happen in school. Now that I am an adult, I am given the liberty to go out, do wherever I want, meet people whom I want to meet, so this is an advantage"*.

Similarly, Shrija, 22 years, describes that being an adult gives an individual the right to stop wrong doing in the society. She says, *"I would like to cite an incident, if you are passing by a road, you see a wrong thing being done, that a group of big boys are bullying a small boy, you as an adult feel confident, you can go and stop it. So indirectly what I want to say is there are certain things you can stop as an adult"*.

Being socially competent has a disadvantage too as now respondents have to be answerable to the society for whatever they may do. So they have to act according to the norms of the society and follow all customs even if they feel burdened by it. They have to follow a set path and cannot deviate from it. It is also expected from them to have awareness about society and think about its well-being. In this vein, Pooja, age 22, expresses, *“Another disadvantage of being an adult is that sometimes you are required to act in a fashion which you yourself do not want to, but I think because of the societal pressure you have to put yourself in that frame. That is a big disadvantage”*.

### **Support parents vs. increased social expectations.**

Another very important advantage of being an adult mentioned by the participants was that one is capable of taking care of one's family both physically and financially. As an adult, one is more considerate towards his/her family and is able to make family proud. All this also helped one to gain their parents' trust. For example, Shrija, age 22, felt that when an individual becomes adult then he/she is capable of earning well so he/she should support parents. In her words, *“Being an adult, you can earn, you can do lot for your parents. This is the time when you can repay your parents. For parents should not be taken as a burden, you should just feel that you are doing something for them, but frankly speaking you can never repay them because it is not a loan that once you repay it and get your hands cleared off it. It is not a debt, nor it is a repayment of loan”*.

Correspondently, Julie, 19 years, expressed that as she has gained her parents' trust, they have full confidence in her and have started giving responsibilities to her as an adult which she thinks is the biggest advantage. She says, *“I would say that my parents have*



*started trusting me. That is one thing which is the biggest advantage of being an adult. Your parents start trusting you and when they trust you they give you responsibilities. And therefore my parents say..... “Now you are matured enough, you should do take this responsibility”.*

In contrast to this, participants also mentioned that being an adult increases everyone's expectations. Not only parents, but society as a whole expects a lot from an adult person. In fact, these expectations were not there when a person was a child but after being an adult, one is faced with lots of expectations in every sphere of life such as education, career and fulfilling family needs. For example, Nishant, age 22, shares, *“People’s expectations from an adult always keep on increasing. An individual as an adult has some different dreams for himself but due to pressure from people, he cannot do what he wants and cannot fulfil others expectations”*. In the same vein, Nalini, aged 22, remarks that expectations rise in every sphere of life, *“As a child, there were not so many expectations as it is there right now. As an adult, we have to fulfil the expectations in the entire sphere of life like in relationships, studies and career”*.

### **Civic responsibility.**

Participants depicted that being an adult has yet another advantage as one becomes capable of handling civic duties as now one has the right to vote and the power to change the nation’s government. Moreover, one could now develop a friendly nature and help everyone. Participants also mentioned that being an adult gives one the right to watch adult movies as well as take part in social parties. For example, Sonia, age 20, felt happy to share that being an adult gave her the opportunity to vote and be a part of

nation building. So she shares, *“You can change the course of life as you want that becomes an important part of the nation’s development. You get the right to vote which plays a major role in changing the nation’s system in a democratic way. Being an adult, you realize your duties and perform them”*. On other hand, Gautam, 25 years, felt that being an adult gave him license to have liquor and watch adult movies too. He says, *“You can go to a movie with your girlfriend after 18. You get legal freedom of action also. You have a right to vote, right to marry. You can go to a bar and have liquor, if you want to”*.

Differences among the residents of Delhi and Vadodara emerged in discussions pertaining to advantages and disadvantages. For example, advantages such as maturity, personality enhancement, importance of one’s opinion in the family, social adaptability and supporting parents were more emphasised by Vadodara participants whereas taking responsibility and decision making were emphasised by Delhi participants. On the other hand, disadvantages like increased responsibility and increased stress were emphasised by Vadodara participants, whereas expectation to act mature, no one to fall back on if a mistake was committed and conflicts with parents’ views were expressed as disadvantages by Delhi participants.

According to participants’ descriptions, the phase of adulthood is a rewarding phase where they have lots of benefits which they enjoy fully. Being in the phase of adulthood enables a person to be on one’s own, enhance personality by developing skills, become focused and cognizant in life. It is in this phase that one has opportunity to be progressive, one’s opinion matters in the family and also one is trusted by the family.

The individual develops a capability to support parents and fulfil everyone's expectations and society at large. Though participants mentioned the phase to be a pleasing one, at the same time it has some flaws too as a person has to face lot societal pressure as well as meet expectations of others. It demands from a person to behave in accordance with the society and in addition become a role model for their younger ones.

Hence adulthood emerges as a challenging period in which young individuals associate two aspects of life, freedom and social expectations. This means that being an adult, one has independence to be on one's own and enhance oneself as well as bear responsibility of oneself and that of one's family.

## **Section IV**

### **Experiences in the Present Life Stage versus Earlier Times**

The section focuses on the contemporary Indian views about adulthood as described by the young individuals and also gives us a picture of how globalisation has transformed views of young individuals about adulthood as compared to earlier times.

The participants were asked if there were any changes in the markers of adulthood from earlier times, to which all participants answered in the positive, expressing numerous changes such as variation in criteria for marriage, transformed family structure, significance to education, gender related changes, openness of society, more democratic parent-child relationships and career consciousness. Table 17 presents these changes with illustrative verbatim.

Table 17

*Changes in Markers of Adulthood*

Criteria	Illustrative Verbatim
Criteria for Marriage	<p><i>“Initially the concept of marriage was very much different than the marriages that we see these days. Earlier, love marriage was a taboo in the society but now it is not seen in that way. Most of the sections of society during previous days did not allow girls to choose their partners. Whereas these days yes we can find at least 75% of the families allow their daughters to choose their partners or to go for their kind of relationship. This is a big and drastic change that I have noticed. Initially girl’s marriageable age was when she had just crossed puberty or just stepping into the threshold of puberty but now it is absolutely different. In most of the cases, now a girl gets proper education, starts earning, and be independent, and then it depends on the girl when she wants to get married” (Nalini, age 22).</i></p> <p><i>“Years before, I guess the marriage would be just for sex and reproducing children and nowadays it has changed. Now there would be no sexual intercourse without any friendly relations. Before there was hardly anything like talking to a woman and a woman would be working at home throughout the day, the person would just come at night and they would do sex and that’s all” (Ragav, 18 years).</i></p>
Transformed Family Structure	<p><i>“Earlier times, it was found that children used to prefer living with their family that is, mother, father, sister and all. But these days if you consider adults and if they get married, they prefer living in a separate house. They want to live with their own individual family and they say that mom-dad look after themselves and live separately. In earlier times in our Indian society we did not have nuclear families, there were mostly joint families” (Julie, age 19).</i></p> <p><i>“In earlier times when people grew up, they used to think about their country, how they would benefit their country, but nowadays, adults’ think of how they can spend their money usefully and profitably. Today adults just think about their own life and problems thereof. How they can improve their living standard, social status and comforts etc. But generally they do not think of how they can improve the society” (Sonia, 20 years).</i></p>
Significance to Education	<p><i>“In earlier times, the education system was not so advanced and people hardly valued education. So people got involved in earning or day-to-day activities at a very early age. So at very small age they were supposed to take care of their families. They were involved in social customs. Compare to earlier times, now people know that education is more important, so it is only after completing their education, they start involving themselves in these activities” (Mohit, 19 years).</i></p>

Gender Related Changes	<p><i>“Especially I think for girls a lot has changed from the earlier times, the kind of independence and the way we see and behave as an adult is very different from the initial time because girls used to be married off pretty early so they developed the way their in-laws or may be their husband wanted them to be. Now, staying unmarried and independent for at least 25-26 years or may be 26+ years of your life, you develop your own way to live life, your own point of view to see things and even your identity develops to a larger extent” (Nathasha, age 25).</i></p> <p><i>“And about the standard markers as to males, I think that for men may be sensitization is not that much. They were not involved in household work too much and they were more dominating. But with time, they are changing their attitude. May be because of the sensitization and rationalization that is coming from the women. So the attitudes of the men have also changed a bit” (Nehal, 22 years).</i></p>
Openness of Society	<p><i>“Hats off to educational system in our country because earlier the thinking of people was much narrow. But gradually they became educated and the whole lot of people started sending their kids to colleges, universities and such other institutions. Consequently the way of thinking was really affected by this step and it broadened their vision and started thinking on higher levels. This had influenced their perception for a person to be an adult” (Aryan, age 20).</i></p>
More Democratic Parent-child Relationships	<p><i>“Now parents give you the freedom, if you want to stay separate even if your family is in Delhi (same city). If you are studying, they understand that you cannot concentrate properly in your studies if you are staying with the family. For that, they can allow you to move out, stay away from home which was not possible during their own times. Apart from that I think parents as such, with a passage of time, are trying to have more faith on their kids which was not there earlier” (Durga, age 25).</i></p> <p><i>“In the earlier times it was the parents who used to decide but now it is the children who decide what they want to do. So this is another concept or can say a new beginning for a new world” (Basant, 23 years).</i></p>
Career Consciousness	<p><i>“As in the earlier times we used to attain adulthood by 20-21, but now as compared to it we are keen enough to think about ourselves when we hit class 10 or 12. That is we decide to opt for different subjects and move into different streams to build a career. In the earlier times it was the parents who used to decide but now it is the children who decide what they want to do” (Basant, age 23).</i></p> <p><i>“In today’s world we need so many counsellors and so many psychologists for young individuals because the expectation level of the parents has increased to such a great height that the child is obviously stressed out and this is a major difference between the earlier times and the present time” (Nehal, 22 years).</i></p>

Table 17 depicts the major changes that participants have expressed with reference to earlier and present times. The foremost transformation is that there is a shift in the age of marriage and the type of marriages. Earlier young individuals used to get married at a very early age and their partners were arranged by their families. But this concept has changed. Nowadays, young individuals not only delay their marriage until mid-twenties or later, but also select their partners on their own. If parents select their partners then they consult the individual for their choice and then make the decision, unlike during earlier times. Respondents also mentioned about the change in relations with their partner. Initially it was related mainly to fulfilling the daily requirements of the family or sexual needs of the partner, but now it is more focused on mutual understanding between partners and having a friendly relationship with each other.

Other modifications noticed by respondents from earlier times were the change in their living status and greater importance to education. Earlier, people used to live together and handle each other's responsibilities and share all societal pressures, but now nuclear families are more common where people have become self-centred and individualistic in thinking and living. Initially young individuals just focused on handling responsibilities and getting married keeping aside their education. But now they know the significance of education, for both boys and girls. Therefore more young individuals are getting higher education and now they have more opportunities as compared to earlier times.

Almost all respondents mentioned about the paradigm shift that has occurred in a girl's role as compared to earlier times. In earlier times, girls were married at an early age and expected to run a house properly. They were not given any freedom but instead had to

follow all traditional rituals. Today however, this scenario has changed as girls have become independent as well as earning members of the family. The change is also observed in the role of boys who have now started participating in household chores. This in turn has also brought about changes in today's economic and social atmosphere, as respondents expressed that society has become broad minded. Societal pressures and restrictions have reduced as people have become modernized and globalized in their thinking. Now young individuals have a lot of freedom and they have their own space which was missing in earlier times.

Respondents also mentioned about other changes, for example, now one's parents not only understand him/her but also support him/her. An individual has one's own views and one's opinion matters in the family which was not there in earlier times. Young individuals attain early maturity and become career conscious which leads to lot of pressure and stress in order to handle responsibilities and accomplish their goals as compared to earlier times.

Responses of participants indicate that there has been modification in the structure of society. This in turn has influenced the perception of young individuals in relation to adulthood. Pias (2006) also refer to similar effects of globalisation that leads to rapid and significant human changes. Importantly, participants revealed that there have been shifts in traditional markers and importance is given to education whereby girls are also encouraged and given opportunities. This is similar to the results of Phase I which shows that participants gave least preference to traditional markers such as marriage and parenthood. Verma (2000) describes similar variation in the Indian society due to



urbanization. This is enunciated by participants through references to decrease in family rigidity along with broadmindedness of society. This has changed parents' views and parenting style as authoritarian parenting has changed to supportive and understanding parenting. This has also provided opportunity for young individuals to alter their living status and express their views openly, and consequently bring about a focus on their self.

## **Section V**

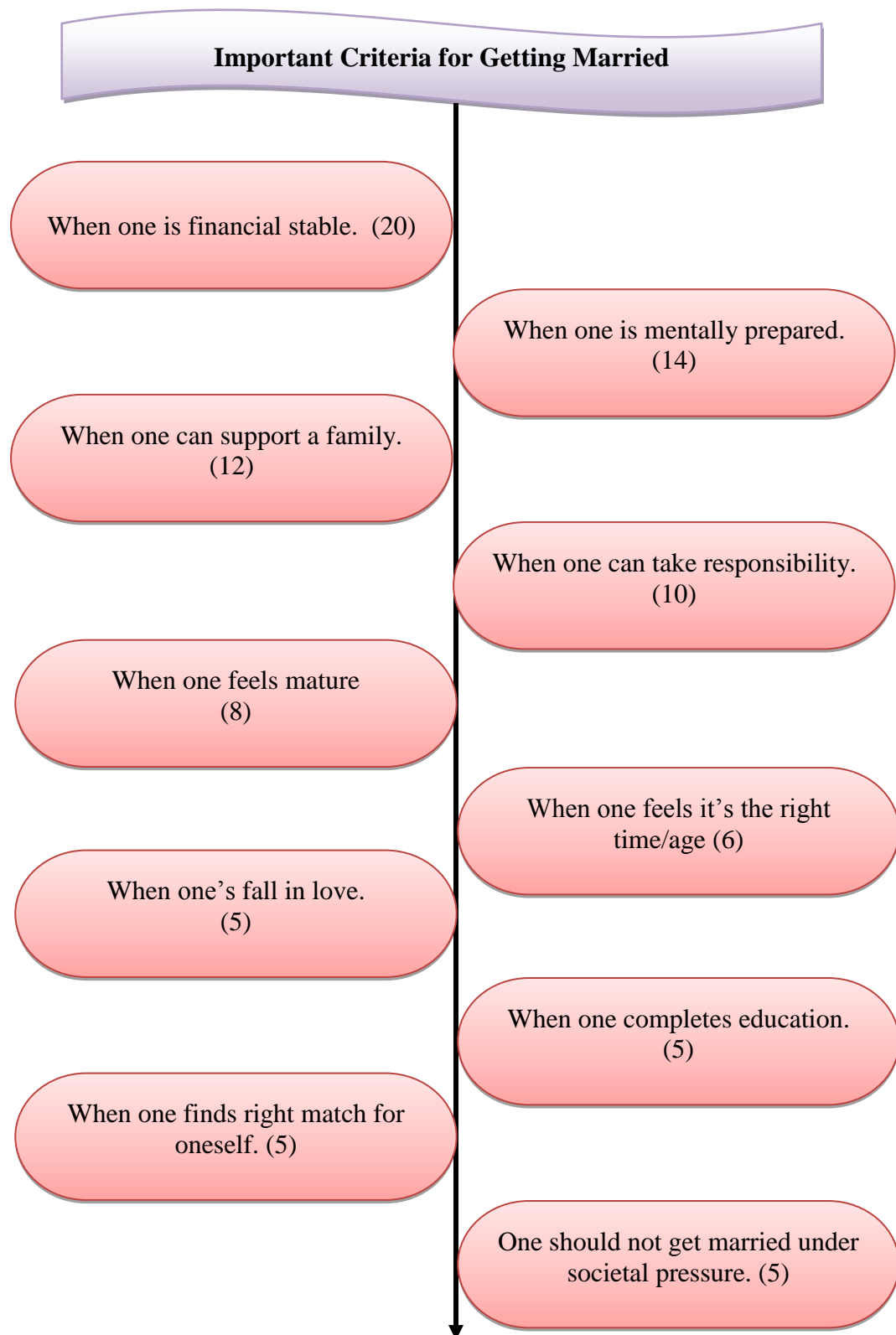
### **Views on Marriage and Parents' Perceptions of Adulthood**

The section is divided into two parts; the first one shares the views of young individuals regarding marriage. This enables us to know the changes related to this traditional marker of adulthood. It also highlights the circumstances in which the participants want to get married and the situations in which they may want to avoid marriage.

