

# **POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY**

*For Holistic Health & Wellbeing*

*Editors*

**Dr. Zulfiqar Ullah Siddiqui | Punita Borpujari Deori**

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**Editors:** Dr. Zulfiqar Ullah Siddiqui, Punita Borpujari Deori,  
Prof. Akbar Hussain, Prof. Azizuddin Khan & Md. Aynul Bari

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Prof. Gauri Dutt Sharma

Vice Chancellor, University of Science & Technology Meghalaya  
Former President, AIU, New Delhi

### Vice Chancellor's Message

The scholarly work, "*Positive Psychology for Holistic Health and Well-Being*," by Dr. Zulfiqar Ullah Siddiqui and Punita Borpujari Deori, from the Department of Psychology, University of Science & Technology Meghalaya, along with Prof. Akbar Husain (Rtd.), Aligarh Muslim University, and Prof. Azizuddin Khan, Department of HSS, IIT Bombay, and Md. Aynul Bari, PQH School of Education, University of Science & Technology Meghalaya have brought out a new concept in emerging areas of positive psychology.

Understanding the power of positive psychological principles has become an important tool in recent times. This book is an invaluable contribution to the field of Positive Psychology, emphasizing research-based knowledge that will provide readers with a deep and scientific insight into the connection between positive mental state and overall well-being. As we continue to explore the relationship between mind and body, the perspectives offered in this volume will be crucial in fostering a comprehensive understanding of the role of positivity in achieving holistic health.

The book will serve as a vital resource for undergraduate, postgraduate, and Ph.D. students, as well as for faculty members from colleges and universities. It offers a well-rounded understanding of the concepts, theories, and empirical evidences that form the bedrock of Positive Psychology. By expanding our awareness, positivity can shape healthier and fulfilling lives. The compilation not only enriches the academic discourse but also contributes significantly to personal and societal well-being.

I am confident that the book will inspire both seasoned scholars and young researchers to explore the transformative power of positivity in everyday life, thus laying the groundwork for a healthier, more resilient society. My best wishes to the editors and contributors for their commendable effort. I am sure the volume will serve as a valuable addition to the ever-evolving field of Positive Psychology.

*G. D. Sharma*

**Prof. G.D. Sharma**

Vice Chancellor

University of Science & Technology Meghalaya

## Message

We are deeply grateful to the Chancellor of the University of Science & Technology Meghalaya, Honorable Mahbubul Hoque sir, whose vision and support have been instrumental in the realization of this edited book. Your unwavering commitment to academic excellence and innovation has provided us with the inspiration and resources necessary to embark on this scholarly endeavor. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. G D Sharma Sir, for your leadership and encouragement. Your guidance has been invaluable in navigating the challenges and milestones throughout this project. Your dedication to fostering a thriving academic environment has significantly contributed to the successful completion of this work.

Our sincere appreciation goes to the Dean, Prof. Gayatree Goswamee, whose expertise and enthusiasm have been crucial in shaping the direction and content of this book. Your insightful feedback and continuous support have enriched our understanding and presentation of positive psychology in the context of holistic health and well-being.

We also wish to acknowledge the editorial team, whose meticulous attention to detail and commitment to excellence have ensured the highest quality of this publication. Your hard work and dedication in reviewing, editing, and organizing the contributions have been vital to the coherence and impact of this book. Finally, we extend our deepest gratitude to the reviewers, whose constructive critiques and valuable suggestions have significantly enhanced the scholarly merit of this work. Your expertise and careful consideration have been instrumental in refining the chapters and ensuring their academic rigor. To all who have contributed to this book, we offer our heartfelt thanks. Your collective efforts and unwavering support have made "Positive Psychology for Holistic Health & Well-being" a reality. It is our hope that this book will inspire and inform readers, contributing to the advancement of knowledge in the field of positive psychology and holistic health.

With deepest appreciation,

**Dr. Zulfiqar Ullah Siddiqui**

**Punita Borpujari Deori**

# *Forward*

It is with great pleasure that I write the forward for "Positive Psychology for Holistic Health & Well-being." This edited volume represents a significant contribution to the growing body of research in positive psychology, offering a comprehensive exploration of how positive psychological practices and principles can enhance holistic health and well-being.

The book brings together a diverse group of scholars and practitioners who provide rich insights into the various facets of positive psychology. Their contributions delve into topics such as resilience, mindfulness, gratitude, and overall mental well-being, highlighting the transformative potential of positive psychological interventions in various settings. The reviewers deserve particular recognition for their thoughtful and constructive feedback, which has significantly enhanced the scholarly merit of the work. Their expertise and detailed evaluations have ensured that each chapter contributes meaningfully to the overarching theme of holistic health and well-being through positive psychology.

As you engage with the chapters in this book, I hope you find inspiration and practical wisdom that can be applied in various contexts to foster well-being and positive mental health. This volume is not just a collection of research but a testament to the power of positive psychology to bring about holistic health and enduring well-being.

## **Publication Ethics:**

Ethical guidelines, we aim to ensure the integrity and quality of the scholarly work presented in "Positive Psychology for Holistic Health & Well-being." We are committed to maintaining trust in the academic community and upholding the standards of excellence in publication ethics.





# *Preface*

The field of positive psychology has emerged as a transformative force, shifting the focus of psychological research and practice from a deficit-based model to one that emphasizes human strengths, well-being, and optimal functioning. "Positive Psychology for Holistic Health & Well-being" is a testament to this paradigm shift, bringing together a diverse array of perspectives, research findings, and practical applications that underscore the profound impact of positive psychological principles on holistic health. The genesis of this book stems from a growing recognition of the need to integrate positive psychology into broader health and wellness frameworks. Holistic health, which encompasses physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being, provides a comprehensive lens through which the benefits of positive psychology can be fully realized. This book aims to bridge the gap between these two domains, offering readers a nuanced understanding of how positive psychological constructs can enhance overall health and quality of life. Our contributors are esteemed scholars and practitioners from various disciplines, each bringing unique insights and expertise to the table. The chapters in this book cover a wide range of topics, including resilience, mindfulness, gratitude, positive relationships, and the role of positive emotions in fostering well-being. By presenting both theoretical frameworks and practical interventions, we hope to provide a holistic view of the field that is both academically rigorous and practically relevant. This book is intended for a broad audience, including researchers, practitioners, students, and anyone interested in the intersection of positive psychology and holistic health. We hope that the insights and knowledge presented here will inspire further research, inform practice, and ultimately contribute to the enhancement of well-being at both individual and societal levels. As you explore the chapters of this book, we invite you to reflect on the ways in which positive psychology can enrich your own life and the lives of those around you. May this book serve as a catalyst for positive change, fostering a deeper appreciation for the power of positivity in promoting holistic health and well-being.

**Editorial Team**

# *A Note from the Editorial Members*

**Dear Readers,**

We are delighted to present to you "Positive Psychology for Holistic Health & Well-being," a compendium of insightful research and perspectives dedicated to exploring the multifaceted dimensions of positive psychology and its impact on holistic health. The journey of bringing this book to fruition has been a collaborative and enriching experience, involving numerous dedicated individuals. We extend our profound gratitude to all the contributors who have shared their expertise, knowledge, and researches, making this book a valuable resource for scholars, practitioners, and students alike. Our deepest thanks go to the Chancellor of the University of Science & Technology Meghalaya, for the unwavering support and encouragement that have been pivotal in this endeavor. The Vice-Chancellor has been a constant source of inspiration, and we are immensely grateful for their guidance and leadership. The editors have worked diligently to ensure the highest standards of quality and academic rigor. We appreciate their meticulous efforts in organizing, editing, and refining the contributions, ensuring a seamless reading experience. Their dedication has been vital in bringing this project to completion. We also express our sincere appreciation to the reviewers, whose expert evaluations and constructive feedback have greatly enhanced the quality of this work. Your careful consideration and scholarly input have been crucial in refining the chapters and ensuring their academic excellence. As editorial members, it is our hope that this book will serve as a significant contribution to the field of positive psychology, offering valuable insights and fostering a deeper understanding of holistic health and well-being. We are confident that the diverse perspectives and research findings presented in this book will inspire and inform readers, encouraging further exploration and innovation in this vital area of study.

Thank you for joining us on this journey. We look forward to the continued advancement of knowledge and practice in positive psychology and holistic health.

**Editorial Team**

# *Declaration*

We, the editors of "Positive Psychology for Holistic Health & Well-being," hereby declare that. All chapters and content included in this book are the original work of the respective authors. Any external sources of information, data, or content have been appropriately cited and referenced. The publication adheres to the highest standards of ethical publishing practices. All authors have complied with the ethical guidelines for research and publication, including issues related to authorship, originality, and conflicts of interest. The content of this book has undergone a rigorous peer review process. Expert reviewers in the field of positive psychology and holistic health have evaluated the manuscripts for their scholarly merit, accuracy, and contribution to the field. All authors, editors, and reviewers have disclosed any potential conflicts of interest. Any conflicts identified have been appropriately managed to maintain the integrity and impartiality of the publication process. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information presented in this book. The editors have worked diligently to verify the content and uphold the scholarly integrity of this publication. Necessary permissions have been obtained for any third-party copyrighted material included in this book. The authors and editors respect intellectual property rights and have ensured that all content is legally compliant. Each author has significantly contributed to their respective chapters, including the conceptualization, design, execution, and interpretation of their research. Authorship has been appropriately attributed based on individual contributions. Authors have provided transparent and accurate reporting of their research findings. Where applicable, authors are prepared to share data and materials related to their research to facilitate transparency and reproducibility.

This declaration affirms our commitment to upholding the ethical standards and integrity of academic publishing. We believe that "Positive Psychology for Holistic Health & Well-being" will make a significant contribution to the field and serve as a valuable resource for scholars, practitioners, and students.

**Editorial Team**

# *About the Book*

Positive psychology was formally introduced by Martin Seligman in the late 1990s during his presidency of the American Psychological Association. Seligman, along with other pioneering psychologists like Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, aimed to shift the focus of psychology from merely addressing mental illness to also enhancing the strengths and virtues that enable people to lead fulfilling lives.

The discipline draws on the rich history of humanistic psychology, which emphasizes human potential and self-actualization, as well as research in areas such as optimism, resilience, and positive emotions. Positive psychology is deeply rooted in empirical research and employs rigorous scientific methods to explore the factors that contribute to a well-lived and meaningful life.

## **Purpose of Edited Book:**

The primary purpose of "Positive Psychology for Holistic Health & Well-being" is to explore and elucidate the profound impact that positive psychological principles can have on holistic health. This edited volume aims to bridge the gap between positive psychology and holistic health, providing a comprehensive and integrative approach to understanding how these two fields can work together to enhance overall well-being.

## **Objectives of the Book:**

- 1. Integrating Positive Psychology and Holistic Health:** By bringing together research and perspectives from both fields, this book seeks to create a cohesive framework that demonstrates how positive psychological practices can contribute to holistic health. It aims to show how physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being are interconnected and can be nurtured through positive psychology.
- 2. Highlighting Evidence-Based Practices:** This book emphasizes the importance of evidence-based practices in positive psychology. It showcases research findings and practical applications that have been scientifically validated, providing readers with reliable and effective strategies for promoting well-being.
- 3. Promoting Multidisciplinary Collaboration:** Recognizing that holistic health requires a multidisciplinary approach, this book includes contributions from various fields such as psychology, medicine, education, and social work. By fostering collaboration across disciplines, it aims to offer a more comprehensive understanding of well-being.
- 4. Empowering Individuals and Communities:** One of the key goals of this book is to empower individuals and communities with the knowledge and tools needed to enhance their well-being. It provides practical interventions and strategies that can be implemented in everyday life to promote positive mental health, resilience, and overall quality of life.

5. **Addressing Contemporary Challenges:** In an era marked by rapid changes and numerous challenges, this book addresses contemporary issues such as stress, anxiety, and burnout. It offers insights into how positive psychology can help individuals and communities navigate these challenges and build a more resilient and fulfilling life.
6. **Inspiring Future Research and Practice:** This book aims to inspire further research and innovation in the field of positive psychology and holistic health. By presenting cutting-edge research and novel applications, it encourages scholars and practitioners to continue exploring new ways to enhance well-being.

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**Theme - 1**  
**Subjective Well-Being**

## Journey to Positive Psychology: A Pathway to Holistic Health and Well-Being

Punita Borpujari Deori\* & Dr. Zulfiqar Ullah Siddiqui \*\*

### ABSTRACT

This chapter aims to examine the role of positive psychology in enhancing holistic health and well-being, focusing on the transition from a traditional deficit-oriented approach to a strengths-based perspective in psychological research. Positive psychology, as outlined by Seligman, emphasizes elements such as positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment (PERMA) to promote human flourishing. The study highlights that practices like mindfulness, gratitude, and forgiveness foster emotional resilience, reduce stress, and improve cognitive flexibility, aligning well with principles of holistic health (Fredrickson, 2001; Creswell & Lindsay, 2014). Techniques such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Loving-Kindness Meditation (LKM) are shown to enhance mental, emotional, and physical well-being, including reducing anxiety and supporting cardiovascular health (Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Zeng et al., 2015). Positive social interactions also contribute significantly to life satisfaction and overall well-being (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). The findings suggest that integrating positive psychology into holistic health practices offers a promising pathway for enhancing well-being, with future research needed to explore its application across diverse populations and settings.

**Keywords:** Positive Psychology, Holistic Health, Well-being, Mindfulness, Emotional Resilience.

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## INTRODUCTION

Positive psychology has emerged as a significant shift in psychological research and practice, moving away from a traditional focus on deficits, which emphasizes illness and dysfunction, toward a strengths-based approach that highlights positive traits and behaviors. This perspective, introduced by Martin Seligman in the late 1990s, emphasizes the importance of human flourishing and well-being (Seligman, 1999). The shift toward positive psychology challenges the long-standing focus within psychology on diagnosing and treating mental illness by advocating for the cultivation of positive emotions, personal strengths, and meaningful experiences (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). The broader scope of positive psychology extends its relevance beyond mental health to a more holistic conception of well-being, which includes physical, emotional, and social dimensions (Diener et al., 2017). This holistic approach aims to foster a life that is balanced, meaningful, and well-connected with others.

The theoretical framework of positive psychology represents a response to psychology's historical emphasis on pathology and disorder. In 1998, Martin Seligman, then-President of the American Psychological Association (APA), officially launched the positive psychology movement, advocating for a shift in focus to the positive aspects of human experience (Seligman, 1999). Seligman proposed that psychology should not only address human weaknesses but should also be concerned with strengths, aiming to build the best qualities in life while addressing the worst. His emphasis on exploring human strengths, virtues, and the conditions that enable individuals and communities to thrive laid the groundwork for the conceptual framework of positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). This framework emphasizes understanding the factors that contribute to human resilience and happiness, offering a scientific approach to the study of well-being.

Central to positive psychology are several key elements that contribute to well-being, often summarized by the PERMA model, which includes Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment (Seligman, 2011). Positive emotions, such as joy, gratitude, and hope, play a crucial role in enhancing well-being. Research suggests that these emotions do more than just improve mood; they also enhance cognitive flexibility, problem-solving skills, and resilience in the face of challenges (Fredrickson, 2001). Engagement, another core concept, refers to the deep absorption and enjoyment one experiences when fully involved in activities (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). This state of being, often described as "flow," is associated with greater satisfaction and better performance in various areas of life. Relationships are also fundamental, as positive and supportive social interactions provide emotional support and contribute significantly to overall life satisfaction (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005). Moreover, the search for meaning and purpose in life is a vital aspect of positive psychology. Research shows that having a sense of purpose is linked to greater life satisfaction, more effective coping mechanisms, and even longer life expectancy (Ryff & Singer, 1998). Accomplishment, or the pursuit and achievement of personal goals, fosters a sense of competence and mastery, which is essential for sustained well-being (Seligman, 2011).

These components collectively offer a comprehensive understanding of well-being, providing the foundation for many interventions aimed at promoting positive mental states and behaviors. Positive psychological practices such as mindfulness, gratitude, and forgiveness play a key role in managing stress, building resilience, and improving overall life quality (Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Emmons & McCullough, 2003). Mindfulness, for example, involves being present in the moment and helps individuals manage stress and anxiety, leading to improved emotional and physical health (Creswell & Lindsay, 2014). Similarly, gratitude and forgiveness are practices that enhance positive relationships and emotional well-being, contributing to a more balanced and fulfilling life (Emmons & Stern, 2013; Toussaint et al., 2019).

Holistic health, a concept that extends beyond merely the absence of illness, focuses on achieving a state of thriving where individuals experience fulfillment, purpose, and a deep sense of connection (Ryff, 2021). Positive psychology aligns closely with this vision by emphasizing practices that address not only mental and emotional health but also the broader context of physical and social well-being (Diener et al., 2017). This integrative approach to health considers the interconnected nature of body, mind, and spirit, and how these elements work together to promote overall well-being (Ryff, 2021). Positive psychology's focus on building resilience, fostering optimism, and enhancing life satisfaction directly supports the goals of holistic health by providing strategies that promote mental clarity, emotional stability, and social connectedness (Fredrickson, 2001).