The second part presents parents' ideas about being an adult as received by participants. This enables us to know which characteristics are endorsed by participants' parents as important markers of adulthood, and the importance of traditional markers.

#### **Views about Marriage**

Participants were asked to present their views about marriage. Figure 4 shows participants' ideas about marriage.



*Note:* Number in brackets indicates frequency of respondents

*Figure 4.* Ideas about marriage

Modernisation and global economy has influenced each segment of our society, especially the urban youth. This has influenced their perceptions on different aspects, for example, marriage. A large number of participants expressed that one should get married only when one is financially stable, can shoulder responsibilities and support one's family (see Figure 4). Few others respondents also highlighted finishing one's education and being capable of handling each and every situation before entering marriage. For example, Aryan, age 20, expresses, *“Well, I think a person must marry when he/she is quite responsible, starts earning and can look after his/her family. To lead a family life, one needs to be mature enough to handle things patiently and calmly. A person should marry when he/she achieves the basic goals of his/her life like having a good reputed job, earning sufficiently and living a secured life in a nice house of his/her own. After all these things are achieved, getting married would be a beautiful experience”*.

Participants felt that adulthood and marriage are two different aspects that cannot be interlinked. As shared by Nehal, 22 years, *“Well adulthood has nothing to do with getting married. I do not consider marriage as a good marker or one of the major characteristics of being an adult. I disagree with the traditional view that a person should get married to be an adult. There are many examples of couples who have got married at a very young age of 18-19 and are leading a very good life. On the other hand there are also examples where people have married after 26-27yrs of age but are not able to sustain their relationship or adjust with their partners. So adulthood has nothing to do with getting married”*.

Respondents also remarked that age is not an important criterion for marriage and that one should not marry due to the pressures of society or family. As echoed by Basant, age 23, *“People say you need to get married at a specific age. This is completely wrong. To my notion if a person is 28 and is not able to understand the importance of marriage then he\ she should not go for it. Marriage is not a destination to be ventured. It should not be age bound”*.

Rather a good number of respondents believed that when a person feels that he/she is mentally prepared, has grown up, found the right choice for him/her and feels compatible with the partner then one should get married. Pooja, 22 years, expresses, *“Marriage itself means carrying a lot of responsibilities and mutual understanding... When a person thinks he or she is ready..... ready for that then he or she should step into marriage. And one must not spoil somebody’s life. Couples should only decide to get married when they think they are apt for each other. I mean I would not say that 18 years is a very early age or 30 years is a very late age for marriage. The right time for marriage is when you think you are ready to enter into a relationship”*.

Next, the participants were asked to mention about the age and circumstances under which they would prefer to get married. To this a large number of respondents expressed that they would get married when they had finished their education, were financially stable, mature and mentally prepared to fulfil responsibilities. Darshan, age 22, comments, *“I think that is when my parents would like, also having completed my studies, getting a good job with a decent salary wherein I can contribute to the welfare of all the members of my family. But before getting into married life, I would like to*

*enjoy my bachelorhood which I think is going with friend for trips and indulging in my hobbies which I think I may not be able to enjoy after marriage”.*

On the other hand age as a criterion did not emerge as an important factor for getting married; rather delay in age of getting married was mentioned. This is also mentioned in section III wherein participants have mentioned shift in age of marriage and the preference for self-selection in marriage. Traditionally young individuals used to get married at an early age and their partners were arranged by their families. But now young individuals in the urban class context not only delay their marriage until mid-twenties, but also select their partner on their own. And if their parents select their partner then they will consult them for their choice and then make the decision. Daljeet, 24 years, observes, *“Not depending on age, even if a person turns 25 years/ 27 years or 28 years of age and if they still do not feel capable of taking responsibility, I think they should not get married, because it actually ruins life. If you are still in the phase of enjoying life, and you feel you want to remain single then you should not get married”.* And Basant, age 23, mentioned that it is now acceptable in the society to delay marriage for both genders, *“I would say that now the society has evolved in that fashion. Now it is accepted that when the girl is getting married in her late 20’s or 30’s or when a guy in 30-35 in between that. So it is very situational”.*

Further it was observed that Delhi participants focused more upon financial stability, responsibility, mental readiness and right match as important criteria for marriage; whereas capable of supporting family, completion of education, being mature, falling in love and delay in age of marriage were emphasized by Vadodara participants.

To summarize, marriage is not an important criterion for adulthood for Indian urban middle class young individuals; this is also seen in the results of phase I. Traditionally in India, it was only after marriage (grhasthasrama stage) that a person was deemed to enter adulthood (Saraswathi & Ganapathy, 2002), but this scenario is changing as revealed by the participants. Further participants described that a person should not marry under any family or societal pressure, rather one should marry when one is prepared for it with no constraint of age. This is also different from traditional Indian arranged marriages where the wishes of the parents or family were most important. According to the participants, before getting married, it is very important for a person to be financially stable and be capable of taking care of the family responsibilities. They should fulfil expectations of both, family and the partner. This also reflects that young individuals gave importance to both individualist as well as collectivist considerations while highlighting features for marriage.

### **Ideas about Parents' Views of Being an Adult**

The respondents were asked to describe about their parents' perceptions of adulthood.

Figure 5 portrays young individuals' perceptions' about parents' views of being an adult.

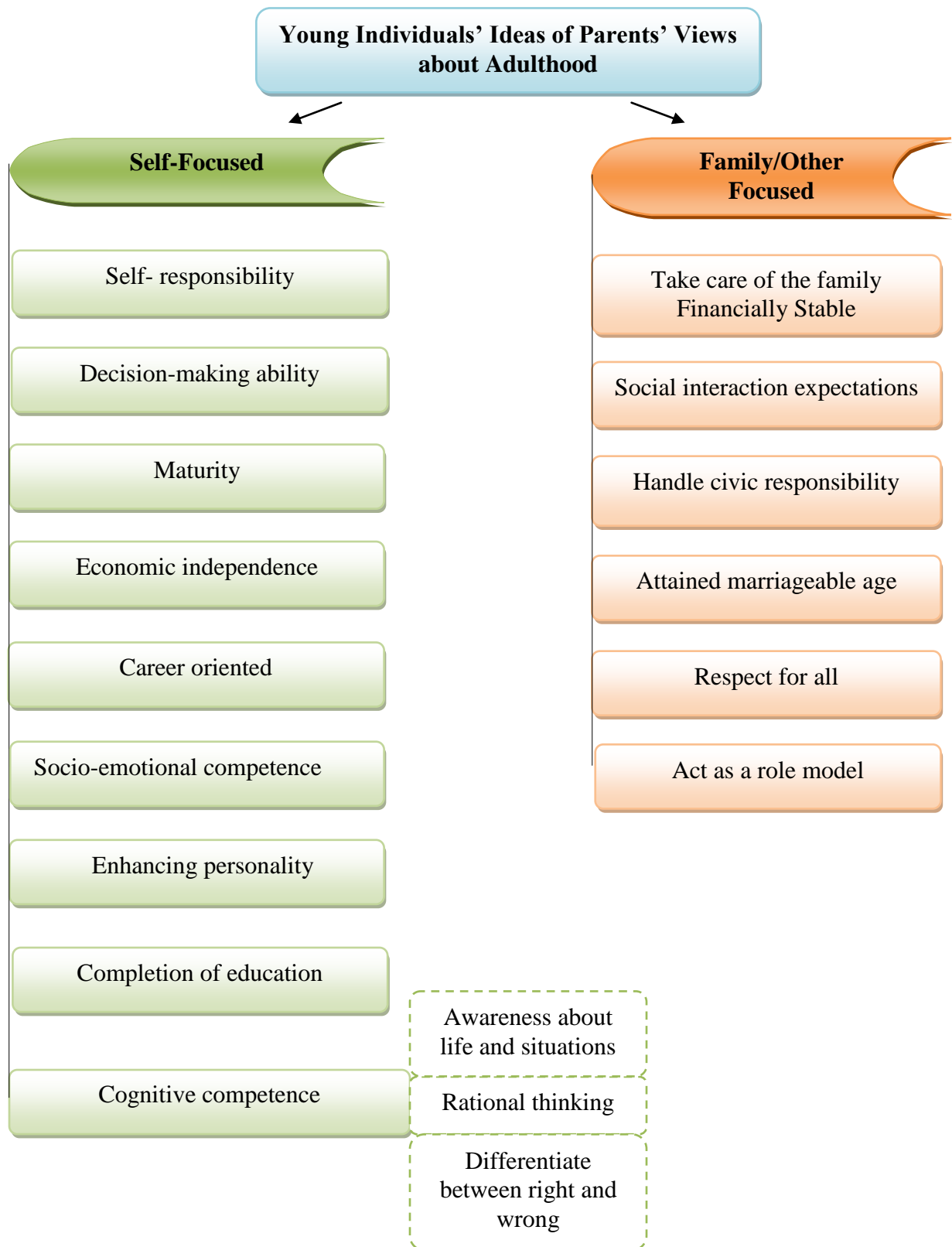


Figure 5. Parents perceptions of an adult



Young individuals' perceptions of parents' views were similar to their own view (see Figure 5). According to them, parents also gave importance to characteristics like being responsible, being mature, being career oriented and having decision making ability.

Gautam, age 25, says, *"There is no particular definition of being an adult. They consider a person as an adult, who is responsible in life; one who is matured in life. The basic point is a person who is responsible and can take his own decisions. If a person is career oriented then according to my parents he is an adult"*.

Participants also illustrated that similar to their views, parents also gave preference to characteristics like being self-sufficient with financial independence, having a good personality with rationality, being able to support their parents, being social and able fulfil civic responsibility. For example, Pooja, 22 years, shares, *"I think financial independence is their idea of being an adult. Apart from that a person should also be rational, prudent, having a good decision making ability and abide by the social laws, so that he can be called as an adult. And I think, according to them if you follow what society has been preaching then you are an adult"*.

Likewise, Mohit, age 19, described that according to his parents, a person who develops a good personality, can support his parents and is able to socialize well, can be termed as an adult. He expresses, *"An adult should take the responsibilities in a proper manner. He should deal with people and do things in proper manners. His ideas should be more practical. He should be able to take care of the family. He should respect elders. He should have clarity about his future. He should be more sociable. An adult should be more sensible, his behaviour should be polite"*.

Few other important characteristics described by participants about their parents' notion of being an adult which were different from them were being able to fulfil all expectations like becoming a successful person, earn well, being able to fulfil their parents' desires, obey them, complete their education, get married and consider parents as role model. According to Vikrant, age 20, *"The parents' expectations are that in future they should do well; at the time of difficulties, they should help people in need. They should not treat the people as big or small. They should behave in similar fashion with everyone. It is their right to point out the mistakes of a person. In the near future, when they grow they should take care of their parents as some people leave them. Every child must remember about the hardships their parent has taken to reach them in a particular position. They should never forget their parents' struggle. They should be aware of what they want from us. They should never misbehave with their parents whatever they tell us, it is for our betterment"*. Similarly, Aryan, 20 years, described about the importance of education his parents placed for an individual to be adult. He says, *"Education, according to them is most important. If I did my graduation then I am an adult because I am more focused towards my career"*.

Similarly, Farah, age 20, articulated that her parents' idea is to consider them as a role model. She says, *"Be able to see things in their way. Being in their shoes so that we are able to gauge the situation the way they gauge their own situation. In a way, we should be able to see through their eyes. Even we think that we are doing something right, we should think again, this obviously gets influenced in your opinion"*.

Some participants mentioned that according to parents, marriage is a criterion for adulthood. In Nathasha's words, *"May be one thing when you are married, they finally feel that you are an adult now so they will leave you on your own and in a way when you take responsibility for your actions, you do not run away from it"* (age 25).

Similarly, Nehal, 22 years, expressed that her parents' opinion on adulthood is that when an individual listens to one's parents, gets married, has children and fulfils all the duties then he/she becomes an adult. She comments, *"Getting married, having kids, and obeying to whatever your parents are saying because adulthood is all about being submissive in some regards as you are not a kid, you are not supposed to throw tantrums and all that. So I think that according to them adulthood is all about that"*

Some of the participants also expressed that according to their parents they will never turn adult even if they cross a particular age in life or show any particular characteristics. They will remain a child to them and parents will protect them in the same way. For example Basant, age 23, shares, *"Well for parents, their children never grow out of the shoes of a five year old. So for them whatever you do, whether earning, or taking a decision, or buying a car, or a house, they will always see you as a child. For them even if you reach adulthood, even if you are married; you are still a kid. So I think that perception has not changed much. So, there is no specifically definite age to recognize that you are an adult for them"*.

Differences among responses from the two cities have also emerged for participants' perceptions of their parents' views about adulthood. Vadodara participants felt that their parents' views about adulthood were centered around the following key factors:

responsibility, maturity, personality development, cognitive competence, social adaptability and finishing education. While Delhi participants highlighted factors such as self-sufficiency, goal orientation, societal expectation increases, marriageable age and respect for all as being key elements of their parents' views about adulthood.

Overall the results revealed that according to participants, their parents' perception of adulthood is almost in line with their own, as their parents' felt that being an adult an individual should possess self-sufficiency, financial stability, maturity, and able to take of family. The characteristics which differed were that a person should have finished one's education, attained a marriageable age and be ready for the same, and consider their parents as role model and be able to adopt this role model image. This reflects that participants' parents still gave preference to traditional markers of adulthood, that is, marriage and parenthood along with other markers. This also signifies the Indian culture stance in parent's perception. Another feature depicting the same is their belief that their child always remains a child for them, no matter what ever age he/she attained. This indicates the interdependence orientation of parents.

## **Section VI**

### **Independence, Self-Reliance and Important Duties**

Young individuals' opinion on the terms independence and self-reliance along with important duties are discussed in this last section of Phase II. The concepts independence and self-reliance were selected particularly to know how these predominantly individualistic constructs are perceived and interpreted in a collectivist society such as India in the context of globalisation.

In addition, the concept of duties was included as it is significant in the Indian cultural context and specifically to know the extent to which participants emphasized duty towards family, in comparison to duty towards self.

#### **Notion of Independence**

Young individuals were asked about their views on independence and when they think a person could attain it. Figure 6 presents participants' ideas about independence.



Note: Number in brackets indicates frequency of respondents

Figure 6. Notions of independence

Respondents associated independence with freedom of speech and freedom of action (see Figure 6). In other words, liberty to do what you want to without any restrictions, no boundaries, and no interferences from others, no need for permission for each and everything nor any need to consult anyone was considered as constituting freedom. Almost all participants also mentioned that one attained independence when one has freedom for one's actions without any fear. For example, Shrija, aged 22, quotes, *"I would say a person is independent when she/he is not bonded to anybody; when he/she has no fear of society; when he/she has no fear of parents, husband, anything that does not mean freedom to do anything that you wish, something that is not acceptable. What I mean is a person is independent when he/she can do what when he/she likes correct. When you have freedom to do something that is correct, I feel that is independence. You are not doing something that anybody is asking you to do. You do what you like to do; especially today a girl or a boy is free to do whatever they like"*.

Few other participants said that one attains independence when one is able to take one's own decisions and is assertive about what one wants and does not fear about what others will say, is responsible for one's actions and towards family, and has financial independence to sustain oneself. For instance Nehal, aged 22, articulates, *"I would say that a person is independent, obvious when he has achieved that sense of belongingness to himself, he relies on his decisions and when he starts earning on his/her own plus he/she is able to take care of his family. Earning is one thing and taking care of the family is another. Everybody can earn but then to be independent, to be self-reliant, I think that taking care of the family is another important aspect. You should know how to cater to the needs of the people who are attached to you"*.

Some respondents linked independence with “having one’s own thoughts and expresses them” which means one can express what one wants to say as one is not under anybody’s supervision and lives life according to one’s own will. They also linked independence with “having awareness” that suggests having knowledge because of which one can see the world, go anywhere and handle things in better ways. It also means awareness of those aspects which one should not be doing. As expressed by Sonia, aged 20, *“Nobody dictates you what is right or wrong. Even if you know that you are not doing right; you want to realize it on your own. You want to have a kick and then realize it. And independence means independence in expressing your thoughts that you are not under anybody’s supervision.... We should be aware of what we are doing; the awareness of our life, the awareness of our knowledge is what makes us independent. So independence doesn’t mean you have to flaunt or you have to break all the rules. It means changing the society; it means changing your own lifestyle; to save the nature; to save others life”*.

Few participants also mentioned that when a person becomes an adult then one is liable to be independent. Julie, aged 19, described that when she realized that she has become an adult then she automatically turned independent and now she is matured enough to do what she wants to do. On the other hand few participants also believed that a person can never attain independence as he/she is bound by situations, expectations and societal norms. In the words of Nalini, aged 22, *“I feel nobody is independent. Being a part of the society as I have said there are several expectations both positive as well as negative, but you are not independent. You have to cater to the needs of your elders, of your peers, of your husband, wife, daughter, etc. If you see through the set of criterion*



*which will define a person to be an independent person, you will find that nobody is independent. When I think of notions associated with independence, I think of certain things like monetary independence; independence to socialize, independence to work”.*

Participants’ responses also specified differences in their opinion with regards to city as components like freedom, decision-making and expressing one’s own views were stated by Vadodara participants as their notion of independence whereas components like responsibility and financial independence were voiced by Delhi participants.

Independence for participants reflects individualistic features such as freedom, that is, freedom to be on their own, having their own views, freedom to make decisions, freedom to take their responsibility with no restrictions and boundaries. At the same time, they also associated independence with taking full responsibility of one’s family whereby they are able to fulfil their needs and can take care of them. They think both adulthood and independence are interconnected as when one becomes an adult, one automatically attains independence. Further a few participants also enunciated that an individual can never attain independence as one is bound by some situations, expectations and societal norms.

### **Notions of Self-Reliance**

Next, participants were asked to explain views about the term self-reliance. Figure 7 represents participants’ notion of self-reliance.



Note: Number in brackets indicates frequency of respondents

Figure 7. Notions of self-reliance

Responses were related to elements such as believing in oneself, relying on oneself, trusting oneself, depending on oneself and nobody else, and having confidence in oneself (see Figure 7). Pooja, age 22, says, *“Self-reliance is something which is very.... What do I say ... it’s within you? Self-reliance comes from self-confidence, it comes from belief in oneself, and it really grows with your principals and your values. Self-reliance means you know you will be able to do this particular thing, you trust yourself. You know whatever you are doing is right. It is that belief in yourself, belief in your values. It is a force that binds you with your inner-self”*.

Some other respondents linked self-reliance to “financial stability”, that is, earning a good salary, fulfilling the daily needs for oneself and one’s family, and being able to “make productive decisions on your own” which implies having a sense of judgment of what is right and wrong and be ready to bear the consequences. For participants, self-reliance also means “achieving your goals” which means that one is sure about one’s career and works on it in one’s own way. For example Basant, 23 years, states, *“If a person is living with his family, is having a good job and is very happy as he is able to fulfil his daily needs and his families’ daily needs, also to some extent save a little bit then I would state that person as self-reliant. Then in that case one has attained self-reliance”*.

Farah, age 20, on other hand linked self-reliance with decision making ability. She remarked, *“Self-reliance means you trust yourself as a person, you should know your sense of judgment, your judgment of right or wrong. When you know that whatever you are doing, you assume it to be right then actually it has to be right. I think that is a kind of self-reliance. So that you know that you do not make a wrong judgment”*.

Likewise, Mohit, 19 years, believed an individual who is self-sufficient, working on one's own principles and achieves one's goal is self-reliant. He expresses, *"Self-reliance means when you are not dependent on anybody. A self-reliant person manages his work according to his thoughts, in his own way; and tries to achieve the objectives or goals. He has his own principles which he follows and achieves his goal"*.

Few participants also mentioned that both self-reliance and independence have almost the same meaning. They both go hand in hand and together they give a better understanding. For example Darshan, age 22, describes, *"Independence and self-reliance are mostly same, not much difference is there but self-reliance means mostly self-responsible, self-independence means living the life on one's own struggles. Independence means independent of thinking, working etc"*.

Difference in opinion of self-reliance by the participants belonging to different cities were also noticed as Vadodara participants' related self-reliance with trusting one's own self, being career oriented and being able to solve problems; on the other hand Delhi participants described self-reliance as earning capacity.

Lastly, participants were asked whether their notions about independence and self-reliance apply to them, and if so then to what extent. To this respondents mentioned that to a certain extent they are independent and self-reliant as they have the freedom to act and behave in the way they want to and also to think freely and share their thoughts without any hindrances. Mohit, 19 years, shares his feelings, *"To certain extent, I am an independent person. As I am allowed to share my views, as I am allowed to speak out my thoughts without any interferences, I also do not have to answer anybody for my acts to some extent but as I am still dependent on my family so to some extent it doesn't apply to me"*.

Few other participants mentioned that their notion about independence applies to them completely as they can take their own decisions, know their responsibilities, act maturely, think about their career and most importantly, have monetary independence. This is expressed by Aadi, age 20, in his reflections, *“I feel it very much applicable to me because I was always the kind of person who was independent and liberal. I always handled everything on my own and I think that I know my responsibilities, what I have to do and what not to. May be I can say that I know the difference between what is right and wrong. So just being independent is like one should know actually, what is right and what is wrong in life”*.

Likewise, Basant, 23 years, also felt that his notion of being an independent person applies to him to a large extent as he is focused on his career, has become financially independent, managed his own accommodation in Delhi and supports his parents both emotionally and financially. So he describes, *“It applies to me in a very large context, because I have been working for the past three years. It is very much applicable, because what I thought I excelled in, I have implemented that; I have planned, executed it properly and now I am working, and with that I have been studying as well. It’s all been a roller coaster ride. But I have been pretty much self-reliant as I am earning, financially well off and independent. Right now I am living in Delhi on my own. So I think I am both independent and self-reliant to that extent. Also whatever extra income I have, I try to help my family with it, apart from giving them emotional support”*.

It is apparent from participants’ responses that self-reliant and independence for them means a mix of both freedom as well as responsibility of their family. This reflects that

in the Indian society, young individuals described their self with a blend of both collectivistic and individualistic behaviours. This is in line with Sinha and Tripathi's (1994) study revealing co-existence of both individualistic and collectivistic orientations. For example, a person feels independence when one has sense of belongingness as well as is able to fulfil daily needs of the family. This means one wants to be independent in order to take care of one's family and others.

### **Significant Responsibilities and Obligations**

In the Indian context, people place high significance on duties based on social roles. Therefore participants were next asked to describe the important responsibilities and obligations of being an adult. To this almost every participant described that both responsibilities and obligations share quite the same meaning, hence they gave responses combining both these concepts and termed them as "important duties". The first significant duty of being an adult which was suggested by most of the respondents was to take care of their family, which implies that they should give complete satisfaction to their parents or rather support them, fulfil their requirements and not leave them at any stage, act as a guardian to their younger siblings and be responsible for their spouse. Overall the well-being of their family and being with them during times of need emerged as the most significant duty. For example, Nisha, 19 years, shares, *"Responsibilities of a person as an adult should be towards his parents from whom he has got so many things; he has to fulfil their necessities. Now the parents are not an adult bubbling with energy and power but rather are in their old age. And he being an adult should give them complete satisfaction so that they feel whatever they did was*

*correct. So the first responsibility is toward the parents. He should always look forward to give them the best in whatever ways he can. He should always support them emotionally if not materialistically. He should be there to talk to them, to discuss matters with them. These are the first duties as an adult”.*

The second most important duty which almost every participant mentioned was to fulfill civic responsibilities. For example voting, paying taxes, avoiding corruption, following all rules and regulations of society, doing something good for the human race and opposing wrong things done in society as the future of the nation depends on you. This is portrayed by Pooja, age 22, in her views, *“The political responsibility is where you pay your taxes being a good citizen, to vote and to make sure that the GDP of your country goes higher because ultimately if you do not do it for your country then I do not think anybody else would come and do it. I mean if an individual is not able to understand his political responsibility then neither the nation can prosper nor the society can prosper. So, political responsibility is very essential. Along with that comes the social responsibility. There are many things that are wrong in our society. So as an adult you are in a position to oppose those things, because you have an opinion, you have a voice. So I mean as far as possible you should try and fight those evils in the society and try to make it a better place”.*

The third most essential duty stated by almost all the participants was to be empathic towards others which implies being helpful to each and every person in need, irrespective of that person being one’s parent, sibling, neighbour or an old man crossing the road. One should support them and take care of people during times of crises, and

one should not only give emotional assistance but also help them in whichever way one can. In short, it is one's duty to be helpful to all, maintain a good relationship with people and mostly understand the need of the situation. This is suggested by Julie, 19 years, *"As a responsible adult ones should be very helpful not only to the family but also to the neighbours; friends and anyone who he is associated with. Not only you, need to be helpful in their good times but also during their bad times. That is their responsibility"*.

Table 18

*Other Significant Duties Defined by Participants*

<b>Duties</b>	<b>Illustrative Verbatim</b>
Develop Cognitive Skills	<i>"You must think, you must have that foresight, like you must have the ability to look into the future a bit, what I mean to say is that you should just think that if I do such a thing, what will be the repercussion, who are the people who will be affected because after all being an adult, you cannot just think about your own decision, you should take a decision considering there are so many people attached to you, your life is not just your own" ( Shrija, age 22).</i>
Fulfil Expectations	<i>"Being an adult certain things are imposed on you like you are supposed to know everything and do everything right. People start to expect more from you, I mean you do not have a chance or you are not supposed to do something wrong, all you have to do is be perfect and do everything right that is a big burden"(Pooja, 22 years).</i>
Regulate Behaviour	<i>"We should talk as a matured and responsible person and we should not hurt anybody. We should be polite and be careful while using words and we should be honest. To talk about the clothes of an adult; we should dress in a way our society accepts and thinks is appropriate. Being an adult, we should be responsible for and should be very careful about our body language; features, action</i>



	<i>and work style that is we should express our feelings and should use our body language in such way that other people should feel that he is a mature and adult person and not like an idiot or behave childishly” (Darshan, age 22).</i>
Create Awareness	<i>“We can see these days children are not given the basic education and are exploited like we can see that small children are working in shops. It is the responsibility and duty of an adult to bring the children out of such exploitation and if possible help them financially and satisfy their basic needs. We do not think that we can put them in sophisticated schools but can always help their parents; or make them understand that education is must these days”(Julie, 19 years).</i>
Be Economically Independent	<i>“In my case, if I can sustain myself in all spheres financially and also if I can support my parents financially, mentally and socially in all events and marriage” (Ravi, age 22).</i>
Be Responsible	<i>“I think that responsibilities are part and parcel of being an adult. And you cannot feel that you are an adult until you start fulfilling those responsibilities or you start taking those responsibilities on your own shoulders. You cannot feel being an adult until you start doing all these things. So to feel that you are an adult, you need to have some responsibilities” (Mani, 23 years).</i>

There were few other duties which was revealed by participants as shown in Table 18

such as develop cognitive skills, fulfil expectation of everyone, regulate one's

behaviour, create awareness, economic independence and being responsible.