From a research perspective, the interconnection between positive psychology and holistic health is significant. Studies have consistently demonstrated that positive emotions and strengths not only enhance mental health but also contribute to better physical health outcomes (Wood et al., 2022). For instance, evidence suggests that practices like gratitude and optimism are linked to improved immune function, lower blood pressure, and reduced risk of chronic illnesses (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). This indicates that cultivating positive mental states can have tangible benefits for physical health, supporting the idea that a holistic approach to well-being is essential for achieving long-term health outcomes. The emphasis on resilience, meaning, and social connections in positive psychology also provides a framework for addressing the complex challenges individuals face in their daily lives, promoting both personal and communal well-being (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004).

### **Positive Psychology: A Comprehensive Approach to Well-being**

Positive psychology emphasizes strengths and positive emotions, encouraging individuals to cultivate qualities like resilience, hope, and optimism. Unlike traditional psychology, which often focuses on dysfunction and mental illness, positive psychology aims to build on existing strengths, helping individuals to achieve their fullest potential. This approach contributes directly to holistic health by fostering a balanced integration of mind, body, and social relationships.

Research by Sin and Lyubomirsky (2009) shows that positive psychological interventions (PPIs)—such as exercises focusing on gratitude, optimism, and kindness—result in notable improvements in mental health, reducing depressive

symptoms and enhancing life satisfaction. These interventions support the idea that focusing on positive aspects of life can build emotional resilience, which is crucial for coping with stress and adversity. Additionally, PPIs promote the development of coping strategies that are essential for maintaining holistic health. The role of positive psychology in enhancing mental health is further supported by Fredrickson's (2001) Broaden-and-Build Theory, which suggests that positive emotions broaden an individual's cognitive resources and foster the building of psychological resilience over time. For example, activities like expressing gratitude or engaging in mindfulness practices can improve cognitive flexibility, enabling individuals to better adapt to challenges and maintain a positive outlook (Garland et al., 2010). This model emphasizes how positive emotions contribute to creating a resilient mindset, which is vital for holistic well-being.

### **GRATITUDE PRACTICE AND ITS IMPACT ON WELL-BEING**

Gratitude, a key focus within positive psychology, Emmons and Crumpler (2000) position it as a fundamental human strength that can help individuals cope with life's challenges by shifting focus from negative experiences to positive aspects of life, involves recognizing and appreciating the positive aspects of life. It is more than just saying "thank you"; it is a deeper emotional response that fosters a sense of connection to others and the world. Research by Emmons and McCullough (2003) has shown that those who regularly practice gratitude experience higher levels of happiness, reduced stress, and improved relationships.

Recent studies continue to support these findings. For instance, a study by Wood et al. (2022) found that gratitude practices can enhance immune function by reducing stress-induced inflammation, which is closely linked to better physical health outcomes. Improve sleep quality and reduce stress (Sansone and Sansone, 2010). Alkozei et al. (2018) propose two causal frameworks, suggesting that gratitude not only enhances subjective well-being directly but also serves as a buffer against negative emotions by fostering positive cognitive appraisals. Collectively, these findings suggest that gratitude can serve as a simple yet impactful intervention, such as keeping a gratitude journal, saying 'Thank you!' can foster lasting improvements in mood and overall life satisfaction.

### **FORGIVENESS AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING**

Forgiveness is another important element of positive psychology that aligns with holistic well-being. It involves letting go of negative feelings such as anger and resentment, which can have a detrimental impact on mental and physical health if left unresolved. Worthington et al. (2007) conducted a study showing that individuals who practice forgiveness experience lower levels of stress, anxiety, and anger, which are known contributors to cardiovascular problems and other health risks. Forgiveness is particularly effective in reducing stress and promoting emotional resilience, making it a crucial tool in the holistic health toolkit. Toussaint et al. (2019) emphasize that forgiveness is closely linked to better physical health outcomes, such as reduced blood pressure and lower stress levels. By letting go of grudges and negative feelings, individuals can experience less chronic stress, which in turn supports cardiovascular health and overall well-being. Webb and Toussaint (2019) also highlight the strong connection between

forgiveness and mental health, noting that individuals who practice forgiveness tend to report higher life satisfaction and lower rates of anxiety and depression. These findings collectively emphasize the potential of forgiveness as a powerful tool for fostering both physical and psychological resilience, contributing to holistic well-being. Worthington and Scherer (2004) further describe forgiveness as an emotion-focused coping strategy that enhances health resilience. They suggest that forgiveness helps reduce emotional burdens, leading to improved immune function and a decreased risk of stress-related illnesses.

## **MINDFULNESS AS A PATHWAY TO HOLISTIC HEALTH**

Mindfulness, the practice of being fully attentive to the present moment without judgment, has emerged as a significant approach to improving psychological well-being. Research highlights its effectiveness within a holistic framework. Amaro (2015) introduces the idea of "holistic mindfulness," which integrates mindfulness into daily life, promoting increased awareness, emotional stability, and a profound sense of connectedness. This approach encourages living more fully in the moment, leading to enhanced overall well-being. Mindfulness also positively affects physical health. For instance, Zeidan et al. (2010) found that mindfulness meditation improves attention, working memory, and cognitive flexibility, proving beneficial for cognitive health.

Loving-kindness meditation (LKM), a specific mindfulness practice, has shown benefits for physiological health. It can improve vagal tone, an indicator of parasympathetic nervous system activity linked to cardiovascular health. Zeng et al. (2015) conducted a meta-analysis that found LKM significantly boosts positive emotions and psychological well-being. Additionally, Uchino et al. (2016) demonstrated that LKM can decrease negativity in relationships, making it a valuable intervention for healthier social connections. Wong et al. (2022) explored how LKM affects the brain-heart connection, showing that it can modulate this connection, as evidenced by EEG data, further underscoring its value in improving emotional and relational well-being.

Nilsson (2014) proposes a four-dimensional mindfulness model that includes attention, awareness, acceptance, and embodiment, emphasizing mindfulness's role in managing stress and deepening the mind-body connection. Creswell and Lindsay (2014) explain the "mindfulness stress buffering account," illustrating how mindfulness training can alleviate stress responses, improve emotional clarity, and enhance immune and cardiovascular function. Kabat-Zinn's (2003) Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program demonstrates that consistent mindfulness practice can significantly alleviate symptoms of anxiety, depression, and chronic stress. Acevedo (2018) reinforces these findings, advocating for the integration of mindfulness practices into holistic health interventions to address mental, emotional, and physical needs. Collectively, these studies confirm that mindfulness is a potent tool for promoting well-being through a balanced and mindful lifestyle.

## **SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING: THE HEART OF POSITIVE EXPERIENCES**

Subjective well-being (SWB) refers to how individuals perceive and evaluate their lives, encompassing both emotional and cognitive components like life



satisfaction, positive affect, and low levels of negative affect. SWB and physical health are intimately linked as demonstrated by Cross, Hofschneider, Grimm, & Pressman (2018). It has been defined as “a person’s cognitive and affective evaluations of his or her life” (Diener et al. 2002a, p. 63). Research indicates a significant positive relationship between physical activity and subjective well-being in healthy individuals. Diener et al. (2018) emphasized that SWB is a strong predictor of both mental and physical health, including longevity and overall life quality. Higher levels of SWB have been linked to improved immune function, reduced inflammation, and healthier lifestyle choices. Buecker et al. (2021), through a meta-analytic review, found that engaging in regular physical activity contributes to enhanced positive affect, reduced symptoms of depression and anxiety, and overall improvements in life satisfaction. These study highlights that even moderate levels of physical activity can significantly boost subjective well-being, suggesting that incorporating physical movement into daily routines can serve as a simple yet effective intervention for psychological health. Similarly, Cross et al. (2018) emphasize the bidirectional relationship between subjective well-being and physical health. Their findings suggest that individuals with higher levels of subjective well-being—characterized by positive emotions, life satisfaction, and a sense of purpose—tend to exhibit better physical health outcomes, including lower levels of inflammation, improved cardiovascular function, and greater longevity. This reciprocal influence suggests that fostering subjective well-being through activities like exercise not only benefits mental health but also promotes physical health. Together, these findings underline the importance of integrating physical activity into health promotion strategies, emphasizing how it serves as a bridge between physical health and psychological well-being.

### **SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING: CONNECTING TO A HIGHER PURPOSE**

Spiritual well-being, which encompasses a sense of connection to a higher purpose or meaning in life, is a critical component of positive psychology. Research consistently highlights the significant role of spirituality in enhancing well-being, particularly among individuals facing health challenges. Hulett et al. (2021) explore the connections between religious and spiritual variables and neuroimmune activity in breast cancer survivors, suggesting that spiritual practices may positively influence immune responses, thereby contributing to overall health and recovery. Bagereka et al. (2023) further establish the link between psychosocial-spiritual well-being, resilience, and mindfulness in patients with severe medical illnesses. Their findings indicate that higher levels of spiritual well-being are associated with increased resilience and mindfulness, suggesting that spirituality can serve as a protective factor in managing illness-related stress. Ryff (2021) discusses the theoretical underpinnings of spirituality and well-being, emphasizing the importance of nature connections and spiritual practices in promoting psychological resilience. Visser et al. (2010) review spirituality’s positive impact on the well-being of cancer patients, highlighting its role in coping and emotional adjustment.

Additionally, Daaleman et al. (2001) provide insights into patient perspectives, demonstrating that spiritual beliefs contribute to overall well-being and quality

of life. Together, these studies underscore the vital role of spirituality in fostering resilience, emotional health, and holistic well-being in individuals coping with illness. Koenig et al. (2012) found that spiritual well-being is associated with lower rates of depression and anxiety, as well as increased life satisfaction. For many, spirituality provides a sense of comfort and hope, particularly during times of stress and uncertainty.

## **BUILDING RESILIENCE AND ADAPTABILITY THROUGH POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY**

Resilience, or the ability to adapt to adversity and recover from setbacks, is a cornerstone of positive psychology. Tugade and Fredrickson (2004) showed that individuals who regularly engage in positive emotion regulation are more resilient in the face of stress. Troy and Mauss (2011) emphasize that emotion regulation acts as a key protective factor, enabling individuals to adapt more effectively to stress and adversity. Their study supports the Broaden-and-Build theory, which suggests that positive emotions build lasting psychological resources that help individuals recover from difficult situations. Programs aimed at resilience-building, such as those developed by Seligman (2011) for military personnel, have demonstrated that training in optimism and resilience can reduce symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and improve overall well-being. Livingstone and Srivastava (2012) found that strategies for up-regulating positive emotions, such as savoring and positive reappraisal, are linked to greater life satisfaction and overall well-being. These strategies help individuals maintain a positive outlook in daily life, enhancing their emotional resilience. This focus on resilience is particularly important for holistic health, as it supports both mental and physical recovery from stressors.

### **Enhancing Social Well-being Through Positive Connections**

Positive psychology places significant importance on relationships and social connections, which are critical for holistic well-being. Research by Holt-Lunstad et al. (2010) found that strong social connections are associated with a 50% increased likelihood of survival, highlighting the profound impact of social well-being on physical health. Social bonds provide support, reduce feelings of isolation, and enhance life satisfaction, contributing to a positive feedback loop of well-being. Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) found that positive psychology interventions, such as acts of kindness and expressing gratitude, can strengthen social ties and improve overall life satisfaction. Similarly, O'Connell et al. (2016) demonstrated that positive psychology activities can enhance social relationships, emphasizing the role of positivity in building strong interpersonal connections. These interventions are effective in fostering community well-being, suggesting that positive psychology can be a powerful tool in creating supportive and thriving social networks.

## **CONCLUSION: THE SYNERGY BETWEEN POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND HOLISTIC HEALTH**

The journey toward positive psychology is not solely about the pursuit of happiness. The relationship between positive psychology and holistic health is deeply interconnected, with each enriching the other to support overall well-

being. The journey toward positive psychology extends beyond the pursuit of happiness; it involves creating a life that is balanced, meaningful, and well-connected, which aligns with the principles of holistic health. Positive psychology offers practical strategies for building emotional resilience, fostering positive relationships, and finding purpose in life—key elements that contribute to holistic well-being. The Broaden-and-Build Theory (Fredrickson, 2001) explains how positive emotions can serve as a foundation for resilience, which is essential for comprehensive well-being. Engaging in practices such as mindfulness, gratitude, and forgiveness helps individuals enhance their cognitive and emotional capacities, fostering adaptability and improving overall health. Integrating spiritual well-being into the positive psychology approach further emphasizes the importance of deeper meaning for maintaining long-term mental stability. Research has shown that these practices not only boost mental and emotional well-being but also provide physical benefits, like reduced stress and improved immune function (Fredrickson, 2001; Wood et al., 2022). Additionally, positive social interactions contribute to a sense of belonging and support, helping individuals manage stress and enhance life satisfaction (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). Positive psychology thus provides essential tools for thriving within a holistic health model.

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# Building A Better Life? - An Introduction to Positive Psychology

**Jamima Afrin Mazerbhuiya\***

## **ABSTRACT**

*Positive Psychology, a transformative branch of psychological science, emphasizes the study of strengths, virtues, and factors that foster human flourishing. This chapter explores key dimensions of Positive Psychology, including its definition, aims, objectives, and significance, while shedding light on its theoretical and practical goals. Positive Psychology seeks to shift the focus from mental illness to promoting resilience, happiness, and well-being, making it an essential framework for understanding optimal human functioning. By delving into its scope and potential, the chapter underscores Positive Psychology's contributions to fostering a holistic approach to well-being, blending empirical rigor with practical application. A comprehensive literature review provides insights into its evolution and critiques, paving the way for further research and cross-cultural exploration in this growing field.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

*"Positive psychology is the scientific study of what makes life most worth living" (Peterson, 2008).*

What makes life worth living? It's a vast, daunting, and vital question. For much of psychology's existence, the focus on mental disorders has not translated into more wellbeing. We have targeted human pathology—what's going wrong—rather than how we flourish (Seligman, 2011; Kellerman & Seligman, 2023). Positive psychology has challenged the focus of psychologists by creating a practical vision of "what actions lead to wellbeing, to positive individuals, and to thriving communities" (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 5).

Positive Psychology is the scientific study of the strengths, virtues, and factors that contribute to human flourishing and optimal functioning. Unlike

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traditional psychology, which often focuses on diagnosing and treating mental illnesses, positive psychology emphasizes enhancing well-being, resilience, and happiness. The term "Positive Psychology" was popularized by Martin Seligman during his presidency of the American Psychological Association (APA) in the late 1990s. Seligman and other pioneers, such as Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, advocated for shifting psychology's focus toward understanding positive emotions, meaningful life engagement, and fulfilling relationships.

Positive psychology doesn't replace traditional psychology, but rather, it functions as a complement to it. Think of it as a seesaw where the two balance each other out. Positive psychology isn't about putting on a happy face all the time. The reality is that life can be hard, and disappointments and challenges are inevitable. However, positive psychology helps to build the resilience you need to better cope with difficult times. As they like to say – greet the negatives and the challenges at the door, but don't invite them in for tea.

Central to Positive Psychology is the PERMA model. The PERMA model is widely recognised and influential in positive psychology. Seligman proposed this model to help explain and define wellbeing in greater depth. "PERMA" is the acronym for the five pillars of positive psychology –

- **Positive Emotions:** Feeling joy, gratitude, hope, and love.
- **Engagement:** Fully immersing oneself in activities (the "flow" state).
- **Relationships:** Building strong, healthy social connections.
- **Meaning:** Finding purpose and contributing to something larger than oneself.
- **Accomplishment:** Achieving personal and professional goals.

Positive psychology's goal was (and still is) to provide individuals and society with the tools to flourish rather than dwell on mental ill health, which has always been the focus of psychology. Seligman (2011) believed that such a new, research-based approach could guide individuals toward flourishing, living a satisfying life, and also raise the bar for the human condition. The promise of positive psychology was to take existing tools and techniques previously used to explain our weaknesses and treat illnesses and use them to "enhance our understanding of strengths and promote wellbeing" (Snyder, 2021, p. 3).

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

According to Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi (2000) the agenda of Positive Psychology are as follows.

To articulate a vision of good life that is empirically sound while being understandable and attractive.

To show what actions can lead to well-being, to positive individuals, and to thriving communities.

To help document - what kinds of families result in children who flourish, what work settings support the greatest satisfaction among workers, what policies result in the strongest civic engagement, and how people's lives can be most worth living.

“Positive Psychology aims to understand and build the emotions, and the strengths and virtues that enable individuals and communities to thrive.