Respondents mentioned that taking initiation to act upon these duties is also very

important for being an adult, that is, taking those duties on one's shoulder, facing them

and accomplishing them no matter what because to complete these duties is a must and

essential to achieve success. Further, while describing duties, Vadodara participants

focused on duties like supporting family, empathy towards others, regulation of their

behaviour and economical independence. On the other hand, Delhi participants focused on civic responsibilities, cognitive skills and fulfilling everybody expectations.

Traditional Indian orientation emphasises taking care of one's duties towards self, family and society at large. It was very important for a person to perform one's duties (*dharma*) to fulfil one's goals of life and to attain self-realisation or salvation, (*moksa*) (Kakar, 1981, Saraswathi & Ganapathy, 2002). It was evident from participants' responses that duties towards self, family and society at large in present India also. Participants felt that it is very important to perform their duties towards family, for example, taking care of their parents and siblings and fulfilling their needs, both emotionally and financially, duties towards nation, for example, behave in accordance with society, speak the truth and be empathetic towards others, and lastly duties towards self to become a better person, and become competent in all fields so that one can be called the future of the nation. This signifies the influence of Indian- Hindu orientation on young individuals in India wherein duty (*dharma*) is necessary, and obligation towards others is preferred before obligation towards self.

## **Summary of Results of Phase II**

- Equal proportion of participants felt adult as well as ambiguous about their status.
- Similar to phase I, more boys and older participants (21-25 years) felt adult than girls and younger participants (18-20 years). But unlike phase I, more Delhi participants felt adult than Vadodara participants.

- Participants emphasized on family focused characteristics similar to phase I, but at the same time equal emphasis was also given to individualistic characteristics (e.g. being self-sufficient).
- Similar to phase I, participants in phase II also indicated that importance of education is a key factor in defining one's adult status as for maximum participants the first realization of adulthood was when they entered college.
- Participants specified traditional gender roles for both boys and girls, which is aligned with phase I results. This indicates that the traditional gender roles still sustain in contemporary India. But at the same time, young individuals, especially girls, indicated their desire to eliminate this discrimination and wanted equal roles for both boys and girls.
- Similar to phase I, there were certain differences in responses of participants from the two cities.
- Adulthood is a mixed bag situation where there are some advantages such as more freedom, opportunity to be progressive, consideration of one's opinion in the family and trust of the family; on the other hand it brings responsibilities, role related obligations and accountability to meet everyone's expectations.
- Participants articulated changes in their perspectives as well as their parents which signify the effects of global influences on society. They revealed that there

have been shifts in traditional markers in terms of importance of education, democratic parent-child relationship and gender related changes.

- Marriage did not emerge as a criterion for adulthood. Participants indicated a shift in age of marriage and expressed that mainly it should happen when a person is economically independent and can take care of parents.
- Perception of parents' views of being adult are similar to participants as they also give importance to both self-focused characteristics (maturity, self-sufficiency, economic independence) as well as family focused characteristics (respect for all, take care of the family, act as a role model). But at the same time, parents' also give significant importance to marriage as criterion for adulthood.
- The co-existence of individualistic and collectivistic orientations is clearly evident in participants' notion of independence. Indian youth is focused on their individual aspirations, however, at the same time they give equal importance to their aspirations for their family.
- Most participants referred to their duties towards their self, family and society at large. Higher emphasis on duties towards family/society, in comparison to duties towards self that represents a continuity with the traditional culture.

### **Overall Summary of Results from Phase I and Phase II**

- Overall results reveal that for half of the participants emerging adulthood appears to exist as they felt ambiguous about their status whereas the other half felt that they have reached adult status.
- Delhi participants, girls and younger participants (18-20years) felt ambiguous about their status than Vadodara participants, boys and older participants (21-25 years) who on other hand felt that they have reached adult status.
- Education appears to be a significant factor in defining one's adult status as for maximum participants the first realization of adulthood was when they entered college.
- Participants gave more importance to family focused categories; nevertheless self-focused categories along with norm compliance were also emphasized.
- City, gender and age have a significant influence on participants' status and their perception about adulthood.
- There appear great variations among participants belonging to the two cities as Vadodara participants endorsed all categories more than Delhi participants, except for family related categories.
- Gender differences are also evident in participants' perception of adulthood. Boys gave preference traditional roles for girls whereas girls gave preference to

traditional roles for boys endorsing norm abiding behaviour. In addition, boys preferred freedom to experiment with sexual relationships whereas girls preferred freedom to gain knowledge and being financially independent similar to boys.

- Results also revealed developmental difference as older participants' endorsed independence criterion more in comparison to younger participants. This may be mainly due to the perceptions among older participants that they have attained adulthood and also because they are living away from family.
- Participants' responses also indicated that living with parents or away from parents has influences on the criteria of adulthood. Participants living with parents revealed that they felt ambiguous about their status and highlighted criteria like role transition and family capacities.
- Traditional markers of adulthood like marriage and parenthood were not given importance by the participants. Rather there is a shift in age of marriage and according to them it should only happen when one is financially stable and able to take care of family. On the other hand, parents gave importance to these traditional markers for being an adult.
- Results also indicated the mix of both individualistic and collectivistic orientations as young individuals gave preference to both family and independent attributes. Independence, they feel, is a mix of both freedom as well as responsibility of their family.

- The significance of duties was another factor specified in the results, as participants gave importance to both duties towards self as well as family. This signifies traditional Indian orientation whereby responsibilities towards family are considered of primary importance (dharma) in order to fulfil one's goals of life and to attain self-realization or salvation (moksha).

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

This research is a step towards understanding the perceptions of young individuals about transition to adulthood in the Indian society. The research focused on young individuals aged 18-26 years in urban regions of northern and western India. The goal was to examine (a) if the Indian youth in their twenties considered themselves as adults, (b) the markers of adulthood in a contemporary Indian context as perceived by the youth, and (c) their preferences for individualist versus collectivist attributes. Further, the study examined how these aspects of emerging adulthood may vary in different cities (Delhi versus Vadodara), different among age groups (18-20 years and 21-25years) and gender.

The discussion revolves around the following major themes:

- Does emerging adulthood exist in India?
- Do background variables influence self-adult perceptions?
- Important criteria for adulthood
- Impact of modernization on markers of adulthood
- Mix of individualist and collectivist markers
- Gender differences



### **Does Emerging Adulthood Exist in India?**

Results revealed that approximately half of the participants felt ambiguous about their status, which implies that the phase of emerging adulthood is becoming increasingly relevant, at least in some parts of India and for some sub-sections of the Indian society. These findings are comparable with the results of other studies, albeit a higher proportion of youth experienced ambiguity in surveys performed in western societies (e.g., Arnett, 2001, 2003; Cheah & Nelson, 2004; Facio & Micocci, 2003; Macek et al., 2007; Sirch et al., 2009; Nelson, 2009). This also confirms the influence of globalisation on youth's perceptions and identity in India. Indian youth expressed desire to explore their identity, in relation to educational and career options via-a-vie delay marriage timing due to expanded self-exploration time and increasing role in selection of a partner.

On the other hand, more than half of the participants felt that they had reached adult status. This is similar to other studies done in non-western collectivist cultures such as China (Nelson et al., 2004; Badger & Nelson, 2006) and Southern India (Seiter, 2009). This also indicates that whilst there is growing prevalence of the emerging adulthood phase, but there is still a significant segment of Indian youth which perceives continuity between childhood and adulthood. From childhood, boys and girls are groomed to take up their adult roles, for example, girls are prepared for proficiency at household chores and childcare, and boys are prepared for occupational roles, as they are expected to be the bread-winners of the family (Saraswathi, 1999; Verma & Saraswathi, 2002). Such role prescriptions play a crucial role in identity perception and a large proportion of

youth consider themselves as adults post puberty, indicating that perception of adulthood is driven by physiological factors. Indian youth relatively do not have similar freedom as of western societies to explore educational/professional choices or romantic relations, which are the key feature of the emerging adulthood phase, albeit some changes as an influence of globalisation have been observed in recent times.

It was evident that regional difference and size of the city has an influence on subjective feelings of participants about their adulthood status. Participants from Delhi felt more ambiguous about their adult status compared to participants from Vadodara. One of the reasons could potentially be that Delhi, the national capital city is influenced to a greater extent by globalisation. There are more opportunities for exploration - higher number of quality educational centers and career options available (significant information technology, finance and other career opportunities). Another relevant reason could also be that young individuals who have come away from their home cities to live in Delhi may already be people who want to and are able to explore their options.

A larger proportion of participants from Vadodara felt that they had reached adult status in comparison to Delhi. Vadodara is a mid-sized city, relatively less exposed to the impact of globalisation, particularly in comparison with the national capital city of Delhi. In addition, living in a mid-sized city, young individuals may tend to be more conforming, and start sharing household responsibilities with their parents at a relatively young age. The sense of responsibility for the family and household could potentially be the key influence behind the mature feeling and perception of adult status.

Research findings revealed that a higher proportion of participants from the age group 21-26 years responded that they had reached adult status (62%), in comparison with the participants in the 18-20 years age group (41%). A significant proportion of participants from 18-20 years age group felt in-between (55%), whilst only one third of participants in the 21-26 years age group felt in-between (36%). Such differences could possibly arise from the following factors: (i) a larger proportion of the youth from the higher age bracket were closer to completing their education and starting their careers (few were already employed) ; the proximity to financial independence may be driving perception of adulthood, (ii) additionally older young individuals may be more likely to realize their responsibilities towards self as well as family and may have greater desire to fit in with culturally expected norms, (iii) due to prevalence of family hierarchy, where the eldest child gets respect from younger siblings, it is more likely that the younger participants, who have to follow this family hierarchy, tend to feel that they have not reached the adult status and hence felt in between (Singh 2004) and (iv) significant proportion of younger individuals have just crossed adolescence and live with parents in a protective environment so this could be another reason for their ambiguous status.

There appears to be a significant variance in the perceptions based upon gender as a significantly higher proportion of young men thought they had attained adulthood status (61%), whilst a lower percentage of young women perceived themselves as adults (42%). Similar variances between men and women were also observed in the study done in Southern India (Seiter, 2009). The findings reflect the traditional gender socialization in Indian families, whereby the male child is groomed to take responsibility of the family, there is pressure on the young men to excel in their education and attain high-

paying professional opportunities. Young men get preference over young women for educational explorations, however, the immense parental / societal pressure mean that school is not a moratorium period as observed in western societies. Also the general preference and favoritism for the male child allows them to pursue their wishes leading to development of confidence levels for taking on any adult roles (Saraswathi, 1999; Seiter, 2009). Such societal factors could be the reason for why a larger proportion of Indian young men felt adult versus young women.

On the other hand more women felt ambiguous (54%) about their status than men (37%). The reason could be that Indian women are provided a protective environment in order to save them from external exploitation. This caring attitude of family makes them more dependent. In addition, traditionally in Indian culture, women were given little freedom and several restrictions are imposed, restraining them from exploring their self and career aspirations. Besides these restrictions, they were also socialized to be submissive and encouraged to control their personal aspirations in accordance with the goal of marriage (Mane, 1991; Saraswathi, 1999). Some of the restrictions and the way girls are socialized in India are still followed in line with traditional roles in principal, albeit significantly more freedom for girls is becoming prevalent. These factors could be the reasons for the ambiguity experienced by girls.

### **Do Background Variables Influence Self-Adult Perceptions?**

Findings showed that background variables like participants' education, parents' education and their living status influenced the definitions of one's status as adult. For example, more participants who are pursuing master level studies felt that they had

attained adult status, versus participants pursuing bachelor level courses. The reason could be that young individuals who are pursuing their master's degree may have explored their self with respect to their career goals and future commitments. They might have an idea or a plan for executing their career objectives or may be already working on it. On the other hand, participants who are pursuing their bachelor's degree were younger in age (many just crossed the adolescent age). Hence they felt the need for more time to explore their self and to decide about their career aspirations, thereby feeling more ambiguous about their status.

Interestingly, participants whose parents were educated only up to secondary school education, felt that they had reached adult status, whilst participants whose parents were more educated (graduates, professionals etc.) felt more ambiguous. This may be because more educated parents are more likely to understand the criticality of decisions related to education and career, and therefore provide more time for their children to explore options and opportunities before making a decision. Another important reason could be that youth from families where parents are well educated, may also have strong financial support, enabling them to take time to explore their options. On the contrary, parents who are less educated themselves, may not be able to appreciate the importance for the youth to explore educational and career opportunities or may not be able to afford these. Therefore parents may expect their children to take all responsibilities and duties once they cross puberty. So it more likely that young individuals adapt to all traditional adult roles and in turn feel more like an adult than their counterparts.

Notably, participants who lived away from their families considered themselves as adult, whilst participants staying with their parents felt more ambiguous. Participants who were living away from their parents had to manage their personal as well as professional/educational lives independently. Moreover, they were required to take most of their decisions independently, making them feel responsible as an adult. Being responsible was identified as the most common marker of adulthood in discussions with the participants. On the other hand, participants living with their parents tend to rely on their parents for support, as well as most of the decisions are at least influenced to a large extent by their parents. This is consistent with the reasons identified by participants for their ambiguous status. The power of making important decisions lay in the hands of their parents and they had to consult them for the same. Also, due to family hierarchy younger individuals are required to follow the rules prescribed by the elders. Therefore, they become more dependent on their parents and lack confidence to take up independent responsibilities. This makes them feel more ambiguous about their status.

### **Important Criteria for Adulthood**

The results of the study showed that the top criterion endorsed by young individual was “accept responsibility for the consequences of his/her actions” (99%). This is similar to most studies done in numerous other countries like America, Austria, Israel, China and also recent study done in South India (Arnett, 1998; Sirch et al., 2009; Mayseless & Scharf, 2003; Nelson et al., 2004, Seiter, 2009). Arnett (1998) stated that this criterion reflects individualistic attributes focusing on self- sufficiency endorsed by most American young individuals as an important criterion for their attainment of adulthood.

Similarly, Austrian and Israeli young individuals have also given high importance to this criterion and indicated internal psychological attributes as the most important markers of adulthood.

Nelson et al. (2004), on the other hand, considered this criterion as an important part of collectivistic cultures, endorsed by most Chinese young individuals and reflects the concerns for the needs and interests of family and community above their own. This is also reflected in the study done in Southern India by Seiter (2009), who stated that Indian culture is almost aligned with Chinese collectivistic values and the criterion “accept responsibility for the consequences of his/her actions” is emphasized by Indian young individuals too as an important marker of being an adult. This is mainly because according to the Hindu-Indian orientations dharma (righteous duty), fulfilling needs and duty towards others including family and society at large is considered mandatory (Mascolo et al., 2004). Further, most Indian families are governed through a hierarchical structure, and there are set ascribed roles for each individual that have to be adopted by all Indian children (Verma & Saraswahti, 2002). Therefore, young individuals in India feel it is their duty to accept responsibility for the consequences of their actions as a way of showing concerns towards others.

The other top five criteria endorsed by Indian young individuals highlight domains such as norm compliance, for example, “avoid drunk driving” and “avoid using illegal drugs”; family related (a newly introduced domain), for example, “be able to support their parents in old age with social, psychological and economic needs” and “show obedience and respect towards elder” and family capacities, for example, “capable of

caring for children (woman)” which were endorsed by participants from both cities. The importance to norm compliance is similar to the trend in other western and non-western cultures like United States, Romania, China and India (Arnett, 1998, 2003; Nelson, 2009; Nelson et al., 2004; Seiter, 2009) where it is considered a necessary criterion for being an adult. In addition, it can be observed in the results of the current Indian sample, that individuals gave much higher preference to norm compliance, for example, “avoid drunk driving”( 94%) and “avoid using illegal drugs”( 94%) compared to United states and China (Arnett, 1998; Nelson et al., 2004). The possible reason could be that the prohibition of alcohol was incorporated in the Constitution of India and initially states were allowed to implement prohibition of the use of intoxicating drinks and of drugs which were injurious to health. This prohibition still continues in Gujarat, with partial restrictions in other states, for example, Delhi has certain dry days (Arora, 2002). Another reason could be that drinking alcohol is considered taboo in the Indian society and those individuals who consume alcohol may not be regarded well. Hence there is a general normative belief felt that to be a good citizen, one should avoid such habits and this becomes a necessary criterion for being an adult.

In the Indian culture, family is given great importance. Therefore, both family related and family capacities domains were highly endorsed by participants as important characteristics for being an adult. For example, “be able to support their parents in old age with social, psychological and economic needs”, “show obedience and respect towards elders”, “have ability to understand parental views” and “capable of caring for children (woman)”. These findings are similar to studies done in Southern India and China (Seiter, 2009; Nelson et al., 2004) but noticeably different from studies done in



United States, as in the American culture, generally young individuals move out of their parental homes to live independently after high school. The Indian culture endorses collectivistic attributes, which lay emphasis on values such as family being a mode of keeping individuals connected through relationships, respecting elders and taking care of others as an important virtue (Roland, 1988; Verma & Saraswathi, 2002). Taking care of parents in their old age is considered the son's *dharma* or duty in the society (Verma & Saraswathi, 2002; Saraswathi & Ganapathy, 2002). The manifestation of this *dharma* or duty persuades one to choose family attributes as important markers of adulthood.

The study revealed that participants gave lowest ranking to criterion "no longer living in parents' household" (20%) as a marker of adulthood. This finding is consistent with the findings of the study done in Southern India (Seiter, 2009) and it also reflects the importance given to the idea of family togetherness in the Indian culture. Most young individuals in India live with their parents as it is the traditional practice of living in the family until marriage for girls and until the need to move to another city occurs for boys (Nalini, 1997; Chaddha, n.d.). Therefore, it is understandable that participants felt that living independently was not a necessary criterion for adulthood. On the contrary, individuals in the American society gave high preference to the criterion "no longer living in parents' household" as it is a practice among young Americans to live independently and leave their parents' home after their high school (Arnett, 1998).

According to traditional markers, marriage and parenthood are two important criteria for being an adult. However, emphasis on marriage and parenthood as markers of adulthood is diminishing as an effect of global influences. This is evident in the present study too,

as the role transition criteria relating to marriage and parenthood were least emphasized as markers of adulthood. Individuals realized that marriage and parenthood cannot make them adult, but instead aspects such as financial stability, caring for family and becoming responsible leads them to the adult status. In addition, they believed that adulthood and marriage are two separate matters and cannot be inter-linked, therefore there is no specific age of marriage and it should happen only after one attains maturity and is prepared to take up responsibilities. However, according to participants' perception of parents' views, preference was still given to marriage and parenthood as markers of adulthood. This may be because in our tradition both these markers are of great significance. There is a particular age defined for both marriage and parenthood, and completing these in a particular time frame is important.

In addition, the findings support the regional diversity in the Indian society. Young individuals from both cities were different in their perceptions on all domains of adulthood (independence, interdependence, role transitions, norm compliance, biological transitions, legal transition family capacities and family related). The findings also support the influence of the context on one's perception and ideas. As mentioned earlier, the two cities are different in that Delhi being a capital city has a diverse cultural environment with a blend of both conventional and progressive stances. Also the city being a point of interface between India and the global world is highly influenced by the impact of globalisation. On the other hand Vadodara being a mid-sized city and known as the cultural capital of Gujarat has a more conforming environment. Hence Vadodara participants felt more confident in defining criteria for adulthood therefore they gave high preference to all the domains than Delhi participants, except family related aspects.

### **Impact of Modernization on Markers of Adulthood**

The findings of this study support the changes taking place due to modernization in the Indian society. In traditional India, marriages were strictly arranged by family members and there was a specific age for marriage for both men and women. Partner selection was based on ascribed roles for both men and women – men should be able to take responsibility of being the bread-winner of the family; women should be able to do household chores and raise children (Chattopadhyay & Ganguly, 2004; Singh, 2010). This scenario of marriage is changing due to the global influences. For example, participants mentioned about the delay in age of marriage, as they want to first attain their career goals and prepare themselves to take-up the responsibilities of marriage. They described that partner selection is based on the inner qualities of a person and marriage is not done just for physical satisfaction, but also for mental and emotional satisfaction. Moreover, it is also being observed nowadays that in arranged marriages, parents consult the individual before deciding upon the partner. This is observed in some studies on marriage selection (Shukla & Kapadia, 2007; Chattopadhyay & Ganguly, 2004).

According to Hinduism, marriage and parenthood are clear markers of adulthood - the stage known as *grhasthasrama* (Saraswathi & Ganapathy, 2002). This signifies the importance given to role transition in traditional India. The impact of globalisation has led to reduced relevance of such traditional markers for the Indian youth (Verma, 2000). As mentioned earlier, participants gave least preference to role transition and instead they described the importance of higher education (for both boys and girls) as a door to

various career opportunities. This also enables them to experience freedom. Participants also mentioned about the changing scenario for girls, in that now they were no longer restricted, rather they are given freedom to pursue their desires and explore their career goals. These findings are supported by Verma (2000), Pias (2006) and Chinnammai (2005) in their discussion on transformation due to globalisation, which is influencing culture on one hand and increasing the importance of education on another.

Modernization has also increased options for women as they are now increasingly taking up employment opportunities, resultantly increasing their self-confidence and independence.

Traditionally in India, there was prevalence of joint family system where all members of the family lived together in a hierarchical social structure. Consequently, the eldest male was considered the head of the family and all decisions were taken by him (Singh, 2004; 2010). Thus young individuals in the family become more dependent on each other. Due to the changes in the family system, the relevance of traditional joint families is diminishing, resulting into more nuclear families (Verma, 2000). The participants of this study have revealed that due to the change in family structure, from joint to nuclear, they have become independent and responsible, there is less control from parents in the sense that they do not impose decisions upon young individuals, instead understand and support them. Parents want their children to have their own identity allowing them to take independent decisions in their lives. This in turn makes youth conscious about their career as important for them to develop an individual identity as well as makes them more responsible for their decisions. Therefore, participants gave high importance to criteria “accept responsibility for the consequence of his/her actions”.

### **Mix of Individualist and Collectivist Markers**

It was thought that most young individuals in India will give high preference to collectivistic criteria due to the importance of family in the Indian culture. However, at the same time the relevance of individualistic attributes has increased due to the changes in the socio-economic structure in India (Mascolo et al., 2004; Sinha et.al, 2001). In the present study, individuals revealed mixed orientations. They gave preferences to collectivistic characteristics such as respecting their elders, taking responsibilities of their family, fulfilling expectations of people and acting as a role model and at the same time they also emphasized individualistic characteristics like being self-sufficient, having decision-making ability, and having intellectual ability. This mixed reflection of both collectivism and individualism is also observed in studies in Argentina and China where emerging adults gave preference to both criteria as they were influenced by the indigenous/traditional culture and at the same time got attracted towards the global world (Facio & Micocci, 2003; Nelson et al., 2004).

It is interesting to note that though participants revealed mixed opinions on markers of adulthood, similar to other cultures, the significantly higher relevance of family is unique to the Indian culture. This is illustrated by a high proportion of participants indicating the following as important markers of adulthood: “showing obedience towards parents”, “ability to understand parental views”, “ability to support parents in their old age, with social, psychological and economic needs”, capable of handling responsibilities towards home”, “fulfilling parents’ expectations”. This also signifies the importance of family in an individual’s life, irrespective of regional diversity. Unlike the

western world, the Indian family system plays a central role in shaping an individual's future and young individuals seek advice of their parents in taking major career decisions and in other decisions across life span.

In the western culture, there is great relevance of autonomy, which is perceived as complete independence from family. Most American young individuals leave their parental homes at the age of 19 or even earlier and reside independently from their families, become self-reliant, take decisions on their own, and take their own responsibility (Arnett, 1998, 2004). Whereas in India, traditional values and beliefs rooted in family cohesiveness are adopted by most individuals. These ideologies influence the perception of autonomy. This is revealed by the participants in the current study, as they perceived that autonomy has both individualistic and collectivistic attributes. Participants also mentioned a mix of both attributes for a person to attain autonomy. For example, an individual, with freedom of thought, ability of taking independent decisions, ability to be responsible for the family and to fulfil family expectations can be considered autonomous.

### **Gender Differences**

The results have revealed marked differences in participants' views based on their gender. Boys' preferred biological transition [e.g. "an adult would have had sexual intercourse", "capable of bearing children (woman)"] as important markers for adulthood amongst others, whilst girls preferred norm compliance [e.g. "avoid drunk driving", "avoid using illegal drugs", "avoid using vulgar, offensive language"; "an adult has no more than one sexual partner"] and family capacities [e.g. "capable of

caring for children (woman)”, “capable of running a household (woman)”] as important markers for adulthood. This reflects traditional gender based socialization in the Indian society. Girls are expected to behave in accordance with the social norms and perform all family roles effectively (Mane, 1991; Saraswathi, 1999), hence norm compliance and family capacities were given importance. On the other hand, boys are given lot of freedom and socialized to raise their family well and expected to carry forward their family name (Verma & Saraswathi, 2002). Therefore boys gave preference to biological transition. It was also revealed from the study that boys gave more preference to “capable of caring for children (women)” than girls. This could potentially be explained based on the pre-defined roles of men and women in traditional India. It is possible that boys associated girls more with their caring attitude for children, whilst liberalized and independent girls now appreciate several attributes of their personality beyond that of a mother. In a recent study done on romantic relationship in India, it was found that men were more stereotypical in their ideas than women (Gala, 2012).

The societal prejudice for the responsibilities of boys and girls was further observed as participants associated different sets of responsibilities for boys and girls. Whilst providing financial support for the family and finding an attractive well-paying career were identified as responsibilities for boys, family care and keeping the family values, norms and traditions alive were identified as a girl’s responsibilities. Participants also described prevalence of gender specific markers of adulthood. Boys’ self-adult status is closely linked to the start of their career, whereas for girls’ adulthood status is associated with marriage and motherhood. This is similar to the way boys and girls were socialized

in traditional India. Thus gender differences prevail in modern India, despite ongoing socio-economic changes.

Interestingly, participants in the study also mentioned that gender bias should be eliminated and both girls and boys should be treated equally. Young woman are making significant progress in the professional world, and men are becoming increasingly accepting to the idea of their life partner being the co-earning member of the family and they are becoming more used to helping women in household chores and childcare. This reflects the psychological consequences of globalisation where a person changes his/her identity and adopts necessary changes according to the global world (Arnett, 2002).

## **Conclusion**

The study findings help in understanding young individuals' conceptions of the transition to adulthood in urban middle class in society in India. The phase of emerging adulthood appears to exist in India at least in certain segment however it is perceived differently based on culturally distinctive beliefs and values.

The results reflect on five features of emerging adulthood as follows:

- Identity exploration: Young individuals mentioned about exploring their options with respect to education and career and there is a progressive change in the process of selecting a marriage partner (focus on intellectual and emotional criteria and increased say of youth in such process).



- **Instability:** Young individuals shared that since they have not attained full adulthood status they feel incapable of taking their own decisions at certain occasions and handling certain responsibilities. However, any risk from such instability is mitigated to a large extent, given strong bonding with the family and ability to rely on parents for economic support until they begin to earn a living as well as for advice / consultation on important decisions.
- **Self-focused:** In this study it was observed that Indian youth are focused on their educational and career goals with an objective of becoming self-reliant. However, often there is a collectivist objective of becoming capable of support their family / parents and “make them feel proud”. Essentially it underscores the unique theme for Indian emerging adults which with “self-focused with a collectivist objective”.
- **In- between:** The results indicate that on one hand the participants think they are adult as some of them are living independently and take small day-to-day decisions of life: what friends they could make, which book is good, or where to party. On the other hand, they are not adult as for major decisions, many participants admitted that they still relied on parental decision and large proportion s was financially dependent on parents. This reflects ambiguity in their perception.
- **Possibilities:** Young individuals, especially belonging to the age group of 21-25 years and living on their own referred to exploration of new possibilities. They have high expectations from themselves and are also conscious of their family

expectations which are to get a job with an attractive compensation and an established career. Most participants considered the opportunities that were available to them as a route to become capable of fully supporting their families both financially and emotionally.

Emerging adulthood in India is observed on account of the fact that in the present study, approximately half of the young individuals felt ambiguous about their status and also because traditional markers of adulthood are diluting which is evident in the responses of young individuals. More significance is placed on aspects such as education and career for both girls and boys in this social class context. However, it is interesting that in some aspects such as gender traditional markers are still prevalent to a material degree.

The way emerging adulthood is conceptualized in India is both similar as well as different in comparison with researches conducted in western societies. Whilst there are similarities in terms of focus on education and career, but at the same time the relevance and importance of family represents a collectivist attribute unique to India. The family related domain was added in the present study by the researcher after conducting pilot interviews which highlighted its prominence in the Indian context. To that extent there is continuity with the traditional ideas as the significance of family is very strong and distinctive in the present study. However some cultural discontinuity is evident as young individuals have not endorsed criteria such as getting married and bearing a child as markers of an adult. Rather they have given more importance to education and career.