Positive Psychology has three central concerns: positive experiences, positive individual traits, and positive institutions.”- Angela Duckworth, Paul Rozin, and Martin Seligman. According to Duckworth, Rozin, and Seligman, the three central concerns of positive psychology involve,

“Understanding positive experiences or positive emotions consists in the study of ‘contentment’ with the ‘past’; ‘pleasure’ in the ‘present’; and ‘hope’ for the ‘future’”

“Understanding positive individual traits means the study of strengths and virtues viz., the capacity to love, valour, altruism, grit, creativity, curiosity, integrity, moderation, self-control, spirituality and humor;”

“Understanding positive institutions involves the study of the strong families, communities, corporations and the virtues that nourish them such as justice, responsibility, civility, work ethic, leadership, teamwork, purpose and tolerance.”

### **Aims:**

The primary aim of Positive Psychology is to understand and nurture the conditions under which individuals and communities thrive. This includes studying human strengths, virtues, and factors contributing to life satisfaction and well-being.

### **Objectives:**

To identify universal strengths, such as gratitude, optimism, and curiosity, and explore their role in promoting a fulfilling life.

To design interventions that enhance well-being, such as gratitude journaling, acts of kindness, and mindfulness practices.

To promote resilience and equip individuals with tools to cope with life’s challenges.

To explore how positive emotions and strengths influence health, relationships, and productivity

### **SCOPE OF RESEARCH**

Moving from an exclusive focus on distress, disorder, and dysfunction, positive psychology shifts the scientific lens to a concentration on well-being, health, and optimal functioning. Positive psychology provides a different vantage point through which to understand human experience. Well-being is a central concept in positive psychology. Shah and Marks (2004, p. 2) state that, “Well-being is more than just happiness. In addition to feeling satisfied and happy, well-being means developing as a person, being fulfilled, and making a contribution to the community.”

Prior to Seligman, other researchers, mainly Bradburn, Ed Diener and Carol Ryff have already discussed about happiness and well-being and made significant contributions. Bradburn (1969) noted that high psychological well-being indicates more of positive affect than negative affect and low psychological well-



being indicates the vice-versa. Seligman himself seems to have changed the goal post of positive psychology from his first book (*Authentic Happiness* -Seligman, 2002) to his second book written after a decade (*Flourishing* – Seligman, 2011). He states, “I used to think that the topic of positive psychology was happiness. I now think that the topic of positive psychology is well-being, that the gold standard for measuring well-being is flourishing, and that the goal of positive psychology is to increase flourishing.” (Italic added for emphasis. Not in the original). (Seligman, 2011, p. 13-15, cited in - Dodge, Daly, Huyton and Sanders, 2012).

In the 15 or so years since the inception of positive psychology, a number of themes have surfaced, such as altruism, accomplishment, appreciation of beauty and excellence, authenticity, best possible selves, character strengths, coaching, compassion, courage, coping, creativity, curiosity, emotional intelligence, empathy, flow, forgiveness, goal setting, gratitude, grit, happiness, hope, humour, kindness, leadership, love, meaning, meditation, mindfulness, motivation, optimism, performance, perseverance, positive emotions, positive relationships, post-traumatic growth, psychological capital, purpose, resilience, savoring, self-efficacy, self-regulation, spirituality, the good life, virtues, wisdom and zest. Many of the themes studied have their origins outside of the field of positive psychology. However, Rusk and Waters (2013) looked at the breadth of the field and found that approximately a third of the positive-psychology-related terms they studied were new to the field since 1999. Therefore, it seems that positive psychology is largely exploring existing constructs, but through a fresh lens. This growth has generated new sub-fields focused on the application of the science, such as positive education (Norrish 2015; Norrish et al., 2013) or positive organizational behavior and positive organizational scholarship (Wright and Quick, 2009).

Recent developments have produced a common framework and that locates the study of positive states, strengths and virtues in relation to each other and links them to important life outcomes. Recent developments suggest that problems in psychological functioning may be more profitably dealt with as the absence, excess, or opposite of these strengths rather than traditional diagnostic categories of mental illness. The principal claim of positive psychology is that the study of health, fulfillment and well-being is as deserving of study as illness, dysfunction, and distress, has resonated well with both the academic community and the general public.

Positive Psychology, as a burgeoning field, provides vast opportunities for research that span individual, societal, and global levels. Its interdisciplinary nature integrates insights from psychology, sociology, neuroscience, education, and organizational studies, offering a holistic framework for understanding and enhancing well-being.

Research at the individual level focuses on understanding the factors that contribute to personal well-being and flourishing. Studies investigate how emotions like joy, gratitude, and awe impact mental health, resilience, and cognitive functioning. For example, research based on the Broaden-and-Build Theory explores how positive emotions enhance creativity and coping strategies.

The Values in Action (VIA) framework provides a foundation for studying how universal virtues like kindness, humility, and perseverance contribute to life satisfaction. Evidence-based interventions, such as gratitude journaling, mindfulness, and strengths-based therapy, are studied for their efficacy in improving well-being and mental health outcomes. Advances in neuroimaging techniques allow researchers to examine how brain activity correlates with happiness, flow states, and resilience, contributing to a deeper understanding of the biological underpinnings of well-being.

The Interpersonal and Community-Level domain of Research examines how social connections and community interactions influence collective well-being. Research investigates the role of supportive and meaningful relationships in fostering psychological and physical health. Studies often focus on the impact of empathy, compassion, and forgiveness in improving interpersonal dynamics. Positive psychology principles are applied to enhance resilience in communities affected by natural disasters, economic crises, or pandemics. Interventions such as Psychological First Aid (PFA) and community-building activities are explored. Studies examine how acts of kindness, volunteerism, and other prosocial behaviors strengthen social bonds and contribute to societal harmony.

In the educational domain, Positive Psychology has revolutionized educational systems by integrating well-being and resilience into curricula. Research focuses on the impact of incorporating well-being frameworks like Seligman's PERMA Model into schools to promote emotional intelligence, engagement, and academic success. Studies explore how identifying and utilizing students' strengths enhance learning outcomes and motivation. Positive interventions targeting empathy, kindness, and conflict resolution are evaluated for their effectiveness in reducing bullying and promoting a positive school culture.

In Organizational and Workplace studies, Positive psychology has significant implications for understanding and improving workplace dynamics. Research investigates how workplace interventions, such as mindfulness training and strengths-based leadership, boost job satisfaction, engagement, and productivity. Studies explore how cultivating resilience and work-life balance reduces employee stress and prevents burnout, leading to healthier organizational cultures. Positive psychology principles are applied to develop transformational leadership styles that prioritize employee growth and well-being.

Positive Psychology's universality and cultural specificity are areas of ongoing exploration. Research examines how cultural values and practices influence pathways to happiness and flourishing. For instance, concepts like ubuntu in Africa or ikigai in Japan reflect culturally specific approaches to well-being. Cross-cultural research investigates the universality of constructs like happiness, resilience, and strengths, contributing to a global understanding of Positive Psychology. The adaptability of interventions across cultural contexts is studied to ensure their efficacy and relevance worldwide.

The studies go across the Global map addressing macro-level issues, emphasizing its potential to create systemic change. Research informs the creation of indices like Bhutan's Gross National Happiness and the World Happiness Report, providing alternative metrics to GDP for measuring societal progress. Studies

explore the relationship between environmental sustainability and human flourishing, highlighting the role of nature in promoting mental health. Positive psychology contributes to global health programs aimed at reducing mental health disparities and promoting resilience in underserved populations.

The scope of research in Positive Psychology is vast and ever-expanding. By bridging theory and practice, it offers innovative solutions for fostering well-being across diverse contexts. Its interdisciplinary nature ensures relevance in addressing contemporary challenges, making it a critical area of study in both academic and applied settings. Emerging Areas in Positive Psychology Research include The use of technology, such as mobile apps and virtual reality, to deliver positive psychology interventions and measure their impact. It also explores how neural mechanisms influence positive emotions, motivation, and strengths development, as well as highlighting and Investigating the potential of AI in personalizing well-being interventions and enhancing mental health care delivery.

## LIMITATIONS AND CRITICISMS

Despite its popularity, there are growing concerns about the relevance, impact, and credibility of positive psychology as a science. The findings showed that critics of the discipline questioned the unique value proposition of positive psychology and the validity of the philosophy, theories, methodologies, and interventions on which it was built. These criticisms are systematically being addressed and actively debated within the literature. Although most of the criticisms seemed easy to address, critics highlighted a number of proverbial bad habits that had become embedded in positive psychology.

### **Positive Psychology lacks proper theorizing and conceptual thinking -**

Critics argue that Positive Psychology often emphasizes practical applications over robust theoretical frameworks. Positive Psychology is sometimes accused of ignoring foundational psychological principles, such as the role of unconscious processes and negative emotions, leading to incomplete theorizing. There's overemphasis on individual well-being without addressing broader systemic influences, and insufficient grounding in existing psychological paradigms, which can lead to vague or superficial interpretations.

### **Positive Psychology reflects issues with measurement and methodology -**

The measurement of constructs like happiness, flourishing, and well-being has been criticized for being subjective and culturally biased. Reliance on self-reported data, such as happiness scales, raises concerns about validity and reliability. Respondents may overestimate or underestimate their emotional states. A lack of objective and standardized measures across diverse populations has been observed with over-reliance on Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) samples, limiting generalizability.

### **Positive Psychology is a pseudoscience: poor replication and lacking evidence-**

The replication crisis in psychology has affected Positive Psychology, with some studies failing to produce consistent results. Critics label the field pseudoscientific

due to its reliance on anecdotal evidence and lack of rigorous testing. The study is based on limited empirical validation of interventions like gratitude journaling or strengths-based exercises.

### **Positive Psychology lacks novelty and self-isolates from mainstream psychology -**

Critics argue that many concepts in Positive Psychology are repackaged ideas from other fields. Constructs like resilience, self-determination, and strengths have long been studied in developmental, clinical, and social psychology, raise questions about Positive Psychology's originality. The study is sometimes seen as isolating itself from mainstream psychology by focusing exclusively on positive aspects, ignoring the interplay between positive and negative experiences.

### **Positive Psychology is a decontextualized neo-liberalist ideology that causes harm -**

Critics view Positive Psychology as promoting a decontextualized and individualistic perspective, often aligned with neo-liberal ideologies. Positive Psychology tends to focus on individual responsibility for well-being, often ignoring systemic factors like poverty, discrimination, and inequality that significantly impact mental health. By emphasizing personal agency, the field risks blaming individuals for their unhappiness or struggles while overlooking structural barriers. Many Positive Psychology concepts are rooted in Western ideals, potentially alienating non-Western cultural perspectives on well-being.

### **Positive Psychology is a capitalistic venture -**

The study has been criticized for its commercialization and alignment with capitalist ideals. The proliferation of self-help books, corporate training programs, and motivational workshops based on Positive Psychology principles raises concerns about the commodification of well-being. Critics argue that commercial applications often dilute scientific rigor, offering quick fixes rather than meaningful, evidence-based solutions.

## **CONCLUSION**

Positive Psychology represents a paradigm shift in psychological research and practice, emphasizing strengths, virtues, and the factors that promote human flourishing. Through its focus on well-being, resilience, and positive emotions, it has enriched our understanding of how individuals and communities can thrive even amidst adversity. Despite its transformative contributions, Positive Psychology is not without limitations. As Positive Psychology continues to evolve, its future lies in bridging the gap between theory and practice, integrating diverse cultural perspectives, and fostering interdisciplinary collaboration. By doing so, it can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of human potential and create pathways for a more equitable and flourishing world, to inspire hope, cultivate resilience, and empower individuals.

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## The Origin of Positive Psychology

**Satabdi Nath \***

*“The aim of positive psychology is to catalyse a change in psychology from a preoccupation only with repairing the worst things in life to also building the best quality things in life”.*

**– Martin Seligman**

Positive psychology is an emerging and developing field within psychology that focuses on providing people with a practical understanding of the science of happiness. It assists individuals in cultivating a more positive perspective on life, aiding them in discovering meaning in their existence. The goal of positive psychology is to encourage a shift in the field of psychology from solely focusing on fixing the worst aspects of life to also cultivating the best characteristics of life. The roots of this optimistic domain, which aims to foster human well-being and improve the quality of life, are deeply anchored in the historical development of psychological theories. This article will guide you through a historical exploration, tracing the rise of positive psychology from its initial influences to its formal recognition as a separate field of study.

### The ancient history

Indian context: One of the initial influences on positive psychology comes from the Indian tradition, which has acknowledged the inherent wish of every person to attain happiness throughout all phases and facets of life. “Sarve bhavantu sukhinaha, sarve santu niramaya Sarve bhadrani pasyantu, ma kaschid dukhabhaga bhavet” (May everyone experience happiness, may all be free from illness, may all recognize goodness, and may no one endure sorrow). For instance, the Gayatri Mantra emphasizes this sentiment. The ancient text on the Hindu medical system describes the idea of sukhswarup (a joyful life). In everyday interactions, younger individuals greet elders, who respond with blessings such as ‘khush raho’ (stay happy). The significance of the mind is highlighted in the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita. In chapter 6, verse 6, Sri Krishna states,

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बन्धुरात्मात्मनस्तस्य येनात्मैवात्मना जितः।

अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वतेतात्मैव शत्रुवत्।।VI.6।।

For those who have mastered their mind, it acts as a companion; for those who have not, the mind behaves as an adversary.

In chapter 6, verse 17, Sri Krishna highlights the significance of equilibrium and moderation in different areas of life. It states that individuals who maintain moderation in their consumption, leisure, effort, rest, and alertness can reduce their suffering and distress in life by engaging in Yoga.

युक्तारजविरस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कममसु।

युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगी भवजत दुःखि।।VI.17।।

The insightful lessons of the Bhagavad Gita also highlight the importance of building emotional resilience and mental fortitude. In chapter 6, verse 5, there is a clear focus on how self-discipline contributes to the enhancement of mental strength.

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत्।

आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः।।VI.5।।

In the Bhagavad Gita, numerous instances illustrate the way mindfulness can be incorporated into daily life. Chapter 6, known as Dhyana Yoga, emphasises the importance of meditation and mindfulness in verses 10-15. Sri Krishna explains how to soothe the mind through meditation, likening it to the difficulty of taming the wind. Specifically, verse 14 highlights the core concept of mindfulness.

प्रशान्तात्मा जवगतभीर्भमचारव्रते द्वितः।

मनः संयम्य मद्धित्तो युक्त आसीत मत्परः।।VI.14।।

In chapter 6, verse 20, the core of mindfulness is explained in more detail through this verse:

यत्रोपरमते जचत्तं जनरुद्धं योगसेवया।

यत्र चैवात्मनात्मानं पश्यन्नात्मजन तुष्यजत।।VI.20।।

When the mind, which has been restrained from physical actions, becomes tranquil through the practice of Yoga, the yogi can perceive the soul with a clarified mind and experiences deep inner happiness. This verse exemplifies the height of mindfulness in samadhi, where the mind reaches deep focus and joyful awareness. The Bhagavad Gita remains an eternal guide for cultivating mindfulness via disciplined thinking, concentrated meditation, and steadfast devotion.

### THREE GUNAS :

Tamas represents a state characterised by darkness, passivity, inactivity, and material existence. Tamas arise from ignorance and misleads all beings away from their spiritual realities.

Rajas embody a state of energy, action, transformation, and movement. The essence of rajas is one of desire, yearning, and attachment, which strongly ties us to the outcomes of our efforts.

Sattva signifies a state of harmony, equilibrium, joy, and wisdom. Sattva is the guna that yogis strive for, as it diminishes both rajas and tamas, thereby facilitating liberation. To enhance sattva, one should minimise both rajas and tamas.

All yogic practices were designed to foster sattva within the mind and body. Therefore, engaging in yoga and adopting a yogic way of life greatly promotes sattva. The psychological attributes of the mind are notably unstable and can swiftly shift among the various gunas. The predominant guna in the mind functions as a lens that influences our perceptions and viewpoints about the world around us. Consequently, when the mind is in a state of rajas, it will perceive world events as chaotic, perplexing, and overwhelming, reacting to these occurrences in a rajasic manner. Each of the gunas fosters attachment and thus ties one's self to the ego. When an individual transcends the three gunas that stem from the body, they free themselves from birth, ageing, illness, and death, ultimately achieving enlightenment (Bhagavad Gita 14.20). While the yogi's aim is to cultivate sattva, their ultimate objective is to transcend the misidentification of self with the gunas and to remain unattached to both positive and negative aspects of life. Krishna urges Arjuna to move beyond all gunas (nistraigunyobhavārjuna). From the perspectives of Sāṃkhya-Yoga and Vedānta, human nature and behaviour are significantly shaped by the three gunas: sattva, rajas, and tamas, just as they are by the phenomenal universe.