The results seem to support the belief that culture is the most significant factor in defining emerging adulthood and that the existence or the meaning of this phase cannot be generalized. It also indicates clear emphasis on collectivistic criteria in the Indian context wherein family aspects and its role were deemed necessary for being an adult. Nevertheless, globalisation is bringing about a revolution in the world of technology and economy and influencing cultural orientations. An indication in the present findings is the emphasis on individualistic criteria like being self-sufficient and importance of a career in order to succeed in life. Consequently, the results reflect a mix of both collectivism and individualism which is characteristic of the Indian psychosocial orientation.

Overall the findings portray a mixed orientation consisting of positive aspects of this stage as well as some drawbacks. The positive orientation is revealed in terms of: freedom for day-to-day decisions, ability of independently handling situations, increased significance of their opinion in family decisions and prospect of supporting their parents both financially and emotionally. However, at the same time the participants have also articulated certain drawbacks of being in this phase, in particular, rising societal expectations and pressures: educational / career excellence, demonstration of mature behavior and ability to shoulder significant responsibilities. Also participants who felt that they have reached adult status shared that the role of family and its influence has an impact on their status in that even though they feel that they have reached adulthood, yet their parents still consider them as a child. The culturally unique feature of adulthood in the Indian context is thus evident.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The present study has very useful findings and has focused on two different regions of India that is Northern (Delhi, capital city) and Western (Vadodara, mid-sized city) region including college students. India is a culturally and economically very diverse country where each state is different and presents distinct complexities. Thus, the findings in the present study cannot be generalized to all Indian young individuals. More researches are needed in order to develop a better understanding of the perception of adulthood in India and future studies can potentially address other parts of the country. There is opportunity to discover similarities as well as differences between different regions, developing a broader picture of emerging adulthood in the Indian context.

In the present study, the sample was predominantly urban Indian young men and women belonging to different educational backgrounds and professional programs like information technology or engineering. Since 70% of the Indian population constitutes of rural groups, living in villages, in very different situations and ideologies from people living in urban areas, future studies could potentially include samples from rural areas to further tap the cultural diversity. Also very little research has been done to examine potential differences between student and non-student groups on their perceptions of emerging adulthood (Seiter, 2009). Hence future studies may focus on gathering a sample of non-college going young individuals.

Future studies may also include background variables like caste and religion of the participants as these are salient features in defining one's perceptions and identity. The caste system is alive not only in rural areas but also in urban areas of the society. It is

likely that both in rural and in urban settings, one's caste and religion may influence greatly one's experience of adulthood. Thus, it is recommended that both caste and religion should be included as variables in future researches to have an insight into how these variables along with other background factors impact the transition into adulthood for Indians.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **Permission Letter**

To:

The Head of the Department,

New Delhi

#### **Subject: Request for permission of data collection for Doctoral Research**

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I am writing this letter to explore the possibility of conducting a research with the college student of your institution.

I am a PhD Scholar working under the guidance of Prof. Shagufa Kapadia, Head of the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Faculty of Family and Community Sciences, The M.S. University of Baroda.

The area of my research is youth and my topic is “Am I an Adult: views of Urban Indian Youth”. The study focuses to discern the views and perceptions for being an adult by Indian young people and it includes college student from upper middle class in the age group of 18-20 and 21-25 years from two cities i.e. Vadodara and Delhi. The data will be gathered with the use of the following questionnaire.

The measure need to be administered on college student in groups. Each college student will be required to complete the questions in the presence of the researcher so that she can clarify any aspects, if need be. Approximately 35 minutes will be required to administer the questionnaire. The information given by the college student will remain confidential.

I would like to request your kind permission and co-operation for the same. Please find attached a copy of the Questionnaire that the respondents will be asked to complete for your reference.

Looking forward to a positive response,

Thanking You

Warm Regards  
Sincererly

Through,  
Ms Priyanka Chopra  
Ph D Scholar  
Dept of HDFS,  
Faculty of Family and Community  
Science  
The M. S. University of Baroda  
Vadodara

Prof. Shagufa Kapadia  
Head,  
Dept of HDFS,  
Faculty of Family and Community  
Sciences  
The M. S. University of Baroda  
Vadodara

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Tool I**

Dear participants,

I am a PhD Scholar in the Department of Human Development and Family studies from M.S. University of Baroda and I am doing my research on “Am I an Adult: Views of Urban Indian Youth.”

The major objective of this research is to find out the perceptions and views of Indian's youth for being an adult and to what extent they themselves relate with it.

I am thankful to you for agreeing to be a respondent for my study. This is an academic exercise. The information furnished by you will be kept strictly confidential.

I would be grateful to you if you kindly extend your co-operation by reading each part carefully and giving frank and honest responses to the each of the questions. Please do not proceed to part III unless filling part I & II.

I will be present through the entire process. In case of any doubt and confusion, please check with me

Thanking you  
Yours sincerely

Priyanka Chopra  
Doctoral Student  
Department of HDFS  
Faculty of Family and Community  
Sciences  
The M. S. University of Baroda

## CRITERIA FOR INDIAN ADULTHOOD QUESTIONNAIRE

### **Part I Background Information**

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Gender: Female \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_
3. Education: Graduate (Stream) \_\_\_\_\_,  
Post Graduate(Stream) \_\_\_\_\_, Any other \_\_\_\_\_
4. Parents' Education: Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Father \_\_\_\_\_  
Parents' Occupation: Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Father \_\_\_\_\_
5. Mother Tongue: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Number of Years of Residence In the State of Delhi: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Living with Parents or Family: Yes / No \_\_\_\_\_
8. Have you ever lived away from family on your own? Yes / No \_\_\_\_\_
9. For how many years have you lived independently? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Are you employed?  
a. Yes / No. \_\_\_\_\_ b. If yes: Part-time \_\_\_\_\_ or Full-time \_\_\_\_\_
11. Family's Monthly Income.  
Rs. 15,000 – Rs. 20,000 \_\_\_\_\_; Rs. 20,000 – Rs. 30,000 \_\_\_\_\_;  
Rs. 30,000 and above \_\_\_\_\_.
12. How would you classify yourself as:  
Middle Class \_\_\_\_\_; Upper Middle Class \_\_\_\_\_; Upper class \_\_\_\_\_



**Part II Self Adult Status**

**Answer the following:**

1. Do you think you are an adult?
  - i. Yes -----
  - ii. No -----
  - iii. In some respect yes, in some respect no -----
  
2. In your own words, please describe what you think are most important characteristics in determining whether or not a person has reached adulthood.

**Part III Criteria for Adulthood.**

**Instructions:**

The statements on the next page represent the characteristics or markers for **an individual** to be considered an **adult**.

Please read each statement and respond with reference to whether or not YOU believe the following are necessary for adulthood

1. First indicate “**Yes**” (necessary for adulthood) **or** “**No**” (not necessary for adulthood).
2. Second, give your opinion on the importance of each item in determining whether or not a person has reached adulthood.

Rate each item on a scale of 1- 4 as follows:

- 1= “Not at all important”**
- 2= “Not very important”**
- 3= “Fairly important”**
- 4= “Very important”**

Items	Yes/ No	<b>Rate Each Item : 1 to 4</b> 1= Not at all important 2= Not very important 3= Fairly important 4= Very important
1. Accept responsibility for the consequences of his/her actions.		
2. Decide on personal beliefs and values independently of parents and other influences.		
3. Establish relationships with parents as an equal adult.		
4. Financially independent from parents.		
5. Learn always to have good control of your emotions.		
6. Become less self-oriented and develop greater consideration for others.		
7. Be able to take any decisions without influence of peers and social obligations.		
8. An adult is one who spends quality time with one's family.		
9. An adult is one who has responsibilities towards family and home.		
10. Avoid committing petty crimes like shoplifting, theft, and getting into fights.		
11. An adult should use contraception if sexually active and not trying to conceive a child.		
12. Avoid drunk driving.		
13. Avoid using illegal drugs.		
14. Drive an automobile safely and close to speed limit.		
15. An adult has no more than one sexual partner.		
16. Avoid becoming drunk.		
17. Avoid using vulgar, offensive language.		
18. A man should be capable of keeping family physically safe.		
19. A woman should be capable of running a household.		
20. A man should be capable of running a household		

Items	Yes/ No	<b>Rate Each Item : 1 to 4</b> 1= Not at all important 2= Not very important 3= Fairly important 4= Very important
21. A woman should be capable of keeping family physically safe.		
22. A man should be capable of supporting a family financially.		
23. A woman should be capable of caring for children.		
24. A man should be capable of caring for children.		
25. A woman should be capable of supporting a family financially		
26. An Adult is employed full time.		
27. Settle into long-term profession or career.		
28. Finished with education.		
29. A married person is an adult.		
30. An adult should have at least one child.		
31. Purchased a house.		
32. Committed to a long-term love relationship.		
33. A man should be capable of fathering children.		
34. A woman should be capable of bearing children.		
35. Grow to full height.		
36. An adult is one who has reached age 18.		
37. An adult is a person who has reached age 21.		
38. An adult is a person who has reached age 25.		
39. An adult is a person who has reached age 30.		
40. Obtaining driver's license means you are an adult.		
41. Makes lifelong commitments in relationships (e.g., family, friends, and relatives).		
42. Not deeply tied to parents emotionally.		
43. Have ability to understand parental views.		
44. Show obedience and respect towards elder.		
45. Be able to support parents in old age with social, psychological and economic needs.		
46. An adult would have had sexual intercourse.		
47. Decide to marry a person of his/her choice.		
48. No longer living in parents' household.		

## CRITERIA FOR INDIAN ADULTHOOD QUESTIONNAIRE (Hindi Version)

### भाग -१

#### व्यक्तिगत जानकारी

१. उम्र : \_\_\_\_\_
२. लिंग : स्त्रीलिंग \_\_\_\_\_ पुल्लिंग \_\_\_\_\_
३. शिक्षा : स्नातक (विशेष) \_\_\_\_\_  
उच्च स्नातक (विशेष) \_\_\_\_\_  
कोई और \_\_\_\_\_
४. माता-पिता की शिक्षा : माता \_\_\_\_\_  
पिता \_\_\_\_\_
५. मातृ भाषा : \_\_\_\_\_
६. कितने सालों से आप दिल्ली के निवासी हैं। \_\_\_\_\_
७. क्या आप अपने माता-पिता या परिवार के साथ रहते हैं। हाँ / नहीं \_\_\_\_\_
८. क्या आप कभी अपने परिवार से दूर रहे हैं। हाँ / नहीं \_\_\_\_\_
९. कितने सालों से आप अकेले रह रहे हैं। \_\_\_\_\_
१०. क्या आप नौकरी करते हैं। हाँ / नहीं \_\_\_\_\_  
अगर हाँ, पूर्ण समय के लिए \_\_\_\_\_ मध्यान्तर के लिए \_\_\_\_\_
११. अपने परिवार की मासिक आय बतायें।  
१५,०००- २०,००० \_\_\_\_\_ २०,०००- ३०,००० \_\_\_\_\_  
३०,०००- और उससे उपर \_\_\_\_\_
१२. आप अपने आप को किससे सम्बंधित करेंगे।  
मध्यम वर्गीय \_\_\_\_\_ उच्च मध्यम वर्गीय \_\_\_\_\_  
उच्च वर्गीय \_\_\_\_\_

## भाग -२

निम्नलिखित प्रश्नों के उत्तर दीजिए ।

१. क्या आप अपने आपको एक वयस्क (जवान) इंसान समझते हैं।

१. हाँ \_\_\_\_\_

२. ना \_\_\_\_\_

३. कुछ हद तक हाँ कुछ हद तक ना \_\_\_\_\_

२. अपने शब्दों में एक वयस्क (जवान) इंसान की विशेषताओं का वर्णन करें।

## सूचना

१. आगमी पृष्ठ पर एक इंसान को वयस्क समझने के लिए कुछ विशेषताएँ दी गई हैं।

कृपया निम्नलिखित वाक्यों को ध्यान से पढ़ कर अपनी राय(विचार) दें कि क्या आप उससे सहमत हैं या नहीं ।

१. हाँ – जरूरी है वयस्क इंसान के लिए।

२. नहीं – नहीं जरूरी है वयस्क इंसान के लिए।

२. दूसरे भाग में निम्नलिखित वाक्यों को आप कितना महत्व देते हैं एक वयस्क इंसान के परिचय के लिए अपनी राय दें।

१. जो बिलकुल भी जरूरी नहीं है।

२. जो कुछ हद तक जरूरी नहीं है।

३. जो कुछ हद तक जरूरी है।

४. जो बहुत जरूरी है।

क्रम	विशेषताएँ	हाँ / नहीं	राय दीजिए १. जो बिलकुल भी जरूरी नहीं है। २. जो कुछ हद तक जरूरी नहीं है। ३. जो कुछ हद तक जरूरी है। ४. जो बहुत जरूरी है।
१	अपनी हरकतों के लिए खुद जिम्मेदारी उठाना।		
२	अपनी व्यक्तिगत सोच और संस्कारों को स्वयं बनाना, न कि अपने मातापिता या किसी ओर के प्रभाव में आकर।		
३	अपने माता-पिता के साथ एक वयस्क इंसान की तरह समान स्तर पर व्यवहार करना।		
४	अपने माता पिता पर आर्थिक रूप से निर्भर न होना।		
५	अपनी भावनाओं पर संयम रखना।		
६	अपने से ज्यादा दूसरों के बारे में सोचना।		
७	अपने निर्णय (फैसले) किसी तरह के सामाजिक या मित्रों के प्रभाव में ना आकर स्वयं लेना।		
८	एक वयस्क इंसान उसे कहते हैं जो अपने परिवार को बहुमूल्य समय देता है।		
९	एक वयस्क इंसान वह है, जो अपने घर और परिवार की जिम्मेदारियाँ उठाए।		
१०	छोटे-मोटे गुनाहों से अपने को रोकना, जैसे दुकान से समान उठाना, चोरी करना या लड़ना।		
१०	छोटे-मोटे गुनाहों से अपने को रोकना, जैसे दुकान से समान उठाना, चोरी करना या लड़ना।		
११	एक वयस्क इंसान को गर्भ निरोधक का उपयोग करना चाहिए अगर वो सम्भोग करे और बच्चा ना चाहता हो।		
१२.	शराब पी कर गाड़ी चलाने से अपने आप को रोकना।		
१३.	अपने आप को मादक पदार्थों जैसे चरस-गांजा लेने से रोकना।		
१४	गाड़ी को सुरक्षित व धीमी गति से चलाना।		
१५	एक वयस्क इंसान का एक के साथ यौन सम्बंध होना चाहिए।		
१६	अपने आप को ज्यादा पीने से रोकना।		
१७.	अपने आप को तुच्छ भाषा (गाली गलोच)का उपयोग करने से रोकना।		
१८.	एक आदमी अपने परिवार को सुरक्षित रखने में सक्षम हो।		
१९	एक औरत अपने घर को चलाने में सक्षम हो।		
२०.	एक आदमी अपने घर को चलाने में सक्षम हो।		
२१.	एक औरत अपने परिवार को सुरक्षित रखने में सक्षम हो।		

क्रम	विशेषताएँ	हाँ / नहीं	राय दीजिए १. जो बिल्कुल भी जरूरी नहीं है। २. जो कुछ हद तक जरूरी नहीं है। ३. जो कुछ हद तक जरूरी है। ४. जो बहुत जरूरी है।
२२.	एक आदमी अपने परिवार को आर्थिक रूप से सहारा देने में सक्षम हो।		
२३.	एक औरत अपने बच्चों की देखभाल करने में सक्षम हो।		
२४.	एक आदमी अपने बच्चों की देखभाल करने में सक्षम हो।		
२५.	एक औरत अपने परिवार को आर्थिक रूप से सहारा देने में सक्षम हो।		
२६.	एक वयस्क इंसान वो है जो पूरे समय नौकरी करता हो।		
२७.	अपने व्यवसाय या कैरियर में काफी समय से स्थिर हो।		
२८.	जिसने अपनी पढ़ाई खत्म कर ली हो।		
२९.	एक शादी शुदा इंसान व्यस्क कहलाता है।		
३०.	एक वयस्क इंसान को कम से कम एक बच्चा तो होना ही चाहिए।		
३१.	घर खरीदना।		
३२.	अपने प्रेम संबंध में लम्बे अरसे से वचनबद्ध हो।		
३३.	एक आदमी जो पिता की भूमिका निभाने में सक्षम हो।		
३४.	एक औरत, जो बच्चा पैदा करने में सक्षम हो।		
३५.	जिसकी लम्बाई पूरी तरह से बढ़ चुकी हो।		
३६.	एक वयस्क इंसान वो है जो १८ साल का हो चुका हो।		
३७.	एक वयस्क इंसान वो है जो २१ साल का हो चुका हो।		
३८.	एक वयस्क इंसान वो है जो २५ साल का हो चुका हो।		
३९.	एक वयस्क इंसान वो है जो ३० साल का हो चुका हो।		
४०.	एक वयस्क इंसान वो है जिसके पास ड्राईव्हींग लाईसंस हो।		
४१.	अपने रिश्तों के प्रति जीवन पर्यन्त वचनबद्ध होना चाहिए (जैसे परिवार, दोस्त या रिश्तेदार)।		
४२.	माता-पिता के साथ भावनात्मक रूप से ना बंधे होना।		
४३.	माता पिता के दृष्टि कोण को समझने में सक्षम होना।		
४४.	बड़ों के प्रति आदर और सत्कार दिखाना।		
४५.	माता-पिता को वृद्ध अवस्था में सामाजिक मानसिक और आर्थिक रूप से सहारा देना।		
४६.	एक वयस्क इंसान वो है जिसने सम्भोग किया हो।		
४७.	अपनी इच्छा अनुसार शादी करना।		
४८.	अपने माता-पिता के घर में न रहना।		

## APPENDIX C

### Tool II

#### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

##### **Part I Background Information**

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Gender:      Female \_\_\_\_\_      Male \_\_\_\_\_
3. Education: Graduate \_\_\_\_\_, Post Graduate \_\_\_\_\_, Any other \_\_\_\_\_
4. Parents' Education: Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Father \_\_\_\_\_  
                                  Parents' Occupation: Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Father \_\_\_\_\_
5. Mother Tongue: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Number of Years of Residence In the State of Gujarat/Delhi: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Living with Parents or Family: Yes / No \_\_\_\_\_
8. Have you ever lived away from family on your own? Yes / No \_\_\_\_\_
9. For how many years have you lived independently? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Are you employed?
  - a. Yes / No. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. If yes: Part-time \_\_\_\_\_ or Full-time \_\_\_\_\_
11. Family's Monthly Income.
 

Rs. 15,000 – Rs. 20,000 \_\_\_\_\_; Rs. 20,000 – Rs. 30,000 \_\_\_\_\_;

Rs. 30,000 and above \_\_\_\_\_.
12. How would you classify yourself as:
 

Middle Class \_\_\_\_\_; Upper Middle Class \_\_\_\_\_; Upper class \_\_\_\_\_



**Part II Descriptive Questions**

1. Do you consider yourself as an adult?
  - a. Yes/No
  - b. Give reasons for your answer.
  - c. When did you first realize that you are an adult?
2. What do you think are most important characteristics necessary in order to be considered an Adult? Please specify for girls and boys separately.
3. Do you think the concept /markers of adulthood are changing compared to earlier times? In what ways?
4. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of being an adult?
5.
  - a) Do you stay with your parents?
  - b) What do you think are your parents' ideas about being as adult?
6. What according to you are the notions of independence and self-reliance? When would you say that a person is independent? To what extent does this apply to you?
7. When do you think a person should marry? When will you do so?
8. What are the responsibilities and obligations necessary to fulfil being an adult?

## INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (Hindi Version)

### भाग -१

#### व्यक्तिगत जानकारी

१. उम्र : \_\_\_\_\_
२. लिंग : स्त्रीलिंग \_\_\_\_\_ पुल्लिंग \_\_\_\_\_
३. शिक्षा : स्नातक (विशेष) \_\_\_\_\_  
उच्च स्नातक (विशेष) \_\_\_\_\_  
कोई और \_\_\_\_\_
४. माता-पिता की शिक्षा : माता \_\_\_\_\_  
पिता \_\_\_\_\_
५. मातृ भाषा : \_\_\_\_\_
६. कितने सालों से आप दिल्ली के निवासी हैं । \_\_\_\_\_
७. क्या आप अपने माता-पिता या परिवार के साथ रहते हैं । हाँ / नहीं \_\_\_\_\_
८. क्या आप कभी अपने परिवार से दूर रहे हैं । हाँ / नहीं \_\_\_\_\_
९. कितने सालों से आप अकेले रह रहे हैं । \_\_\_\_\_
१०. क्या आप नौकरी करते हैं । हाँ / नहीं \_\_\_\_\_  
अगर हाँ, पूर्ण समय के लिए \_\_\_\_\_ मध्यान्तर के लिए \_\_\_\_\_
११. अपने परिवार की मासिक आय बतायें ।  
१५,०००- २०,००० \_\_\_\_\_ २०,०००- ३०,००० \_\_\_\_\_  
३०,०००- और उससे उपर \_\_\_\_\_
१२. आप अपने आप को किससे सम्बंधित करेंगे ।  
मध्यम वर्गीय \_\_\_\_\_ उच्च मध्यम वर्गीय \_\_\_\_\_  
उच्च वर्गीय \_\_\_\_\_

## भाग - २

### वर्णनात्मक प्रश्नों के उत्तर دیجिये

१. क्या आप अपने आपको वयस्क समझते हैं ?

अ. हाँ / ना / कुछ हद तक हाँ, कुछ हद तक ना

ब. अपने उत्तर के लिए कारण बताइये ?

स. अपने यह कब पहली बार अनुभव किया कि आप वयस्क इंसान बन गए हैं ?

२. एक वयस्क इंसान बनने के लिए आपके विचार में कौन सी अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण विशेषताएं होनी चाहिये ?

कृपया लड़कियों और लड़कों को अलग - अलग निर्दिष्ट करें ।

३. क्या आपके विचार में वयस्क होने की या धारणा पहले समय की तुलना में बदल रहे हैं ? किस तरह से ?

४. आपके विचार में एक वयस्क होने के क्या लाभ और हानियाँ हैं ?

५. आप के विचार में एक वयस्क होने के विषय में आपके माता-पिता की क्या धारणा है ?

६. आपके लिये स्वतंत्रता और आत्म - निर्भरता के क्या तात्पर्य हैं ? आप ऐसा कब कहेंगे कि एक व्यक्ति स्वतंत्र है ?

७. आप के अनुसार एक व्यक्ति को विवाह कब करना चाहिए ? आप विवाह कब करना चाहेंगे ?

८. एक सफल वयस्क इंसान की क्या आवश्यक जिम्मेदारियाँ और दायित्व होते हैं ?

## APPENDIX D

## Detailed List of Percentages of Young Individuals Responding to Criteria

## Necessary for Adulthood

Criteria for Adulthood	All	Vadodara				Delhi			
		18-20 years		21-25 years		18-20 years		21-25 years	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
<b>Independence</b>									
1. Accept responsibility for the consequences of his/her actions	98.5	97.3	98.7	96.1	100	100	97.4	98.7	100
2. Decide on personal beliefs and values independently of parents and other influences.	73.3	68.9	65.3	73.7	76.0	73.0	68.4	82.9	78.4
3. Establish relationships with parents as an equal adult.	70.7	74.3	78.7	73.7	76.0	56.8	64.5	68.4	73.0
4. Financially independent from parents.	64.3	52.7	50.7	69.7	65.3	54.8	67.1	77.6	75.7
48. No longer living in parents’ household.	20.0	32.9	23.0	19.7	21.3	12.3	17.1	24.0	9.5
42. Not deeply tied to parents emotionally.	34.2	37.0	36.0	51.3	36.0	27.0	31.6	42.1	13.5
<b>Interdependence</b>									
5. Learn always to have good control of your emotions.	88.0	90.5	97.3	92.1	84.0	89.2	81.6	89.5	79.7
32. Committed to a long-term love relationship.	49.2	56.8	52.0	64.5	54.7	35.1	38.2	64.5	27.0
41. Makes lifelong commitments in relationships (e.g., family, friends, relatives).	77.3	82.4	84.0	82.9	81.3	70.3	76.3	76.3	64.9
6. Show greater consideration towards family and relatives compared to himself or herself.	66.9	57.5	68.0	68.0	60.0	68.9	67.1	71.1	74.3
<b>Role Transitions</b>									
27. Settle into long-term profession or career.	68.4	82.4	78.7	72.0	70.7	52.7	75.0	61.8	54.1
28. Finished with education.	48.0	62.2	53.3	44.7	48.0	44.6	52.6	42.1	36.5
26. An Adult is employed full time.	39.8	52.7	44.0	48.7	41.3	33.8	34.2	43.4	20.3
29. A married person is an adult	35.5	60.8	49.3	25.0	29.3	31.1	32.9	30.3	24.3
30. An adult should have at least one child.	29.0	41.9	29.3	25.0	29.3	23.0	27.6	38.2	17.6
31. Purchased a house.	44.8	58.1	52.0	39.5	49.3	39.2	47.4	50.0	23.0
<b>Norm Compliance</b>									
11. An adult should use contraception if sexually active and not trying to conceive a child.	83.5	81.1	81.3	78.9	90.7	80.8	82.9	82.9	89.2
12. Avoid drunk driving.	93.5	90.5	94.7	92.1	98.7	91.9	97.4	88.2	94.6
13. Avoid using illegal drugs.	94.0	91.9	97.3	94.7	97.3	91.9	94.7	92.1	91.9
14. Drive an automobile safely and close to speed limit.	87.2	81.1	96.0	80.3	96.0	77.0	92.1	89.5	85.1
15. An adult has no more than one sexual partner.	65.6	64.4	84.0	56.6	81.3	48.6	73.7	66.7	48.6
16. Avoid becoming drunk.	80.0	86.5	96.0	84.2	84.0	71.6	82.9	80.3	54.1
17. Avoid using vulgar, offensive language.	85.8	89.2	97.3	84.2	89.3	78.4	88.2	78.9	81.1

10. Avoid committing petty crimes like shoplifting, theft, and getting into fights.	83.3	79.7	89.3	86.8	89.3	78.4	81.6	84.2	77.0
<b>Biological Transition</b>									
46. An adult would have had sexual intercourse.	27.2	47.3	26.7	28.9	22.7	23.0	21.1	36.8	10.8
33. Capable of fathering children ( <b>man</b> ).	77.3	81.1	93.3	80.3	73.3	68.9	80.3	81.6	59.5
34. Capable of bearing children ( <b>woman</b> ).	64.8	74.3	88.0	76.3	58.7	62.2	63.2	64.5	31.1
35. Grow to full height.	38.5	60.8	45.3	35.5	38.7	28.4	34.2	46.1	18.9
<b>Legal Transition</b>									
36. An adult is one who has reached age 18.	45.3	52.7	65.3	42.1	48.0	31.1	43.4	44.7	35.1
37. An adult is a person who has reached age 21.	50.5	60.8	69.3	47.4	58.7	35.1	43.4	47.4	41.9
38. An adult is a person who has reached age 25.	51.8	58.1	69.3	39.5	64.0	37.8	47.4	53.9	44.6
39. An adult is a person who has reached age 30.	49.6	54.1	65.3	33.3	60.0	36.5	46.1	55.3	45.9
40. Obtaining driver's license means you are an adult.	25.5	40.5	30.7	22.4	26.7	23.0	10.5	31.6	18.9
<b>Family Capacities</b>									
18. Capable of keeping family physically safe ( <b>man</b> )	88.8	91.9	93.3	94.7	92.0	85.1	80.3	96.1	77.0
19. Capable of running a household ( <b>woman</b> ).	84.8	87.8	93.3	88.2	84.0	71.6	86.8	92.1	74.3
20. Capable of running a household ( <b>man</b> ).	85.7	79.7	96.0	89.5	89.3	71.6	86.8	90.8	81.1
21. Capable of keeping family physically safe ( <b>woman</b> ).	81.2	81.1	94.7	76.3	86.7	67.6	77.6	86.8	78.4
22. Capable of supporting a family financially ( <b>man</b> ).	93.0	89.2	98.7	94.7	94.7	89.2	92.1	97.4	87.8
23. Capable of caring for children ( <b>woman</b> ).	94.8	97.3	96.0	93.4	97.3	93.2	90.8	97.3	93.2
24. Capable of caring for children ( <b>man</b> ).	91.6	83.8	98.7	86.8	94.7	91.9	90.7	92.1	94.5
25. Capable of supporting a family financially ( <b>woman</b> ).	81.5	82.4	90.7	69.7	94.7	68.9	84.2	75.0	86.5
<b>Family Related</b>									
7. Be able to take any decisions without influence of peers and social obligations.	77.8	62.2	76.0	84.2	73.3	82.4	80.3	81.6	82.4
43. Have ability to understand parental views.	95.8	89.2	98.7	96.1	96.0	95.9	98.7	97.4	94.6
44. Show obedience and respect towards elder.	96.2	91.9	98.7	93.4	98.7	94.6	97.4	96.1	98.6
45. Be able to support their parents in old age with social, psychological and economic needs.	96.5	90.5	100	100	97.3	91.9	96.1	98.7	97.3
8. An adult is one who spends quality time with their family.	60.5	70.3	78.7	63.2	66.7	41.9	52.6	53.9	56.8
9. An adult is one who has responsibilities towards home.	91.8	87.8	93.3	94.7	89.3	89.2	97.4	88.2	94.6
47. Decide to marry a person of his/her choice.	79.2	74.3	89.3	77.6	81.3	77.0	75.0	82.9	75.7