**Greek context :** One of the foundational influences on positive psychology can be traced back to ancient Greek philosophy. The Greeks had a notion referred to as 'Eudaemonia', commonly interpreted as 'flourishing' or 'the good life'. Aristotle, a prominent Greek philosopher, regarded eudaemonia as the ultimate human achievement. He argued that genuine happiness arises from living a virtuous life and realising one's potential. This concept aligns with positive psychology's emphasis on individual development and the enhancement of strengths. In a similar vein, Stoicism, another school of Greek thought, highlighted the importance of emotional resilience and the pursuit of virtue. Stoics such as Epictetus taught that while we cannot govern all events in our lives, we can manage our reactions, a notion that aligns with contemporary views on resilience and emotional control.

## EARLY HISTORY:

Psychology first became recognized as a separate field dedicated to the study of the mind and behaviour when Wilhelm Wundt founded the first experimental psychology laboratory in Germany in 1879 (Kim, 2016). In the United States, William James had set up a psychology lab at Harvard a few years prior, but his focus was more on teaching than on scientific investigation (Goodman, 2022). Wundt is linked to structuralism, considered the first major school of psychological thought, while James is known for functionalism. Structuralism aimed to explore the functions of the mind by examining the basic elements of perception through introspection. In contrast, James underscored the importance of the environment in shaping behaviour, advocating for a more comprehensive view (Goodman, 2022).



A decade later, in the 1890s, Austrian neurologist Sigmund Freud pioneered psychoanalysis as he worked with female patients exhibiting psychosomatic symptoms referred to as 'hysteria' (Breuer & Freud, 1895/2004). A series of experimental methods led him to create the techniques of free association and dream interpretation, which he described as the primary pathway to understanding the unconscious (Freud, 1900/1997). Freud proposed that the unconscious served as a storehouse for repressed sexual and aggressive urges that he labelled "drives." The goal of psychoanalysis was to effectively sublimate these drives and turn hysterical distress into normal unhappiness (Breuer & Freud, 1895/2004). Psychoanalysis, along with its unique understanding of human growth and mental illness, was adopted and further explored by a number of Freud's students, including Carl Jung, Alfred Adler, Melanie Klein, and Donald Winnicott, who established their own psychoanalytic schools of thought (Fine, 1977).

Simultaneously, a parallel movement emerged that prioritised human behaviour while disregarding internal experiences. In the early 1900s, John Watson (Watson, 1913) argued that we could comprehend the human mind as a mechanism of conditioned stimulus-response, asserting that there was no need to investigate internal mental conditions. He claimed that behaviours could be learned and subsequently unlearned. John Watson (Watson, 1924) established behaviourism, which was later embraced by B. F. Skinner (Skinner, 1953) before it evolved into the various behavioural interventions we still see today. Although behaviourism and psychoanalysis were fundamentally opposed in many ways, both schools concentrated primarily on understanding the roots of mental disorders and the treatment of diverse psychological conditions (Mahoney, 1984). Both approaches situated the psychologist or therapist as a detached authority on the patient's issues, prompting criticism from the early proponents of humanistic psychology.

While positive psychology has grown significantly in recent years, its origins can be traced back to the period following World War II. A renewed interest in achieving a fulfilling life beyond mere survival arose years after World War II, influenced by the humanistic approach introduced by Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. Diverging from Freudian ideas, Maslow and Rogers sought to explore the innate drives of individuals and highlighted the importance of self-actualization, thereby offering a novel perspective in psychology. The phrase 'positive psychology' was introduced for the first time in 1954 by Maslow in his book "Motivation and Personality." He was critical of psychology's focus solely on mental illness, believing it neglected the significance of human potential. Alongside Abraham Maslow, Rogers is recognized as one of the pioneers of the humanistic approach to psychology. He introduced the ideas of the ideal self and the real self, asserting that the alignment between them was influenced by the degree of positive regard a person received. In summary, humanistic psychology, which emphasises human potential, personal development, and the value of subjective experiences, laid the groundwork for the concepts and methods of positive psychology. This influence is evident in positive psychology's focus on individual strengths, enhancement of well-being, and the pursuit of a meaningful life.

## MODERN HISTORY

Positive psychology began to gain traction in the late 20th century as a psychological field centred on the 'scientific examination of well-being and life enhancement.' This discipline, known as positive psychology, was popularised by Martin Seligman in 1998 during his presidency of the American Psychological Society. Its primary aim was to delve deeper into human potential, balancing the focus on psychopathology while establishing a science dedicated to human flourishing. The expression "Positive Psychology" was introduced by Abraham Maslow in his 1954 book "Motivation and Personality." He contended that psychology's emphasis on disorder and dysfunction failed to capture a true understanding of human potential.

Martin Seligman is an American psychologist, educator, researcher, and writer. In 1996, Seligman became President of the American Psychological Association and chose to centre his efforts on positive psychology. He fundamentally proposed that mental health encompasses more than merely the absence of illness, marking a turning point in the exploration of the roots of human happiness and fulfilment (University of Pennsylvania, 2022). His early research into learned helplessness and negative attitudes sparked his interest in learned optimism. This led to his collaboration with Christopher Peterson, aiming to develop a positive counterpart to the classification of psychopathology established in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Throughout their study, they investigated various cultures throughout history, from ancient Greece to modern times, to compile a list of virtues that are widely esteemed. This classification system became the foundation of their publication, "Character Strengths and Virtues" (Seligman & Peterson, 2004), featuring the following six categories:

- wisdom/knowledge
- courage
- transcendence
- justice
- humanity
- temperance

Professor Seligman is well recognized as the pioneer of positive psychology and took the role of Director at the Positive Psychology Center at the University of Pennsylvania in 2004. To this day, he has authored over 350 academic articles and more than 30 books in this field.

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi was born in Hungary in 1934, during a time when his family faced significant challenges due to World War II. His father served as the Hungarian Ambassador to Rome but resigned this position in 1949 when Hungary adopted a communist regime, subsequently opening a restaurant. As a result, the government took away the family's Hungarian citizenship, prompting young Mihaly to leave school to assist with the family business (Nuszpl, 2018). After enduring these hardships, Csikszentmihalyi developed a passion for psychology after attending a lecture by Carl Jung in Switzerland,

which focused on the troubled minds of Europeans post-World War II. This interest inspired him to move to the United States to pursue psychology studies. He earned his PhD from the University of Chicago in 1965 and became a professor in 1969. Csikszentmihalyi had a deep appreciation for painting and believed that the creation process sometimes held more value than the final piece itself. This perspective fueled his intrigue in what he termed the flow state. He dedicated his career to the scientific exploration of various methods to attain flow as a representation of optimal human experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). His research garnered significant public interest and has been extensively applied to the fields of creativity, productivity, and happiness for individuals and organisations alike. Martin Seligman worked alongside Csikszentmihalyi as a groundbreaking researcher in positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), and today Csikszentmihalyi is acknowledged as one of its founding figures.

Christopher Peterson held a position as a psychology professor at the University of Michigan and was the former chair of the Clinical Psychology Department. He co-authored the book *Character Strengths and Virtues* with Martin Seligman (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) and is celebrated for his contributions to the fields of strengths, virtues, optimism, hope, character, and well-being. In 1984, Edward Francis Diener developed a subjective well-being model, positing that an individual's perception and feelings about their life are crucially important.

Renowned for his research in social cognition and modelling theory, Albert Bandura introduced the Self-Efficacy theory, which is centred on an individual's belief in their abilities and performance to achieve specific goals.

### **Some significant milestones**

- 2000: The inaugural Positive Psychology Summit takes place in Lincoln, Nebraska.
- 2002: Tal Ben-Shahar's course on "Positive Psychology" becomes the most sought-after class ever offered at Harvard University.
- 2005: Sonja Lyubomirsky releases "The How of Happiness," a well-received book detailing positive psychology strategies.
- 2008: The first Ph.D. program in positive psychology is launched at Claremont Graduate University.
- 2008: The Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index is introduced in the United States, providing extensive data on overall well-being.
- 2009: The inaugural World Congress on Positive Psychology occurs in Philadelphia.
- 2009: Barbara Fredrickson publishes her book "Positivity," which emphasises the 3:1 positivity ratio necessary for optimal human functioning.
- 2010: Tony Hsieh's book "Delivering Happiness" becomes a bestseller, incorporating principles of positive psychology into business practices.

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## Psychological Perspectives on Well-being

Dr. Anuradha Singh\*

### ABSTRACT

*The concept of well-being holds significant importance in the field of Psychology, as it pertains to the mental health, happiness, and overall satisfaction of individuals. This chapter will delve into the various psychological perspectives on wellbeing, including theories, research findings, and practical applications. It will explore the key components of psychological well-being, factors that influence it, and evidence-based strategies for enhancing wellbeing. Psychological well-being is a complex and multidimensional construct that encompasses various aspects of an individual's mental and emotional state. According to the prominent psychologist Carol Ryff, psychological well-being consists of six key dimensions: self-acceptance, positive relationships, personal growth, purpose in life, environmental mastery, and autonomy. These dimensions reflect an individual's overall sense of satisfaction, meaning, and fulfilment in life. Psychological well-being is a vital aspect of mental health and quality of life, encompassing various dimensions that contribute to a sense of fulfilment and happiness. By understanding the key components of psychological wellbeing, identifying factors that influence it, and implementing evidence-based strategies for enhancing wellbeing, individuals can improve their overall mental and emotional well-being. Psychological research on wellbeing continues to inform clinical practice, counselling interventions, and preventive measures aimed at promoting mental health and positive outcomes for individuals and communities.*

**Keywords:** *Self-acceptance, Environmental Mastery, Autonomy, Counselling Interventions.*

### INTRODUCTION

Psychological well-being is a complex and multidimensional construct that encompasses various aspects of an individual's mental and emotional state. According to the prominent psychologist Carol Ryff, psychological well-being consists of six key dimensions: self-acceptance, positive relationships,

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personal growth, purpose in life, environmental mastery, and autonomy. These dimensions reflect an individual's overall sense of satisfaction, meaning, and fulfilment in life. The concept of wellbeing holds significant importance in the field of psychology, as it pertains to the mental health, happiness, and overall satisfaction of individuals. This chapter will delve into the various psychological perspectives on wellbeing, including theories, research findings, and practical applications. It will explore the key components of psychological well-being, factors that influence it, and evidence-based strategies for enhancing well-being.

## KEY COMPONENTS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

**Self-acceptance:** Involves having a positive self-image, self-esteem, and self-compassion. It is the ability to accept oneself, including strengths and weaknesses, without judgment or criticism.

**Positive Relationships:** Refers to the quality of a person's social connections, including close relationships, friendships, and support networks. Healthy relationships are essential for emotional well-being and social support.

**Personal Growth:** Involves continuous learning, self-improvement, and the pursuit of one's potential. It is the process of developing new skills, knowledge, and experiences that contribute to personal development and fulfilment.

**Purpose in Life:** Relates to having a sense of direction, meaning, and goals in life. A strong sense of purpose gives life meaning and motivation, helping individuals navigate challenges and setbacks.

**Environmental Mastery:** Refers to the ability to adapt and to control one's environment. It involves problem-solving skills, resilience, and the capacity to handle stressors effectively.

**Autonomy:** Involves independence, self-regulation, and the ability to make choices that align with one's values and goals. Autonomy is crucial for feeling empowered and in control of one's life.

Psychological well-being is influenced by a range of factors, including genetics, personality traits, life experiences, social relationships, economic status, and cultural influences. Adverse life events, chronic stress, social isolation, and mental health disorders can negatively impact psychological wellbeing. Conversely, positive experiences, healthy relationships, social support, and coping strategies can enhance psychological wellbeing. Psychologists have developed evidence-based interventions to promote psychological wellbeing and improve mental health outcomes. These strategies may include cognitive-behavioural therapy, mindfulness practices, positive psychology interventions, resilience training, social skills training, and stress management techniques. By focusing on building strengths, fostering positive emotions, enhancing social connections, and developing coping skills, individuals can cultivate psychological wellbeing and resilience in the face of challenges.

In the last five years, there has been a significant amount of research conducted on psychological perspectives on wellbeing. Some key findings and trends in this area include:

**Positive Psychology Interventions:** Positive psychology interventions have gained popularity in recent years to enhance psychological wellbeing. Research

has shown that practices such as gratitude exercises, mindfulness meditation, and acts of kindness can improve overall wellbeing and life satisfaction.

**Well-being and Resilience:** Studies have explored the relationship between psychological wellbeing and resilience, finding that individuals with higher levels of wellbeing tend to be more resilient in the face of adversity. Enhancing psychological wellbeing through positive coping strategies and social support can help individuals better navigate life challenges.

**Well-being Across the Lifespan:** Research has examined how psychological wellbeing changes across the lifespan, with findings suggesting that older adults tend to report higher levels of wellbeing compared to younger individuals. Factors such as wisdom, acceptance of aging, and social connectedness play a role in promoting wellbeing in older age.

**Well-being in Specific Populations:** Studies have focused on understanding psychological wellbeing in specific populations, such as individuals with chronic illnesses, caregivers, LGBTQ+ individuals, and marginalized communities. Research has highlighted the importance of addressing unique stressors and promoting resilience in these populations to enhance psychological wellbeing.

**Well-being and Technology:** The impact of technology on psychological wellbeing has been a growing area of research, with studies exploring the effects of social media use, screen time, and digital devices on mental health. Research has shown that excessive use of technology can negatively impact psychological wellbeing, emphasizing the importance of mindful and balanced technology use.

**Cultural Perspectives on Well-being:** Cross-cultural research has examined how cultural values, beliefs, and practices influence psychological wellbeing. Findings suggest that cultural factors play a significant role in shaping individuals' perceptions of happiness, life satisfaction, and overall wellbeing.

Overall, research on psychological perspectives on well-being in the last five years has contributed to a deeper understanding of the factors that influence mental health and happiness. By continuing to explore different dimensions of psychological wellbeing, researchers can inform interventions and strategies aimed at promoting positive mental health outcomes for individuals and communities.

One recent study on the psychological perspectives of well-being examined the role of emotion regulation, interpersonal relationships, and perfectionism in influencing positive psychological wellbeing. The researchers conducted a series of surveys and analyses to explore the relationships between these factors and how they contribute to individuals' overall well-being.

The study found that individuals who were better at regulating their emotions, had positive interpersonal relationships, and exhibited healthy levels of perfectionism tended to report higher levels of psychological well-being (Zamojski, M., Jasielska, K., & Gerymski, M., 2020). Specifically, effective emotion regulation strategies, such as cognitive reappraisal and acceptance, were associated with greater life satisfaction and happiness. Additionally, strong social support and meaningful connections with others were found to be important predictors of psychological well-being. The findings from this study

highlight the importance of cultivating emotional resilience, building strong social connections, and fostering adaptive perfectionism in promoting positive psychological wellbeing. By understanding the mechanisms that contribute to well-being, researchers and practitioners can develop targeted interventions to enhance individuals' mental health and overall quality of life.

Few more research studies on psychological perspectives of well-being explores the relationship between psychological wellbeing and various health outcomes, functioning, and overall quality of life. The authors discuss the importance of positive psychological states such as life satisfaction, positive emotions, and optimism in promoting better physical health, cognitive functioning, and social relationships (Diener, E., & Chan, M. Y. Diener, E., & Chan, M. Y. 2021). Another study investigates the relationship between mindfulness practice and psychological well-being, with a focus on the mediating role of self-compassion and emotion regulation. The authors found that individuals who engage in mindfulness practices tend to have higher levels of self-compassion and better emotion regulation skills, which ultimately contribute to improved psychological well-being (Brown, K. W., & Ryan, R. M. 2018).

.Here are some Indian research studies on psychological perspectives of well-being. This study compared the psychological well-being of urban and rural women in India and found significant differences in the levels of wellbeing between the two groups. The authors highlighted the importance of addressing socio-economic factors and improving access to mental health resources to enhance the psychological well-being of women in both urban and rural areas (Nagarathna, R., et al.2018). Furthermore, a study examined the effects of a mindfulness-based stress reduction program on the psychological well-being of college students in India. The authors found that participating in the program led to significant improvements in stress levels, anxiety, and depressive symptoms, thereby enhancing overall psychological wellbeing among the students (Raghavendra, B. R., et al.2019). Another study explored the relationship between spirituality and psychological well-being among elderly individuals in India. The authors found a positive association between spiritual beliefs, practices, and psychological wellbeing, emphasizing the importance of addressing spiritual needs in promoting overall well-being among older adults (Sharma, P., & Charak, R.2017).

These Indian research studies provide insights into the psychological perspectives of well-being among different population groups in India and highlight the importance of addressing factors such as urban-rural divide, stress reduction programs, and spirituality in promoting mental health and well-being. These studies also highlight the importance of psychological factors such as emotion regulation, self-compassion, and positive psychology in promoting well-being and resilience.

## GAP IN INDIA

In India, there are several gaps in the psychological perspectives of well-being that need to be addressed:

**Lack of Awareness and Stigma:** There is still a lack of awareness about mental health issues in India, leading to a stigma surrounding seeking help for



psychological problems. This can prevent individuals from accessing appropriate mental health services and support for their psychological well-being.

**Limited Access to Mental Health Services:** There is a shortage of mental health professionals in India, particularly in rural areas, leading to limited access to mental health services for those in need. This can result in undiagnosed and untreated mental health conditions, impacting overall well-being.

**Cultural Sensitivity:** Many psychological perspectives of wellbeing are based on Western theories and concepts, which may not always be culturally relevant in the Indian context. There is a need for research and interventions that consider the cultural beliefs, values, and practices of diverse Indian populations.

**Gender Disparities:** There are gender disparities in the field of mental health in India, with women often facing higher rates of mental health issues but having limited access to appropriate care. Addressing these disparities and promoting gender-sensitive approaches to mental health is crucial for improving well-being in India.

**Integration of Traditional Healing Practices:** India has a rich history of traditional healing practices, such as Ayurveda and yoga, that can contribute to psychological wellbeing. There is a need to integrate these traditional practices with modern psychological perspectives to provide holistic and culturally sensitive interventions for mental health issues.

**Research and Data Gaps:** There is a need for more research on psychological perspectives of wellbeing in the Indian context, including studies on the prevalence of mental health issues, effective interventions, and factors influencing wellbeing. Collecting robust data on mental health indicators can help inform policy and program development to address mental health gaps in India.

Addressing these gaps in psychological perspectives of well-being in India requires a comprehensive approach that includes raising awareness, increasing access to mental health services, promoting cultural sensitivity, addressing gender disparities, integrating traditional healing practices, and conducting more research on mental health issues in the Indian context. By addressing these gaps, India can work towards improving the mental health and wellbeing of its population.

## FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

**Integration of Technology:** With the rapid advancement of technology, future research in psychological perspectives of wellbeing is likely to explore the potential benefits and drawbacks of integrating technology in mental health interventions. This could include the use of virtual reality, smartphone apps, and wearable devices to monitor and improve wellbeing.

**Cultural Adaptation:** As the field of psychology becomes more globalized, there is a growing recognition of the importance of cultural factors in shaping psychological wellbeing. Future research may focus on developing culturally adapted interventions that take into account the diverse perspectives and values of different cultural groups.

**Prevention and Early Intervention:** A shift towards a proactive approach to mental health is expected, with an emphasis on prevention and early intervention

strategies to promote psychological wellbeing. This could involve implementing mental health education programs in schools, workplaces, and communities to enhance resilience and coping skills.

**Positive Psychology:** The field of positive psychology, which focuses on strengths, virtues, and positive emotions, is likely to continue to influence research on psychological wellbeing. Future studies may explore interventions aimed at enhancing positive emotions, gratitude, and resilience to improve overall wellbeing.

**Holistic Approaches:** Future research may adopt a more holistic approach to psychological wellbeing, considering the interconnectedness of physical, emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions of health. This could involve interdisciplinary collaborations between psychologists, healthcare providers, and other professionals to address the multifaceted nature of wellbeing.

Overall, the future perspectives of psychological perspectives of wellbeing are expected to be shaped by advancements in technology, a focus on cultural adaptation, a proactive approach to mental health, the principles of positive psychology, and a holistic understanding of wellbeing. By incorporating these trends into research and practice, the field of psychology can contribute significantly to promoting mental health and wellbeing in diverse populations.

## CONCLUSION

Psychological wellbeing is a vital aspect of mental health and quality of life, encompassing various dimensions that contribute to a sense of fulfilment and happiness. By understanding the key components of psychological wellbeing, identifying factors that influence it, and implementing evidence-based strategies for enhancing wellbeing, individuals can improve their overall mental and emotional well-being. Psychological research on wellbeing continues to inform clinical practice, counselling interventions, and preventive measures aimed at promoting mental health and positive outcomes for individuals and communities.

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**Theme - 2**  
**Spiritual Fitness and Well-Being**

## Theory of Wellbeing and Bhartrhari's Nitisatakam

**Renuka Panchal\***

### ABSTRACT

*This chapter explores the theory of well-being through a comparative lens, examining modern Positive Psychology alongside Bharthari's Nitisatakam, a classical Indian text. Positive Psychology, as championed by Martin Seligman, introduces the PERMA model - Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment - to scientifically investigate and cultivate well-being. On the other hand, the ancient wisdom in Bharthari's Nitisatakam emphasizes contentment, moderation, virtuous living, and the pursuit of wisdom for a harmonious life. This chapter draws connections between these two frameworks, highlighting their shared emphasis on meaningful relationships, purposeful living, and intrinsic fulfillment. Despite differing in historical and cultural contexts, Positive Psychology and the Nitisatakam reveal timeless principles of well-being, illustrating how both traditional and contemporary perspectives can enrich our understanding of what it means to live well.*

**Keywords** - Theory of Wellbeing, Positive Psychology, Bharthari', Nitisatakam, PERMA Model.

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the study of well-being has gained significant attention as researchers and thinkers across disciplines strive to understand what constitutes a fulfilling life. Positive Psychology, a relatively new branch in the field of psychology, focuses on the scientific exploration of human strengths, resilience, and factors that contribute to flourishing. Pioneered by Martin Seligman, the PERMA model provides a framework emphasizing Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment as vital pillars of

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well-being. This framework has shaped contemporary approaches to mental health and happiness.

Simultaneously, humanity has long been guided by ancient wisdom on ethical living and happiness. Bharthari's *Nītiśatakam*, a revered Sanskrit text from classical India, is one such source. Through its collection of 100 verses, Bharthari provides practical and moral guidance for achieving a harmonious life. It emphasizes the importance of contentment, moderation, virtue, and wisdom in creating a life of fulfillment.

In this chapter, we explore the intersections between Positive Psychology's PERMA model and Bharthari's *Nītiśatakam*. Despite their divergent cultural and historical backgrounds, both frameworks reveal profound insights into universal principles of happiness. We aim to draw parallels between their approaches and highlight how ancient and modern thought align on key elements of well-being. By analyzing these connections, we can better understand timeless concepts of happiness and ethical living and gain tools to foster well-being in today's world.

## 2. FOUNDATIONS OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

Positive Psychology is a field within psychology that emphasizes the scientific study of human strengths and what makes life worth living. Martin Seligman, often considered the founding father of this discipline, introduced it as a shift away from traditional psychology's focus on pathology and mental illness to explore the elements that lead to human flourishing. One of the core contributions of Seligman and his colleagues is the PERMA model, which provides a framework for understanding well-being through five essential components:

1. **Positive Emotions:** Experiencing positive emotions like joy, gratitude, serenity, and hope. They help foster an optimistic outlook and buffer against stress.
2. **Engagement:** Being deeply involved or "in the zone" during activities, known as "flow." When individuals are fully immersed in tasks, time may appear to pass unnoticed due to intense concentration.
3. **Establishing** and maintaining meaningful connections with others. Strong social bonds are vital for emotional support and personal growth.
4. **Meaning:** Finding purpose beyond oneself. This often involves contributing to something greater, like a cause, community, or belief system.
5. **Accomplishment:** Pursuing mastery and achieving goals. Accomplishment brings a sense of pride and fulfillment, whether through personal challenges or professional endeavors.

In addition to the PERMA model, other frameworks within Positive Psychology have been developed, such as the concept of character strengths by Peterson and Seligman and the broaden-and-build theory by Barbara Fredrickson. Collectively, these models have laid a strong foundation for understanding human flourishing, highlighting the significant role that positive emotions, personal strengths, and meaningful connections play in enhancing well-being.

### 3. THE NĪTĪŚATAKAM AND ITS PERSPECTIVE ON WELL-BEING

The Nītiśatakam, attributed to the ancient Indian poet and philosopher Bhartrhari, is one of the most esteemed Sanskrit texts focused on moral and ethical guidance. Comprising 100 verses, the Nītiśatakam belongs to Bhartrhari's triad of collections (Śatakatraya), which includes the Śgāraśatakam and Vairāgyaśatakam. In the Nītiśatakam, Bhartrhari outlines practical advice and ethical principles that illuminate pathways to a fulfilling life, providing valuable insights into ancient Indian thought on well-being.

**Key themes in the Nītiśatakam include:**

1. **Contentment:** The verses emphasize contentment (samtosa) as a cornerstone of happiness. Bhartrhari suggests that genuine contentment helps individuals find peace and satisfaction within themselves, reducing the yearning for material wealth or external rewards.
2. **Moderation and Balance:** The text advocates for balance and moderation in desires and behaviors. Bhartrhari advises against excess, warning that unbridled ambition, indulgence, and greed can lead to suffering and inner turmoil.
3. **Virtuous Living:** The virtues extolled in the Nītiśatakam include humility, kindness, honesty, patience, and generosity. According to Bhartrhari, these qualities are vital for harmonious relationships and personal integrity.
4. **Wisdom and Knowledge:** The Nītiśatakam places a strong emphasis on acquiring wisdom (jñāna) and knowledge, distinguishing between transient pleasures and lasting fulfillment. Wisdom is viewed as a guiding force to discern the nature of true happiness.
5. **Impermanence of Life:** Bhartrhari frequently reflects on the impermanence and unpredictability of life, encouraging readers to remain unattached to fleeting pleasures and focus on enduring values.

These tenets in the Nītiśatakam offer ethical guidance that aligns with various aspects of modern well-being frameworks. While rooted in a different cultural and temporal context, Bhartrhari's verses continue to resonate with contemporary principles of personal growth, mindfulness, and social harmony.

### 4. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND THE NĪTĪŚATAKAM

Examining Positive Psychology and the Nītiśatakam together reveals compelling similarities and differences in their approaches to well-being. Both frameworks, despite their differing cultural and historical contexts, provide valuable insights into the universal quest for a fulfilling life.

#### SIMILARITIES

1. **Focus on Positive Emotions:** Positive Psychology highlights positive emotions like joy, gratitude, and hope as essential for well-being. Similarly, the Nītiśatakam advocates for contentment, an enduring inner satisfaction that acts as a foundation for happiness.

2. **Meaning and Purpose:** The PERMA model underscores the importance of meaning in life, such as engaging in causes larger than oneself. The Nītiśatakam also emphasizes purposeful living, encouraging individuals to act virtuously and transcend material desires for a greater cause or spiritual truth.
3. **Virtuous Relationships:** Both perspectives recognize the value of meaningful relationships. The PERMA model stresses positive relationships, while Bhartḥari emphasizes virtues like kindness, patience, and honesty in maintaining social harmony and ethical interactions.
4. **Accomplishment and Mastery:** Positive Psychology views accomplishment as a critical factor in self-fulfillment. In the Nītiśatakam, Bhartḥari encourages personal growth through wisdom and disciplined living, emphasizing mastery over one's desires and behaviors.

## DIFFERENCES

1. **Scientific vs. Philosophical Approach:** Positive Psychology adopts a scientific methodology to study well-being, relying on empirical data and experiments. Conversely, the Nītiśatakam is rooted in traditional wisdom and uses a poetic-philosophical style to convey moral principles.
2. **Temporal and Cultural Contexts:** Positive Psychology reflects modern societal values, while the Nītiśatakam is steeped in the cultural and historical context of ancient India. As a result, their perspectives on specific virtues and priorities may differ, such as differing emphases on personal goals versus spiritual goals.
3. **Concept of Flow and Engagement:** Positive Psychology's notion of engagement (or "flow") focuses on deep involvement in meaningful tasks. The Nītiśatakam does not directly parallel this concept but emphasizes mindfulness and moderation in one's actions.

In conclusion, while there are differences in their foundational approaches and contexts, Positive Psychology and the Nītiśatakam ultimately converge on several key aspects of well-being. This comparison provides valuable insights into timeless principles of happiness that transcend geographical and temporal boundaries, illustrating that modern and ancient wisdom can complement each other in understanding human flourishing.

## 5. APPLICATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Bringing together the perspectives of Positive Psychology and the Nītiśatakam reveals a rich tapestry of ideas that can be applied to modern well-being strategies. Here's how their principles can inform practical approaches for individuals and practitioners alike:

### 1. Integrating Positive Emotions and Contentment

Combining Positive Psychology's emphasis on positive emotions with Bhartḥari's concept of contentment creates a balanced approach to emotional well-being. Practicing gratitude, mindfulness, and savoring simple pleasures can enhance one's sense of satisfaction, helping cultivate joy and reduce stress.

## 2. Fostering Meaning and Purpose

Both frameworks underline the importance of purposeful living. Modern strategies can include identifying personal strengths and aligning them with meaningful activities. From the Nīṭisātakam, one can learn to balance worldly pursuits with higher ideals and spiritual goals, providing a more holistic sense of purpose.

## 3. Building Relationships through Virtue

Positive relationships are crucial in both perspectives. Applying virtues such as kindness, humility, patience, and honesty, as emphasized by Bhāṛṭhari, strengthens interpersonal bonds. Modern practices like active listening, empathy, and fostering mutual respect also contribute to deeper connections.

## 4. Practicing Moderation and Engagement

The Nīṭisātakam emphasizes moderation, while Positive Psychology advocates for engagement. Together, these principles encourage a balanced lifestyle where individuals can pursue challenging and immersive activities while maintaining mindful control over their desires. Practicing self-discipline in one's habits can help prevent burnout and promote sustainable well-being.

## 5. Seeking Accomplishment and Wisdom

Both Positive Psychology and the Nīṭisātakam stress the importance of achieving goals, whether through the PERMA model's focus on accomplishment or Bhāṛṭhari's pursuit of wisdom. Setting realistic and meaningful goals, celebrating achievements, and nurturing continuous learning can lead to personal growth and fulfillment.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTITIONERS

1. **Cultural Sensitivity:** Integrating ancient wisdom like that of the Nīṭisātakam into modern well-being practices can be culturally enriching. Practitioners should be sensitive to diverse cultural perspectives when addressing well-being.
2. **Holistic Approaches:** Combining ancient and contemporary insights allows for holistic well-being strategies that address mental, emotional, and spiritual dimensions, providing a more comprehensive framework for individuals.
3. **Cross-Disciplinary Collaboration:** Collaboration between psychologists, philosophers, and other disciplines can broaden the understanding of well-being, promoting cross-pollination of ideas that ultimately benefit individuals and society.

Ultimately, integrating these complementary perspectives can help develop resilient, grounded, and ethically informed approaches to living a fulfilled and meaningful life in the modern world.

## 6. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have explored the rich interplay between the theory of well-being in Positive Psychology and Bhāṛṭhari's Nīṭisātakam. Despite originating in vastly different contexts, both frameworks offer profound insights into what



constitutes a fulfilling and meaningful life.

**Key findings from this comparative exploration include the following:**

- 1. Universal Principles:** Both Positive Psychology and the Nītiśatakam emphasize the importance of positive emotions, meaningful relationships, virtuous living, and purposeful engagement. This overlap points to the universality of these principles across different cultures and eras.
- 2. Complementary Approaches:** While Positive Psychology emphasizes empirical research, the Nītiśatakam is rooted in philosophical and moral guidance. Integrating the scientific rigor of Positive Psychology with the ethical teachings of the Nītiśatakam can provide a more comprehensive understanding of well-being.
- 3. Practical Applications:** Combining insights from both perspectives allows individuals and practitioners to implement practical strategies for fostering contentment, building stronger relationships, achieving goals, and cultivating virtue.
- 4. Ethical and Spiritual Dimensions:** The Nītiśatakam expands the well-being conversation by stressing spiritual goals and moderation. These principles offer depth to the more secular approach of Positive Psychology, underscoring the importance of ethical living and inner contentment.

Looking forward, future research and practice can benefit from blending ancient wisdom with contemporary scientific methods. By embracing timeless ethical teachings and incorporating them into modern frameworks, we can create a well-rounded approach to well-being that resonates with diverse populations and cultural contexts. Ultimately, this synthesis between Positive Psychology and Bhartrhari's Nītiśatakam provides a roadmap for individuals seeking to live balanced, meaningful, and joyful lives.

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## Sacred Pathways: Exploring Wellbeing through Spirituality and Religion

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### ABSTRACT

*Positive psychology as a field, explores human wellbeing, one of the core concept which is essential to lead a good and fulfilled life. It also emphasis on ways to achieve well-being. In this chapter, concepts such as spirituality and religion is discussed in context of wellbeing. Religion and spirituality differs in concept, but found to be having major role in determining wellbeing of an individual and community itself. From childhood to old age, spirituality and religion are important concepts which will help an individual to attain fulfilled and a meaning full life. Nurturing spirituality and religiosity in an individual can help in fostering wellbeing, prior to that, having a deep knowledge about both concepts are important. Through this chapter, we are discussing concepts of spirituality and religion in relation with wellbeing as well as negative side of spirituality and religion. This chapter also identifies various religion and spirituality based interventions for developing well-being, in order to achieve fulfilled life.*

**Key words:** Wellbeing, Spirituality, Religion

Positive psychology always encourages discussions on wellbeing, and it's relation to spirituality and religion. Both religion and spirituality plays an important role in mental health and wellbeing. APA defines wellbeing as "state of happiness and contentment, with low level of distress, overall good physical and mental health and outlook, or good quality of life" (Well-Being – APA Dictionary of Psychology, n.d.). Thus, wellbeing is a state in which we feel emotional state of joy and feeling of satisfaction and having a life with good quality, where we will have overall good mental and physical health.