## APPENDIX E1

## Detailed List of Means and Standard Deviations for All Criteria in Delhi City for

## Age and Gender

Criteria for Adulthood	Delhi									
	All		18-20 years				21-25 years			
			Boys		Girls		Boys		Girls	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
<b>Independence</b>										
1. Accept responsibility for the consequences of his/her actions	3.56	.61	3.51	.67	3.59	.66	3.53	.58	3.62	.52
2. Decide on personal beliefs and values independently of parents and other influences.	2.91	.86	2.88	.94	3.03	.80	2.64	.87	3.09	.78
3. Establish relationships with parents as an equal adult.	2.74	.97	2.63	.98	2.72	.95	2.75	1.01	2.85	.96
4. Financially independent from parents.	2.83	1.02	2.60	1.07	3.07	1.04	2.70	.97	2.93	.96
48. No longer living in parents' household.	1.84	.90	1.79	.94	2.01	.99	1.80	.86	1.73	.76
42. Not deeply tied to parents emotionally.	2.26	1.04	2.20	1.05	2.49	1.06	2.12	1.04	2.22	1.00
<b>Interdependence</b>										
5. Learn always to have good control of your emotions.	3.27	.86	3.41	.76	3.42	.80	3.17	.90	3.08	.93
32. Committed to a long-term love relationship.	2.33	1.09	2.20	1.12	2.72	1.03	2.38	1.13	1.99	.96
41. Makes lifelong commitments in relationships (e.g., family, friends, relatives).	2.82	1.01	2.74	1.07	2.96	1.00	2.82	1.00	2.76	.95
6. Show greater consideration towards family and relatives compared to himself or herself.	2.68	.90	2.64	.96	2.79	.94	2.64	.84	2.64	.87
<b>Role Transitions</b>										
27. Settle into long-term profession or career.	2.72	1.04	2.68	1.10	2.78	1.13	2.79	.87	2.65	1.05
28. Finished with education.	2.42	1.10	2.43	1.21	2.46	1.10	2.51	1.03	2.27	1.06
26. An Adult is employed full time.	2.27	.93	2.36	.92	2.46	1.05	2.25	.93	1.99	.75
29. A married person is an adult	1.97	1.11	2.03	1.17	2.05	1.11	1.96	1.12	1.82	1.04
30. An adult should have at least one child.	1.83	1.03	1.91	1.06	2.01	1.11	1.80	1.01	1.59	.89
31. Purchased a house.	2.18	1.06	2.11	1.09	2.50	1.10	2.26	1.01	1.85	.93
<b>Norm Compliance</b>										
11. An adult should use contraception if sexually active and not trying to conceive a child.	3.36	.96	3.12	1.08	3.32	1.01	3.48	.86	3.51	.84
12. Avoid drunk driving.	3.61	.81	3.55	.88	3.46	.92	3.76	.61	3.68	.78
13. Avoid using illegal drugs.	3.60	.85	3.55	.91	3.57	.88	3.74	.66	3.53	.94
14. Drive an automobile safely and close to speed limit.	3.27	.88	3.04	1.00	3.33	.77	3.45	.76	3.26	.95
15. An adult has no more than one sexual partner.	2.81	1.14	2.51	1.21	2.87	1.13	3.20	1.03	2.65	1.07
16. Avoid becoming drunk.	2.89	1.07	2.84	1.11	2.97	1.06	3.16	.97	2.57	1.09
17. Avoid using vulgar, offensive language.	3.05	.93	2.97	.92	3.07	.97	3.25	.85	2.89	.95
10. Avoid committing petty crimes like shoplifting, theft, and getting into fights.	3.23	.98	3.20	.96	3.34	.99	3.25	.95	3.14	1.04

**Biological Transition**

46. An adult would have had sexual intercourse.	1.80	.92	1.92	.90	2.16	1.11	1.68	.85	1.45	.60
33. Capable of fathering children (man).	2.84	1.03	2.78	1.10	3.05	.95	2.92	.96	2.58	1.07
34. Capable of bearing children (woman).	2.51	1.10	2.57	1.21	2.78	1.10	2.55	.96	2.14	1.04
35. Grow to full height.	1.96	1.03	2.04	1.05	2.11	1.05	2.08	1.02	1.61	.92

**Legal Transition**

36. An adult is one who has reached age 18.	2.08	1.04	1.99	1.10	2.21	1.00	2.01	.99	2.09	1.09
37. An adult is a person who has reached age 21.	2.20	1.04	2.00	1.07	2.49	1.06	2.16	.98	2.15	.99
38. An adult is a person who has reached age 25.	2.25	1.08	1.99	1.12	2.57	1.11	2.21	1.05	2.22	.98
39. An adult is a person who has reached age 30.	2.30	1.15	2.01	1.15	2.53	1.17	2.33	1.19	2.31	1.06
40. Obtaining driver's license means you are an adult.	1.78	.94	1.72	.97	1.97	1.08	1.74	.88	1.70	.79

**Family Capacities**

18. Capable of keeping family physically safe (man)	3.23	.90	3.34	.93	3.50	.68	3.22	.84	2.84	1.01
19. Capable of running a household (woman).	2.92	.97	2.64	1.08	3.18	.81	2.97	.83	2.86	1.06
20. Capable of running a household (man).	2.97	.95	2.74	1.11	3.25	.88	2.95	.78	2.95	.93
21. Capable of keeping family physically safe (woman).	2.78	.89	2.69	.98	2.89	.92	2.74	.81	2.80	.88
22. Capable of supporting a family financially (man).	3.43	.80	3.38	.86	3.63	.65	3.42	.82	3.30	.86
23. Capable of caring for children (woman).	3.48	.75	3.46	.85	3.67	.58	3.47	.74	3.34	.80
24. Capable of caring for children (man)	3.31	.82	3.28	.85	3.30	.82	3.37	.71	3.26	.91
25. Capable of supporting a family financially (woman).	2.84	.88	2.47	.83	2.80	.85	2.97	.78	3.09	.92

**Family Related**

7. Be able to take any decisions without influence of peers and social obligations.	3.13	.87	3.15	.86	3.24	.91	2.99	.90	3.14	.79
43. Have ability to understand parental views.	3.41	.72	3.42	.72	3.47	.77	3.37	.71	3.38	.70
44. Show obedience and respect towards elder.	3.44	.72	3.41	.84	3.50	.72	3.46	.66	3.39	.64
45. Be able to support their parents in old age with social, psychological and economic needs.	3.69	.64	3.62	.77	3.82	.48	3.57	.68	3.74	.57
8. An adult is one who spends quality time with their family.	2.48	1.00	2.38	1.10	2.61	1.02	2.45	.94	2.47	.93
9. An adult is one who has responsibilities towards home.	3.41	.76	3.23	.88	3.43	.79	3.51	.64	3.46	.71
47. Decide to marry a person of his/her choice.	2.91	.95	2.81	.93	3.11	.96	2.75	.93	2.97	.95

## APPENDIX E2

**Detailed List of Means and Standard Deviations for All Criteria in Vadodara City  
for Age and Gender**

Criteria for Adulthood	All		Vadodara							
			18-20 years				21-25 years			
			Boys		Girls		Boys		Girls	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
<b>Independence</b>										
1. Accept responsibility for the consequences of his/her actions	3.46	.70	3.43	.66	3.59	.70	3.40	.82	3.43	.62
2. Decide on personal beliefs and values independently of parents and other influences.	2.86	.93	2.69	.99	2.92	.92	2.92	.96	2.92	.83
3. Establish relationships with parents as an equal adult.	2.98	1.04	2.91	1.10	3.03	1.10	3.05	.91	2.95	1.04
4. Financially independent from parents.	2.79	1.04	2.57	1.11	2.97	.98	2.75	.99	2.85	1.07
48. No longer living in parents' household.	2.13	1.07	2.42	1.14	2.04	.97	2.23	1.09	1.84	1.00
42. Not deeply tied to parents emotionally.	2.55	1.04	2.60	1.03	2.64	1.03	2.79	1.02	2.19	1.01
<b>Interdependence</b>										
5. Learn always to have good control of your emotions.	3.35	.84	3.24	.89	3.39	.82	3.52	.68	3.23	.92
32. Committed to a long-term love relationship.	2.66	1.13	2.76	1.06	2.64	1.21	2.57	1.10	2.67	1.17
41. Makes lifelong commitments in relationships (e.g., family, friends, relatives).	3.16	.90	3.16	.89	3.13	.96	3.21	.81	3.13	.96
6. Show greater consideration towards family and relatives compared to himself or herself.	2.74	.93	2.67	.93	2.87	.99	2.71	.90	2.72	.89
<b>Role Transitions</b>										
27. Settle into long-term profession or career.			3.03	.94	3.07	.99	3.17	.79	3.07	.96
28. Finished with education.	2.46	.98	3.05	1.05	2.67	1.09	2.93	1.02	2.64	1.06
26. An Adult is employed full time.	3.08	.92	2.51	1.02	2.37	1.00	2.55	.89	2.40	.99
29. A married person is an adult	2.33	1.19	2.73	1.11	2.05	1.11	2.48	1.17	2.05	1.23
30. An adult should have at least one child.	1.99	1.04	2.39	1.06	1.82	1.03	1.99	.98	1.77	.99
31. Purchased a house.	2.40	1.08	2.64	1.05	2.11	1.07	2.53	.98	2.35	1.14
<b>Norm Compliance</b>										
11. An adult should use contraception if sexually active and not trying to conceive a child.	3.27	.99	3.14	.98	3.18	1.05	3.16	1.12	3.60	.72
12. Avoid drunk driving.	3.67	.73	3.49	.88	3.54	.90	3.85	.46	3.79	.50
13. Avoid using illegal drugs.	3.73	.64	3.55	.80	3.72	.67	3.85	.51	3.79	.53
14. Drive an automobile safely and close to speed limit.	3.38	.86	3.26	.89	3.07	1.09	3.67	.53	3.55	.72
15. An adult has no more than one sexual partner.	3.18	1.07	3.11	1.09	2.68	1.21	3.53	.83	3.42	.92



16. Avoid becoming drunk.	3.37	.89	3.42	.84	3.08	.99	3.72	.58	3.28	.97
17. Avoid using vulgar, offensive language.	3.28	.86	3.18	.87	3.00	.95	3.63	.65	3.31	.84
10. Avoid committing petty crimes like shoplifting, theft, and getting into fights.	3.38	.96	3.36	.92	3.24	1.00	3.40	1.01	3.51	.89
<b>Biological Transition</b>										
46. An adult would have had sexual intercourse.	2.07	1.06	2.39	1.07	2.11	1.07	2.07	1.11	1.73	.89
33. Capable of fathering children (man).	3.13	.95	3.04	.90	3.13	.98	3.31	.72	3.04	1.16
34. Capable of bearing children (woman).	2.97	1.04	3.08	.93	2.93	1.04	3.27	.88	2.61	1.18
35. Grow to full height.	2.28	1.09	2.53	1.08	2.05	1.07	2.37	1.10	2.16	1.05
<b>Legal Transition</b>										
36. An adult is one who has reached age 18.	2.48	1.07	2.68	1.04	2.25	1.16	2.72	.99	2.28	1.01
37. An adult is a person who has reached age 21.	2.57	1.09	2.77	1.00	2.22	1.18	2.77	.99	2.52	1.08
38. An adult is a person who has reached age 25.	2.59	1.16	2.81	1.18	2.07	1.10	2.84	1.00	2.65	1.21
39. An adult is a person who has reached age 30.	2.56	1.22	2.72	1.20	2.00	1.13	2.88	1.11	2.64	1.26
40. Obtaining driver's license means you are an adult.	2.17	1.08	2.43	1.09	2.03	1.18	2.31	1.01	1.92	.96
<b>Family Capacities</b>										
18. Capable of keeping family physically safe (man).	3.51	.76	3.34	.93	3.53	.72	3.73	.50	3.45	.79
19. Capable of running a household (woman).	3.20	.87	2.99	.88	3.09	.80	3.53	.66	3.20	1.01
20. Capable of running a household (man).	3.20	.86	3.14	.96	3.22	.89	3.32	.68	3.13	.88
21. Capable of keeping family physically safe (woman).	3.10	.85	2.95	.83	2.91	.93	3.43	.62	3.13	.91
22. Capable of supporting a family financially (man).	3.60	.68	3.43	.85	3.62	.61	3.80	.43	3.55	.72
23. Capable of caring for children (woman).	3.60	.71	3.53	.74	3.53	.79	3.71	.63	3.65	.67
24. Capable of caring for children (man).	3.28	.85	2.93	.97	3.12	.86	3.60	.62	3.45	.74
25. Capable of supporting a family financially (woman).	2.89	.89	2.72	.91	2.64	.92	3.12	.80	3.09	.82
<b>Family Related</b>										
7. Be able to take any decisions without influence of peers and social obligations.	2.98	.96	2.86	.94	3.26	.74	2.83	1.04	2.95	1.03
43. Have ability to understand parental views.	3.50	.66	3.36	.82	3.53	.62	3.61	.52	3.48	.62
44. Show obedience and respect towards elder.	3.56	.68	3.55	.76	3.39	.80	3.71	.51	3.59	.57
45. Be able to support their parents in old age with social, psychological and economic needs.	3.73	.56	3.62	.73	3.70	.57	3.83	.38	3.77	.51
8. An adult is one who spends quality time with their family.	2.85	.98	2.93	.93	2.72	1.05	3.03	.94	2.73	.96
9. An adult is one who has responsibilities towards home.	3.49	.75	3.39	.81	3.58	.66	3.51	.76	3.47	.76
47. Decide to marry a person of his/her choice.	3.05	.97	3.01	1.03	2.99	1.01	3.17	.86	3.01	.99