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Studies shows that there exist a strong relationship between mental health and various aspects of wellbeing such as social, behavioral and psychological aspects with religion and spirituality. Those who are more religious as well as spiritual will have better mental health and they will be able to deal with health related problems compared to people who are less religious and spiritual. Thus, for physical and psychological health spirituality and religion do play a major role (Koenig, 2012). Studies also shows that while considering most of measures of religion and spirituality, there exist a positive relationship between with life satisfaction and happiness of individual (Lun & Bond, 2013).

Religion is when an individual follows a particular faith tradition, which may include their rituals, prayers and belief in existence of heaven or nirvana. Spirituality is all about qualities of our spirit which can result in happiness for oneself and the others around. The qualities such as having love, compassion to others, ability to forgive others, patience, having sense of responsibility and harmony within oneself (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). Fahlberg (1991) describes spirituality as something which connects divine with our self while religion is all about involved in social activities or activities related to specific tradition of faith which an individual follow(Fahlberg & Fahlberg, 1991).

## **RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY ASSOCIATION**

It's clear that the concepts of spirituality and religiosity varies. Aspects of wellbeing we used to discuss in positive psychology varies with the level of spirituality and religiosity as well as in involvement of activities related to religion and spirituality in an individual. Spirituality, with or without religion has better level of meaning in life and self-actualization. While, people with higher level of both spirituality and religion has higher level of initiatives for personal growth. Thus, religion without element of spirituality seems to be empty, so spirituality and religion are both connected and essential for wellbeing (Ivtzan et al., 2013). In a study conducted on U.S. military veterans, it's been found out that higher levels of religion and or spirituality reduces the risk of mental health related disorders and it plays a protective role by having positive effects on psychosocial aspects (Sharma et al., 2017).

## **RELIGION AND WELLBEING**

In a study conducted on undergraduate Kuwaiti Muslim students, it's been foundout that the religious people are much happier than the non-religious people (Abdel-Khalek, 2006). Similarly, in a study conducted on Protestants, Jews and Catholics, it's evident that spirituality, religious belief and coping can determine happiness and life satisfaction and quality of life of Catholics and Protestants (Cohen, 2002). Thus spirituality, religious belief and coping by having belief in God will results in life satisfaction. While some studies proves that there exist relationship between religion and happiness, some studies failed to find association between measures of religion and happiness (Lewis et al., 2000). Lewis and Cruise (2006) reported that using different scales of measures to examine link between happiness and religiosity, its evident that while using oxford happiness inventory with Francis scale of attitude towards Christianity, religiosity ids found to be associated with happiness. But while

using depression- happiness scale there were no relationship between both the variables (Lewis & Cruise, 2006). In a long-term longitudinal study conducted, it's evident that adults who have attended more on religious activities have lesser depression throughout the follow up period of 10 years (Barton et al., 2013). Similarly in a study conducted on undergraduate students in USA, the students who scored high on attitude towards Christianity found to be happiest than students who scored low on attitude towards Christianity (Francis & Lester, 1997). Association between happiness and religiosity is evident in most of the studies, but some studies suggest that while we consider purpose in life and cognitive aspects of religiosity, there is no evidence on the positive correlation between religion and happiness (French & Joseph, 1999). In a study conducted on people from different culture and nationality in Oman, no matter what ever religion we belong too, as the religiousness increased, happiness also found to be high. Thus, the study is an evidence that religiosity has positive impact on happiness (Hossain & Rizvi, 2016). In clinical perspective, studies conducted on person with epilepsy, it's evident that religiosity, mental health and wellbeing have positive association (Lee et al., 2017). It helped person with epilepsy to deal with anxiety and symptoms of depression in Korean samples. Thus, the religious beliefs of an individual plays a significant role on developing mental health and wellbeing of an individual.

## **SPIRITUALITY AND WELLBEING**

Spirituality is not restricted to being part of a religion. It's something related to our inner self. Studies shows that spirituality leads a major role in having a good life. People with strong spiritual experiences seems to be having good life compared to others. Spirituality plays major role in leading moral good life (Van Dierendonck, 2012). Spiritual engagement such as praying or meditating when some crisis arise in life, it will help in coping and to obtain inner strength and support (Dierendonck & Mohan, 2006). More than religiosity, spiritual beliefs found to be having more association with risk of suicide and mental health in patients who undergo haemodialysis, those who had more spiritual belief reported to be having lower risk of suicide and better mental health (Loureiro et al., 2018). Studies shows that spirituality can determine an individual's overall subjective wellbeing. When an individual have a feeling of having spiritual struggle or getting disconnected from higher power, they will start to experience shame as well as guilt and it will affect their wellbeing and result in negative affect (Murray & Ciarrocchi, 2007)

## **OTHER SIDE OF RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY**

Studies shows that religion can affect an individual positively or negatively. By developing positive beliefs, through having support from religious community and actively participating in community as well as coping in a positive way can result in positive impact on mental health. On other hand if an individual have false beliefs, having negative religious coping as well as having miscommunication and understanding things in a negative way can result in negative impact on mental health (Weber & Pargament, 2014). There exist negative and positive ways of coping related to religion. Negative religious

coping or spiritual struggle arise when someone starts questioning about God or feeling of being abandoned by greater power can lead to depression, ill-being and greater chance of suicidal ideation. While positive religious coping can be used to treat psychological distress, psychotic problems and it will help to achieve greater wellbeing (Rosmarin et al., 2013). Thus finding out what is the mindset of a patient or individual is essential while using religion and spirituality as intervention. Hope is major concept in positive psychology, where hopeful person will strive to achieve goals ahead in life. Religious hope is similar concept, which implies the hope in god, which is the faith in God which can turn out to be positive or negative outcome. Someone can be hopeful so that gain strength through faith in order to get motivated oneself to pursue his or her goal. On the other side, if individual leaves everything to God and stop to pursue goal, disempowerment happens (Watts et al., 2006). Research on children focusing on negative sides of spirituality, they argue that when individual get obsessed with the connectedness or relationship with something other than their own self, they may focus on certain unrealistic goals or someone else as well as they may feel lack in self-esteem and fail to accept oneself, which will result in disappointment and despair (Souza, 2012).

### **SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGION THROUGHOUT LIFESPAN**

Throughout life span, having better mental health, happiness and able to live a good life is important. Studies on people belong to different age groups shows that spirituality and religion is an essential component for having a better life. In a study conducted on 320 children belong to the age group of 8-12, it's been found out that children who are more spiritual were happiest. They studied both the communal (level of inter-personal relationship) and personal (having meaning and value for own life) levels of spirituality and it was evident that the children who feel that having a meaning as well as having value for their life and children with better quality of life and better level of inter-personal relationship found to be happier than others (Holder et al., 2010). Studies shows that adolescents who are active in religious activities can deal with suicidal behaviours better, but when they enter adulthood this effect declines. If the suicidality is been diagnosed, the spirituality and religion can be used as method of healing (Nkansah-Amankra et al., 2012). Studies conducted on adults also shows that having spirituality can enhance health of an individual, it can act as a healing method in adults with or without illness (Tuck et al., 2006). Prayer is a religious practice and it act as a connection with higher power and oneself, elders who use prayer as coping strategy found to be more optimistic and having positive coping styles. Thus using prayer and other spiritual treatments helps elders and adults to cope in a better way and to enhance their health and wellbeing (Dunn & Horgas, 2000). Religious and spiritual beliefs are much common and sound during old age and it will help them to cope up with health related issues and illness during old age. To have a better life and wellbeing during old age, practicing spiritual and religious ways of coping is essential for older adults (Petee et al., 2019).

### **SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGION INTERVENTIONS**

Interventions in positive psychology mainly focus on developing virtues and

strengths of an individual. Most of the virtues discussed in positive psychology are based on religion and spirituality. Religious and spiritual beliefs can be used in order to nurture virtues in an individual. For example, hope as a main concept in both religion and spirituality, all the major religions promote concept of hope. They believe that through having hope in God, the power will help them to attain goals and to have a good life. Prayer as a religious practice is one of example for this. Hope, gratitude, self-compassion, forgiveness, and all these elements of virtues can be practiced and developed. Introducing concept of both spirituality and religion in intervention studies will help in building rapport, to make them remain throughout the program, and to avoid the therapist from imparting their own belief system to the client. It is most effective when an individual feels life his/her issues is beyond their control. Prayer, meditation and active participation in religious community plays significant role in religious practices. There are certain disadvantages too in religious interventions, such as in a group therapy, incorporating different faiths and beliefs will be difficult task. And various types of coping should be understood (Rye et al., 2013). There are studies which proves that spiritual/religious interventions can be used in different contexts. One such study says that using spiritual and religious intervention is effective to help people who has substance related issues (Hai et al., 2019). Studies also shows that addressing spirituality related issues in cancer patients is necessary in order to provide efficient palliative care in United states (Breitbart, 2002). Studies also shows that even in most of the studies, positive effect of spirituality intervention on quality of life and coping with stress is visible, on other hands, in studies conducted on clinical trials there were limited effects are found (Tuck, 2012). In studies conducted on adults who are in terminal phase, it's been found out that interventions based on spiritual and religious elements may or may not be effective in developing wellbeing. They concluded that much more studies on its effects should be explored (Candy et al., 2012). While studies also shows that interventions in trauma survivors will help them to deal with trauma related consequences effectively (Doucet & Rovers, 2010). Similarly, in a study conducted on cancer patients, spiritual and religious interventions without introducing any drug shows much lesser effect on cancer patients compared to spiritual and religious intervention accompanying psychedelic drugs (MA et al., 2004). It's also evident that religion and spirituality interventions will help in dealing with stress, depression and alcoholism. (Gonçalves et al., 2015). While some studies are evidence of positive effect of religious and spiritual interventions on mental health and wellbeing, certain studies implies that much more rigorous studies should be conducted to find out their effectiveness.

Spirituality and religion should be explored in further studies, as they are important in mental health and wellbeing. While some studies focus on positive effect of spirituality and religion on wellbeing, certain studies implies the need to understand the subjective nature of spirituality and religion. Different scales can give different impact on wellbeing, but understanding which type of coping, whether positive or negative religious coping an individual adapt is important while addressing religiousness and spirituality. Further studies should explore on various spiritual and religious interventions and as a group how to impart religious interventions effectively should be discussed.

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# A Case Study of Complete Recovery from Toddy Addiction: Integrating Meditation, Yoga, and Medication

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## ABSTRACT

**Study Background:** *Toddy addiction and rehabilitation affect mental and physical health, according to this study. It examines how stress and poverty induce addiction.*

**Objective:** *Determine how medication, yoga, and meditation affect toddy addiction and rehabilitation. Personal experiences are used to explain coping, resilience, and healing in this research.*

**Method:** *In-depth interview with a toddy addict to analyze rehabilitation.*

**Findings and Implications:** *Alcoholism is complex and numerous variables affect help-seeking. Yoga and meditation may help addicts recover from physical and emotional health issues. Complete support systems and processes are emphasized.*

**Keywords:** *Toddy addiction, recovery, meditation, yoga, medication.*

## INTRODUCTION:

Combining traditional Indian practices with contemporary science, yoga, meditation, and medication provides a holistic approach to encouraging emotional and physical well-being (Jurin, 2020) (Ooi et al., 2023). The goal of yoga is to promote harmony between the body and mind via a variety of activities such as physical postures, breathing exercises, and meditation techniques. Yoga improves overall wellness by improving strength, flexibility, and balance (Hachem et al., 2008) (Breedvelt et al., 2019).

Through mindfulness and focused attention, meditation simultaneously encourages mental clarity and inner peace (Lomas, 2020). Meditation decreases tension, anxiety, and symptoms of depression by calming the mind and encouraging critical thought (Hachem et al., 2008). These combined methods provide a comprehensive framework for treating a range of physical and

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mental health issues, enhancing conventional medicine by addressing both physiological and psychological aspects (Ahuja, 2014). Balance, resiliency, and general energy are encouraged by this broad approach, which highlights the connections between mental, emotional, and physical health (Wicher, 2017) (Saeed et al., 2010).

The traditional alcoholic drink "Toddy" (or Kallu in Telugu) has two forms. Named "Thati kallu" from palmyra sap and "Ita kallu" from silver date palm sap. These trees produce sap which is collected and fermented as toddy. This natural toddy is sipped in many culturally significant sites. Toddy provides alcohol-like effects of relaxation and altered consciousness. However, excessive consumption may affect mental and physical health. (Ooi et al., 2023) (Choudhuri & Kumar, 2022)

However, this is not the same as an artificial or man-made toddy or adulterated toddy. During the production process, hazardous components including diazepam, chloroform, and alprazolam are added to replicate the taste and effects of a natural toddy. Although this combination is more widely available and typically less expensive, considerable health risks are involved. While manufactured toddy poses a health risk, natural toddy is a part of local culture and traditions.

Workers and low-income people consume Kallu, an artificial toddy, throughout all of Telangana. is accessible only in 'Kallu dukanam' or 'Kallu compound'. Prices range from 10 to 20 rupees in rural regions to 40 to 50 rupees in cities packed in recycled beer bottles. Unfortunately, this imitation drink's accessibility and cost lead a lot of people to have serious social and health issues.

Someone who becomes addicted to toddy has a "toddy addiction." They have a strong urge to consume toddy and suffer withdrawal symptoms including sweating, shaking, and anxiety when they cease. This addiction involves excessive consumption despite its harmful effects, like other alcohol addictions. Anxiety, psychotic behaviour, nervous system problems, liver damage and imbalance, sweating, shivering, seizures, fits, and other disorders, and social and economic consequences like contradictory emotions and economic difficulties are all to be looked at. Toddy addiction affects physical, mental, and social well-being (Weiss & Porrino, 2002) (Tripathi, 2019).

The study explores the impact of toddy addiction on health, mind, and emotion. It proposes a holistic approach combining meditation, yoga, and medicine, grounded in positive psychology. The research aims to understand the complexity of addiction and the path to recovery through in-depth interviews with individuals who have personally experienced toddy addiction.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

1. Madhuri (2013) "A Comparative Study of Emotional Intelligence & Personality of Alcoholics & Drug Addicts and Non-Alcoholics & Non-Drug Addicts". It suggests that addicts have higher neuroticism and psychoticism levels and lower emotional intelligence scores. The study emphasizes the need for medical treatment, psychoeducation, and coping strategies for addiction.

2. Suman (2018) "Study of Alcohol Addicted Sports Persons and Their Consequences" The study reveals that sportsmen without alcohol dependence perform better in various aspects, including social interactions, commitment, and independence. Alcohol addiction negatively impacts creativity and family harmony, and socioeconomic status does not determine addiction. Personal control and family relationships are crucial in preventing athletes from acquiring alcohol addiction.
3. Diego Gómez, Juan José Rahona, Gonzalo Hervás, and Carmelo Vázquez (2009) "Psychological Well-being and Health: Contributions of Positive Psychology" The study explores positive emotions and strengths, highlighting the role of positive psychology in understanding human well-being, examining hedonic and eudaimonic views, and their implications in academic, social, and political contexts.
4. Shilpi (2021) "Alcohol Addiction among Young Adults and Psychological Practices in Treatment and Prevention" Shilpi Tripathi discusses the increasing health problem of young adult alcohol addiction in this study. The main objectives are to critically examine psychosocial theories that explain the growth of alcohol addiction and to talk about the Behavioral implications for harm reduction.
5. Dilip Kumar and Dr. Sajjan Choudhuri (Month: February 2023) "A Study on the Influence of Alcohol Abuse on the Pan Indian Z-Generation" The study explores the impact of alcohol addiction on the Pan Indian Z-Generation, highlighting its health implications, particularly among young people. It calls for increased awareness of teenage alcohol addiction's harmful effects and calls for law enforcement action. Data was collected from government repositories, news pieces, and recent studies.
6. Kori Bloom (2016). "Turning Points: The Lived Experience of Addiction Recovery" The article aims to empower individuals in addiction recovery by examining activities, relationships, reflection, motivation, and the environment's impact using Photovoice, a participatory research method. It emphasizes the importance of understanding and drawing insights from real-life experiences to break the silence surrounding addiction.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. To study toddy addiction and its impact on mental, emotional, and physical health.
2. To examine what makes addicts ready for treatment and recovery.
3. To examine how yoga and meditation could be integrated to toddy addiction therapy.
4. To reflect on recovery experiences and insights.

### **METHODOLOGY:**

An in-depth interview with a person (Mr. Rama Rao) who struggled with toddy addiction was part of the technique. The participant was chosen based on their honesty and willingness to share what they have experienced. With approval, the interview was recorded in private, and then the transcript was performed for analysis. Privacy and informed permissions are a couple of ethical issues that were carefully monitored during the process.

## ANALYSIS OF THE INTERVIEW:

Analysis and Interpretation: The interview produced valuable insights about a range of aspects related to addiction and recovery from toddy. Mr. Rama Rao Garu (name changed) provided thoughtful reflections and explanations on the following aspects:

### **Objective 1: The Process of Toddy Addiction and Its Impacts on Health:**

Alcoholism and its effects on health: We feel more alert and calmer after drinking toddy. Everyday intake climbs as our drinking needs grow. This drink helps while it's in good health.

Personal Experience: To cope with the stress and anxiety of the financial position, in 2013 I began to consume just one glass of toddy a day, but when creditors pressured me, I started drinking more. My daily intake increased from one glass to two, three, and two bottles. In less than a year, it reached seven bottles at the peak stage. After drinking in the nights, I drank in the afternoon and morning. Drinking started at 7 a.m. and ended at 7 p.m. I became a toddy addict within 10 to 12 months. I used to drink 4 to 5 bottles a day for two years.

Early effects of the toddy: The body pains started after seven months. Interestingly, toddy diminished these signs. My physical stamina also decreased. This drink helped me control my anxiety and stress. Sleeping for 10–12 hours was also common. This led me to gain 14 kg. In addition, diabetes arose. My memory lapses caused me to neglect tasks. I started setting phone reminders to recall essential information.

### **Root Causes of the Addiction: The issues came from creditor pressure and financial difficulty.**

Health conditions during the urge to drink: Heavy sweating, shivering, severe foot burning, tinnitus, instability, wanting to stay in darkness, and too much tension and anxiety. Sometimes I felt that maybe I would die.

Health conditions at this Advanced stage: At this peak stage, I endured a myriad of severe health conditions, including imbalance, diabetes, debilitating body pains, intense calf pain, burning sensations in my feet, discomfort in my knees. retinal tears that blurred my right eye's vision, and optic nerve damage, I underwent three eye surgeries on my right eye. Two motorcycle accidents damaged my right shoulder, The cumulative effect of these health issues left me unable to tolerate light, rendering it impossible for me to watch television. Overall, the combination of financial stressors and the toll of addiction exacted a significant physical and emotional toll, posing immense challenges and hardships in various aspects of my life.

### **Objective 2: Engagement in treatment and recovery:**

Motivation for Change: I realized that I required assistance when my health declined and I lost control of my addiction. My family's constant encouragement gave me the courage to go see a doctor. 'My extreme dizziness and sensation of the world whirling marked the turning point. Served as a warning'. My drive to change was fueled by the government's prohibition on toddy, my drink. I felt like 'I would pass away definitely if I did not visit a doctor. There's nothing more to do. I'm about to lose everything and become useless'.

**Treatment and Recovery:** In 2015 October I saw a doctor and was hospitalized for 10 days at a well-known corporate hospital. However, money limitations forced me to stay at my local hospital for a month. I had frequent doctor's checkups for six months afterward. The doctor recommended daily drugs, gradually decreasing the dosage, Totally I took medication for four to five years.

At the beginning of the medication, it was difficult to assess my heartbeat by the corporate hospital staff, since I encountered terrible muscle spasms for two to three days. The medical personnel laughed at how hard it was to find my heartbeat amid spasms by saying, 'ISKA SEENA KIDAR HAI, LEFT OR RIGHT' (in Hindi).

### **Objective 3: Integration of Yoga and Meditation:**

After leaving the hospital, I spent most of my time sleeping and taking my medication. Even after quitting toddy and stopping my medication, I felt weak emotionally and physically. I was not at all interested in anything and had no energy to work. I didn't meditate or performed yoga in the first year of medication. Even if the intent was there, health issues made these activities difficult in the initial stages of withdrawal.

**Challenges Faced:** Meditation was hard, and yoga made my body problems worse, needing many breaks. Even though I kept yoga and meditation by taking such long breaks for body support, several body aches need fifteen days of rest after one day of practice.

**Gradual Progression:** However, after three years of this cycle, I noticed that my health steadily improved. I understood that, yoga and meditation are very essential for my complete recovery in my difficult toddy detox. Yoga helps me meditate better. Supported by the unwavering encouragement of my family, I dedicated myself to these practices, symbolized by the wearing of a Rudraksha mala as a sign of devotion.

**Yoga and Meditation activities:** The individual's schedule involves pranayama, anulom-vilom, kapalbhati, bhasrika, bhramari, udgeeth, sarwangan, halaasan, sheershasan, Surya namaskar, pushups, walking, and 1/2 hour of meditation. It was difficult at first to dedicate 1/2 hour a day to these exercises, but extremely very slowly it was improved, now raised it to 1 1/2 to 2 hours and made it became a regular part of my schedule from the last year.

**Health Benefits:** Medicine, yoga, and meditation are improving my overall health. While medication aided my addiction, yoga, and meditation were crucial to my recovery. After stopping toddy, I was sleepy after eight hours of sleep before. Now I sleep 5–6 hours, which provides me power. I lost my pains, improved my health, and even cured my diabetes (I took metformin 500 mg for over 9 years, but I've been diabetic-free since 2023 October). My childhood optic nerve injury stopped my sight from recovering. Weight loss reached 17 kg.

**Resilience and coping:** I feel calmer and more energized. Yoga and meditation have helped me regulate my emotions. Now I can focus on improvements and can handle my anxiety, tension, stress and resistance, better enabling me to overcome life's problems. After each practice, I feel stronger and more energetic. Wearing a God mala to remind me not to drink and maintain my vows helps me stay dedicated to my recovery during difficult times.

#### **Objective 4: Analysis of Personal Experiences and Insights**

Reflections on Recovery: Recovery from addiction requires patience and perseverance, as it can connect us easily, but to overcome from addiction, and for complete recovery it took eight to nine years, however it has been transformative, fundamentally altering my perspective on life. Now I prioritizing productivity and health over indulgence and waste of time.

Advice for Individuals in Need: I strongly advise individuals struggling with addiction or improving their health to seek professional help and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Consistent practice of yoga and meditation can yield beneficial outcomes within five years.

Further Thoughts: Addiction has negative impacts on both physical and mental health, so it is crucial to avoid it. Accepting methods like yoga and meditation can improve health and promote resilience, leading to happy, healthy lives(Ooi et al., 2023)(Francis et al., 2021).

#### **DISCUSSION:**

The interview covers todody addiction issues and recovery. It shows how stress and financial challenges build todody addiction, which causes significant physical and mental health issues.

One essential lesson is that asking for help needs motivation. Here the addict changed due to government legislation, family support, and lowering health. Medical treatment and recovery included hospitalization, medication, and withdrawal problems. Despite initial challenges, yoga and meditation improved sleep, physical health, and emotional well-being.

The interview provides an interesting investigation into addiction and recovery, including its challenges, reasons, and tactics. Bringing attention to the complex relationship between addiction, motivation, treatment, and recovery, the interview raises consciousness about this major health problem and stresses the need for wide, empathetic, and focused addiction treatment solutions.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

This study highlights the complex issues of todody addiction and recovery. The interview highlights the significance of yoga, meditation, medical treatment, and family support in recovering from addiction and well-being. Addiction treatment requires comprehensive treatment and support systems, according to the research.

The journey from addiction to recovery shows how strong individuals are. Holistic techniques including yoga, meditation, and medication may help people restore mentally, emotionally, and physically. The research found links between addiction, change motivation, options for treatment, and personal progress.

Addiction recovery takes constant dedication, family support, and professional guidance. Promoting well-being, mindfulness, and an encouraging atmosphere may help individuals recover control and find inner balance and energy. Recovery shows the stamina of the human spirit and the capacity of holistic treatment to change.

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**Theme - 3**  
**Happiness and Well-Being**

## Understanding Happiness and Wellbeing: A Comprehensive Review

**Dr. Poonam Devi Bagi\***

### **ABSTRACT**

*This article delves into the multifaceted realm of happiness and wellbeing, exploring their significance in individual lives and the broader societal context. From examining biological and neurological correlates to cultural and societal perspectives, present article uncover the intricate interplay of factors shaping subjective experiences of flourishing. Author highlight evidence-based interventions and strategies while acknowledging challenges in measurement, cultural adaptation, and policy implementation. Looking forward, interdisciplinary collaboration, technological advances, and a focus on positive education hold promise for advancing our understanding and promoting collective wellbeing.*

*Through this exploration, author chart a course towards a future where happiness and wellbeing thrive as universal aspirations.*

**Key words:** *Happiness, Wellbeing, Education.*

Happiness and wellbeing hold immense significance in individual lives; definition and conceptual framework of happiness and wellbeing encompass mental, emotional, and physical dimensions of health. Happiness typically refers to a subjective emotional state characterized by feelings of joy, contentment, and fulfilment. It often involves the pursuit and attainment of positive experiences and life satisfaction. Wellbeing, on the other hand, is a broader construct encompassing not only subjective feelings of happiness but also overall life satisfaction, optimal functioning, and a sense of purpose and meaning in life. These are intricately linked to mental health outcomes, fostering resilience and emotional regulation while reducing symptoms of depression and anxiety. Positive emotions associated with wellbeing contribute to subjective satisfaction and enrich social connections, enhancing overall life contentment and fulfilment. (Kushlev, 2020) results revealed that improvements in subjective well-being over the course of the program predicted subsequent decreases in

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the number of sick days. Moreover, happiness has tangible effects on physical health, with happier individuals exhibiting lower rates of chronic illnesses and better immune function. Beyond health benefits, happiness fuels productivity, creativity and engagement in various life domains, ultimately shaping one's quality of life and subjective sense of fulfilment. Recognizing the happiness and wellbeing is crucial for fostering individual resilience, societal harmony, and collective prosperity. This article was planned with these thoughts in mind.

Wilson,(1967) define happiness as “ prompt satisfaction of needs causes happiness”. Diener, (1984) placed greater emphasis on psychological factors which define SWB and happiness.

Tellegen et al.,( 1999), identified the role of genetics in the happiness of any person and declared that happiness is trait of SWB. The conceptualization of happiness and wellbeing reflects a complex interplay of subjective experiences, objective life circumstances, and individual values and aspirations, highlighting the need for a comprehensive understanding of these constructs in research and practice.

There are number of factors influence happiness and wellbeing, spanning individual, social, environmental, and cultural domains. These factors interact in complex ways to shape one's subjective experiences and overall sense of satisfaction and fulfilment in life. Some key factors include:

**Genetics and Biology:** Genetic predispositions play an important role in determining an individual's baseline level of happiness and wellbeing. Additionally, biological factors such as brain chemistry and neurological functioning influence emotional regulation and mood stability.

**Personality Traits:** Certain personality traits, such as optimism, resilience, and extraversion are associated with higher levels of happiness and wellbeing. Individuals with these traits tend to adapt more effectively to life's challenges and experience greater life satisfaction. (Kim et al, 2007) analysing the relationship between neuroticism and happiness and found that neurotic people are easily affected by feelings and mood such as anger, anxiety, shame and depression.

**Social Relationships:** The quality of social connections and support networks significantly impacts happiness and wellbeing. Strong, supportive relationships with friends, family, and romantic partners provide emotional validation, companionship, and a sense of belonging, enhancing overall life satisfaction. (Koivumaa, et al 2004) found that the existence of a friendly relationship among colleagues in a kind space is effective in the growth of positive emotions.

**Socioeconomic Status:** Economic factors, such as income, education, and employment, influence access to resources and opportunities that contribute to wellbeing. While financial security alone does not guarantee happiness, socioeconomic disadvantage and financial stress can undermine wellbeing.

**Health and Wellbeing Practices:** Physical health and wellbeing practices, including regular exercise, nutritious diet, adequate sleep, and stress management, are linked to higher levels of happiness and wellbeing. Taking care of one's physical health enhances energy levels, mood stability, and overall life satisfaction.

**Cultural and Societal Norms:** Cultural values, norms, and societal expectations

shape individuals' perceptions of happiness and wellbeing. Cultural differences in collectivism versus individualism, materialism, and the pursuit of happiness influence subjective wellbeing across different societies and cultures.

**Life Events and Experiences:** Life circumstances and experiences, such as marriage, parenthood, career achievements, and major life transitions, can impact happiness and wellbeing. Positive life events often contribute to short-term increases in happiness, while negative experiences may lead to temporary decreases in wellbeing.

**Environmental Factors:** Environmental factors, including access to nature, green spaces, and clean air, can influence mental health and wellbeing.

The biological and neurological correlates of happiness and wellbeing are complex and multifaceted, involving various brain regions, neurotransmitters, and physiological processes. Some key correlates include:

**Brain Regions:** Several brain regions are implicated in the experience of happiness and wellbeing. The prefrontal cortex, particularly the ventromedial prefrontal cortex and dorsolateral prefrontal cortex is associated with emotional regulation, decision-making and positive affect. The limbic system, including the amygdala and hippocampus, plays a role in processing emotions and memory formation, influencing subjective experiences of happiness and wellbeing.

**Neurotransmitters:** Neurotransmitters such as serotonin, dopamine, and endorphins play crucial roles in regulating mood, pleasure, and reward processing, all of which are implicated in happiness and wellbeing. Serotonin, in particular, is associated with feelings of happiness and contentment, while dopamine is involved in reward-seeking behaviour and the experience of pleasure. For example Serotonin is an important neurotransmitter that regulates multiple neuropsychological processes and neural activity. Serotonin also has implications that affect gastrointestinal processes like bowel motility, bladder control, and cardiovascular function ( Berger, et al 2009)

**Hormonal Regulation:** Hormones such as oxytocin, often referred to as the "love hormone" or "bonding hormone," are associated with social bonding, trust, and feelings of wellbeing. Oxytocin promotes prosocial behaviour and interpersonal connections, contributing to happiness and wellbeing through enhanced social support and affiliation. Humans are highly social mammals who develop a variety of social attachments and relationships throughout their lives. The establishment of social attachments and bonds from infancy (Bowlby 1982; Harlow and Zimmermann 1959) .

**Neuroplasticity:** The brain's ability to adapt and reorganize itself in response to experiences and environmental stimuli, known as neuroplasticity, plays a crucial role in shaping long-term happiness and wellbeing. Positive experiences and behaviours, such as practicing gratitude, mindfulness, and engaging in meaningful activities, can promote neuroplasticity changes associated with increased resilience, emotional regulation, and subjective wellbeing.

**Stress Response System:** Chronic stress and cortisol dysregulation can negatively impact happiness and wellbeing by disrupting neuroendocrine pathways involved in mood regulation and stress resilience. High levels of cortisol are

associated with increased risk of depression, anxiety, and reduced overall wellbeing.

Understanding the biological and neurological underpinnings of happiness and wellbeing provides valuable insights into the mechanisms underlying subjective experiences of happiness, resilience, and overall life satisfaction. Moreover, it underscores the importance of adopting holistic approaches to promoting wellbeing that address both psychological and physiological factors implicated in happiness and flourishing.

Cultural and societal perspectives play a significant role in shaping the understanding and expression of happiness and wellbeing. Different cultures have distinct values, norms, and beliefs that influence how individuals perceive and pursue happiness. Some key cultural and societal perspectives include:

**Collectivism vs. Individualism:** Cultures vary in the emphasis placed on individual goals and achievements versus collective well-being and group harmony. Collectivist cultures, such as many Asian cultures, prioritize familial and societal relationships, often viewing happiness as interconnected with the well-being of the community. In contrast, individualistic cultures, like those prevalent in Western societies, prioritize personal autonomy and self-expression in the pursuit of happiness.

**Cultural Values and Beliefs:** Cultural values and beliefs shape individuals' priorities, aspirations, and sources of happiness. For example, cultures that prioritize material wealth and achievement may equate success with happiness, while cultures emphasizing spirituality, connection to nature, or social relationships may define happiness differently. Cultural values regarding work-life balance, leisure, and social support systems also influence individuals' subjective experiences of wellbeing.

**Cultural Practices and Traditions:** Rituals, customs, and traditions play a role in promoting happiness and wellbeing within cultural contexts. Practices such as communal gatherings, religious ceremonies, and celebrations of shared milestones serve as avenues for social connection, meaning-making, and the cultivation of positive emotions.

**Cultural Narratives of Happiness:** Cultural narratives, including literature, folklore, and media representations, shape societal understandings of happiness and wellbeing. These narratives often reflect cultural ideals, societal norms, and archetypal themes related to happiness, success, and fulfilment.

**Cultural Responses to Adversity:** Cultural contexts influence how individuals perceive and respond to adversity, which in turn impacts their resilience and subjective wellbeing. Cultural resilience factors, such as collective coping strategies, social support networks, and cultural identity, play a crucial role in buffering against stress and promoting psychological well-being.

**Globalization and Cultural Influence:** Globalization and cultural exchange contribute to the diffusion of cultural values and practices related to happiness and wellbeing. Western notions of happiness, often associated with material wealth and consumerism, have become increasingly pervasive globally, influencing cultural attitudes and aspirations in diverse societies.

Understanding the cultural and societal perspectives of happiness and wellbeing is essential for promoting culturally sensitive interventions and policies that acknowledge the diversity of human experiences and values. It highlights the importance of considering cultural contexts in research, education, and practice aimed at enhancing individual and collective flourishing.

Several scales and inventories are commonly used to measure happiness and wellbeing across various research fields and disciplines. Here are some widely recognized ones:

Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS), Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS), The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ), The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS), The World Health Organization-Five Well-Being Index (WHO-5), The Flourishing Scale (FS), The Perma Profiler.

These measures provide researchers and practitioners with valuable tools for assessing and understanding different facets of happiness and wellbeing, facilitating both quantitative research and interventions aimed at promoting individual and collective flourishing.

Several evidence-based interventions and strategies have been developed to promote happiness and wellbeing. These interventions draw from principles of positive psychology, cognitive-behavioral therapy, mindfulness, and other therapeutic approaches. Here are some examples:

**Positive Psychology Interventions:** Positive psychology interventions (PPIs) aim to cultivate positive emotions, strengths, and virtues to enhance overall wellbeing. Examples include:

- **Gratitude journaling:** Writing down things one is grateful for each day.
- **Three Good Things:** Reflecting on three positive experiences each day and their underlying causes.
- **Acts of kindness:** Engaging in altruistic behaviors and acts of kindness towards others.
- **Mindfulness-Based Interventions:** Mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) involve cultivating present-moment awareness and non-judgmental acceptance of one's experiences. Examples include:
  - **Mindfulness meditation:** Practicing focused attention on the breath or bodily sensations to cultivate mindfulness.
  - **Mindful walking:** Paying attention to each step and the sensations of walking.
  - **Body scan meditation:** systematically scanning the body for sensations and observing them without judgment.

**Strengths-Based Interventions:** Strengths-based interventions focus on identifying and leveraging individual strengths and virtues to enhance wellbeing. Examples include:

- **Character strengths assessment:** Identifying one's core character strengths using tools like the VIA Survey of Character Strengths.

- **Strengths-based goal setting:** Setting goals aligned with one's strengths and values to enhance motivation and engagement.
- **Social Support Interventions:** Social support interventions aim to enhance social connections and support networks, which are crucial for wellbeing. Examples include:
  - **Social skills training:** Teaching communication and interpersonal skills to enhance social relationships.
  - **Support groups:** Providing opportunities for individuals to connect with others facing similar challenges and receive peer support.
  - **Behavioural Activation:** Behavioural activation interventions focus on increasing engagement in rewarding activities to combat depression and enhance wellbeing. Examples include:
    - **Activity scheduling:** Structuring daily activities to include pleasurable and meaningful experiences.
    - **Behavioural experiments:** Experimenting with new behaviours to challenge negative beliefs and increase positive experiences.

**Physical Activity and Exercise:** Regular physical activity and exercise have been consistently linked to improved mood and overall wellbeing. Examples include:

**Aerobic exercise:** Engaging in activities such as walking, running, or cycling to release endorphins and reduce stress.

**Yoga and tai chi:** Practicing mind-body exercises that combine physical movement with mindfulness and relaxation techniques.

These evidence-based interventions and strategies offer practical tools and techniques for individuals, therapists, educators, and policymakers to promote happiness and wellbeing across diverse populations and contexts.

The study of happiness and wellbeing faces several challenges and holds promising directions for future research. Some of these challenges and future directions include:

**Measurement and Assessment:** Developing comprehensive and culturally sensitive measures of happiness and wellbeing remains a challenge. Future research should focus on refining existing instruments and exploring alternative methodologies to capture the multidimensional nature of wellbeing across diverse populations and contexts.

**Complexity and Multifaceted Nature:** Happiness and wellbeing are complex, multifaceted constructs influenced by individual, social, cultural, and environmental factors. Future research should adopt interdisciplinary approaches to unravel the intricate interactions and dynamics shaping subjective experiences of happiness and flourishing.

**Longitudinal Studies and Causality:** Establishing causality and identifying causal mechanisms underlying happiness and wellbeing remain challenging due to the limitations of cross-sectional research designs. Future longitudinal studies and experimental research are needed to examine the causal relationships between interventions, life events, and changes in subjective wellbeing over time.

**Cultural and Contextual Variations:** Cultural and contextual variations in the conceptualization and expression of happiness and wellbeing pose challenges for universal interventions and theoretical frameworks. Future research should explore cultural differences in wellbeing and develop culturally tailored interventions that respect diverse values, norms, and aspirations.

Wearable devices, mobile applications, and virtual reality, offer new opportunities for assessing and promoting happiness and wellbeing. Future research should leverage technology to develop innovative interventions, collect real-time data, and deliver personalized support for enhancing wellbeing.

**Policy Implications and Social Change:** Bridging the gap between research and policy remains a challenge in promoting happiness and wellbeing at the societal level. Future research should focus on translating scientific evidence into actionable policies and interventions that address social inequalities, promote sustainable development, and foster collective wellbeing.

**Positive Education and Wellbeing in School:** Integrating positive psychology principles and wellbeing education into school curricula holds promise for promoting lifelong resilience and flourishing. Future research should explore the effectiveness of positive education interventions in schools and their long-term impact on students' wellbeing, academic performance, and social-emotional development.

Overall, addressing these challenges and advancing research in the study of happiness and wellbeing requires collaboration across disciplines, innovative methodologies, and a commitment to promoting human flourishing and societal well-being. By addressing these challenges, researchers can contribute to a deeper understanding of happiness and wellbeing and develop effective interventions to enhance individual and collective flourishing in diverse communities around the world.

In conclusion, the study of happiness and wellbeing encompasses a diverse array of factors, challenges, and promising directions for future research. We have explored the significance of happiness and wellbeing in individual lives, acknowledging their profound impact on mental, emotional, and physical health. From the biological and neurological correlates to cultural and societal perspectives, we have delved into the multifaceted nature of happiness and wellbeing, recognizing the complex interplay of individual, social, and environmental factors shaping subjective experiences of flourishing. Evidence-based interventions offer practical tools and strategies for promoting happiness and wellbeing, yet challenges remain in measurement, cultural adaptation, and policy implementation. Looking ahead, interdisciplinary collaboration, longitudinal studies, technological advances, and a focus on positive education hold promise for advancing our understanding of happiness and fostering collective wellbeing. By addressing these challenges and embracing future research directions, we can contribute to a more nuanced understanding of happiness and wellbeing, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for individuals and communities worldwide.



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## Meaning in Life and Subjective Happiness: A Synergistic Relationship

Kavita Kumar\* & Naina Gupta\*\*

### Abstract

*The pursuit of Meaning in Life and the experience of Subjective Happiness are deeply intertwined aspects of human existence, each influencing and enriching the other. Meaning in Life involves finding significance, purpose, and fulfillment in one's life, while, Subjective Happiness provides platform for life satisfaction with this backdrop, 150 undergraduate students were selected for the present study. 'Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ)' by Strack (2007) and 'The Subjective Happiness Scale' by Lyubomirsky and Lepper (1999) were administered. The results indicate that there is a positive and significant correlation between Meaning in Life and Subjective Happiness  $r = 0.305$  ( $p < 0.01$ ). Moreover, Meaning in Life had a significant contribution in the determination of Subjective Happiness ( $F = 15.212$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Embracing the pursuit of Meaning in Life and Subjective Happiness both can lead to a richer, more meaningful existence characterized by greater well-being and thriving life.*

**Keywords:** Life, Subjective Happiness, Well-being.

### INTRODUCTION

The pursuit of Meaning in Life and the quest for Subjective Happiness are two fundamental aspects of human existence that have garnered significant attention in psychological research. The intertwining relationship between these two constructs has sparked curiosity among scholars seeking to understand the intricate dynamics between them. This study seeks to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by elucidating the nature of the relationship between

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Meaning in Life and subjective happiness. By uncovering the synergistic dynamics between these constructs, The concept of Meaning in Life (Frankl, 1946/1998) was introduced over seventy years ago, shaping psychology and broader social sciences (Konkoly et al., 2010). Frankl's logotherapy and existential analysis emphasize Meaning in Life as central to human existence. Human beings are driven to seek meaning (Frankl, 1947/1994), underscoring its significance as a motivational concept. Meaning in life, a uniquely human trait (Frankl, 1946/1998), positively influences well-being indicators such as life satisfaction (Abu et al., 2021; Joshanloo, 2019; Konkoly and Martos, 2008; Russo et al., 2021b) and positive affect (Steger et al., 2006; Steger et al., 2009). Additionally, research suggests Meaning in Life indirectly enhances outcomes like organizational commitment (Jiang and Johnson, 2018) and proactive coping (Miao et al., 2017), potentially mediated through positive reflection and affect.

Happiness is a multidimensional construct encompassing simple pleasures, enjoyment, pursuit of hobbies and passions, dedication to social causes, and meaningful contributions to society. Subjective Happiness profoundly influences individuals' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors, shaping their daily experiences and interactions with the world around them. It has a pivotal role in fostering resilience and adaptive coping mechanisms in the face of life's challenges and adversities. Lyubomirsky's seminal work underscores the importance of Subjective Happiness as a fundamental aspect of psychological well-being, emphasizing its enduring impact on individuals' overall life satisfaction and fulfillment and human relationships, Subjective Happiness serves as a catalyst for fostering meaningful connections and nurturing supportive social networks. Individuals who report higher levels of Subjective Happiness tend to exhibit greater empathy, compassion, and altruism towards others, contributing to the cultivation of positive interpersonal dynamics and cohesive communities. Moreover, Subjective Happiness enhances individuals' capacity for intimacy and intimacy, facilitating deeper emotional bonds and enriching interpersonal experiences. In the realm of work and achievement, Subjective Happiness serves as a driving force for motivation, productivity, and goal attainment.

Baquero et al. (2023) revealed a significant correlation between depression and emotional dysregulation, indicating a positive, moderate relationship. Furthermore, the study found a moderate negative correlation between depression and meaning in life, as well as a small negative correlation between emotional dysregulation and Meaning in Life, both statistically significant. The mediation model underscored the significance of Meaning in Life in various strategies of emotional dysregulation and depressive symptoms. Wang et al. (2021) found that self-efficacy acted as a partial mediator in the association between Meaning in Life and subjective well-being. Additionally, bootstrapping analysis revealed significant indirect and direct connections between Meaning in Life and subjective well-being via self-efficacy. In Aydin and Ömüriş (2020) study revealed that all the variables undertaken exhibited positive correlations. Structural equation modeling analyses unveiled that Meaning in Life mediated the relationship between memorable tourism experience and life satisfaction, albeit not positive affect. Muhammad et al. (2020) study revealed that through correlation and regression (path analysis), students' psychological grit emerged

as the notable predictor of hope, meaning in life, and subjective happiness. A study by Bilgin (2017) indicated a correlation between subjective and psychological well-being. Conversely, the association between happiness and creativity is not statistically significant.

Grozdanovska (2016) conducted a study aiming to investigate the relationship among national identity, subjective well-being, and Meaning in Life. A significant positive correlation was observed between national identity, life satisfaction, and the presence of Meaning in Life. However, no significant relationship was detected between national identity and the affective components (positive and negative) of subjective well-being. Lee et al. (2015) reported that Subjective Happiness exhibited a positive correlation with career decision-making self-efficacy and self-esteem, while displaying a negative correlation with job-seeking stress. Several factors were identified as influencing Subjective Happiness, including monthly family income. Together, these factors accounted for 22.6% of the variance in Subjective Happiness. In their study, Uusitalo et al. (2013) investigated predictors of happiness and depression in 737 Finnish children aged 12 years. They examined the influence of relationships with family members and others, the number of close friends, and experiences of parental conflict and drinking. Gender-based differences were observed: while no variance was found in happiness between genders, girls exhibited higher levels of depression compared to boys. Low happiness was associated with strong familial bonds and a larger circle of friends for both genders. Girls' high happiness was linked to close familial and interpersonal relationships, while boys' high happiness correlated with familial bonds and close friendships. Depression in girls was predicted by strained family relationships, a limited number of close friends, and parental discord. Conversely, depression in boys was associated with poor family connections and a reduced number of close friends. These findings suggest that factors influencing happiness and depression differ between genders, highlighting girls' heightened sensitivity to familial discord compared to boys, even at the age of 12 years.

**Justification of the Study:** The present paper addresses a significant gap in the literature by examining how Meaning in Life and Subjective Happiness intersect and mutually influence each other. By understanding the synergistic dynamics between meaning and happiness, scholars can offer valuable insights into enhancing individuals' overall quality of life and existential fulfillment. Moreover, this inquiry aligns with the core tenets of positive psychology and aims to promote holistic well-being. Thus, this relationship is crucial for highlighting the theoretical understanding, facilitating and emphasizing the significance for promoting human success and existential fulfillment.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To study the relationship of Meaning in Life and Subjective Happiness in university students.
2. To study the relative contribution of Meaning in Life and Subjective Happiness in university students

## HYPOTHESES

**H1:** There would be a positive significant relationship between Meaning in Life and Subjective Happiness in university students.

**H2:** Meaning in Life would have a significant contribution in the determination of Subjective Happiness in university students.

## VARIABLES

1. Predictor Variable

### Meaning in life

2. Criterion Variable  
Subjective happiness

## SAMPLE

The study was conducted on a sample of 150 students, both male and female undergraduate students from Agra, UP, India. The subjects were between 17 to 21 years of age. Convenient sampling technique was used.

## TOOLS

1. The Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ), is a 10 item self-report inventory designed to measure life meaning by Strack (2007), was used to measure Meaning in Life.
2. Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS-A), which is a four-item measure originally developed by Lyubomirsky and Lepper (1999) was used to measure Subjective Happiness.

## DATA ANALYSES AND DISCUSSION

Regression analysis was used for statistical analysis of the data for the current study

**Table-1: Descriptive Statistics**

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Meaning in life	48.2400	8.17401	150
Subjective Happiness	18.4800	4.44764	150

Table-1 shows the mean and standard deviation for Meaning in Life as predictors of Subjective Happiness. The coefficients of correlation were computed to test the anticipated hypotheses. Table-2 shows inter correlations among the proposed variables, viz., Meaning in Life and Subjective Happiness

**Table-2: Correlation Matrix**

Variables	Meaning in life	Subjective Happiness
Meaning in life	1	0.305**
Subjective Happiness	0.305**	1

**\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level**

The matrix of coefficient of correlation (Table-2) indicates there is a positive significant correlation between Meaning in Life ( $r=0.305$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), with Subjective

Happiness. Hence, the first hypothesis formed that stated, "There would be a positive relationship between Meaning in Life with Subjective Happiness is accepted."

Further, the multiple regression analysis was done to examine the extent to which predictor variable Meaning in Life predict criterion variable Subjective Happiness. For interpreting the results obtained from Multiple Regression Analysis, the variance caused by the combined effect of all predictor variables is seen by obtained R square as shown in Table-3.

**Table-3: Multiple Regression Analysis for Subjective happiness**

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.305
R Square	0.093
Adjusted R Square	0.087
Standard Error	4.24959
Observations	150

The above Table-3 shows that the calculated Multiple R value is 0.305 which indicates the direction of the relationship being positive. This also specifies that the larger the value; the stronger the relationship. The above Table-3, shows that the obtained value for R square = .093, which means that about 9 % of contribution is jointly accounted for by the predictor variable Meaning in Life in causing variation in the criterion variable, i.e., Subjective Happiness. The remaining variation of 91 % is due to other factors. The statistical test for the significance of R is an F ratio (Table-4).

**Table-4: Showing the F-Value for Subjective Happiness**

	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	1	274.705	274.705	15.212	.000
Residual	148	2672.735	18.059		
Total	149	2947.440			

**Table-4, depicts the value of F = 15.212, which is significant at  $p < 0.01$  level of significance, indicating that there is a significant contribution of Meaning in Life in determining Subjective Happiness.**

S . No.	Variable	Regression Coefficient (b)	Standard Error of Coefficient	Correlation Coefficient	t-value	B	Coefficient of Determination
1.	Meaning in life	0.166	0.043	0.305	3.900	0.305	0.093

Table-5: Regression Coefficient of Predictor Variables for Subjective Happiness  
Regression equation between Subjective Happiness and Predictor Variable:  $Y = 0.166X_1 + 10.467$

Table-5 reveals that the predictor Meaning in Life has accounted for 9% of the contribution in determining the criterion variable i.e., Subjective Happiness and the remaining 91% is accounted for by other variables. A careful study of the

regression equation reveals that 1 unit variation in X1 i.e., Meaning in Life will bring about a variation of 0.093 units ( $b = 0.166$ ) in the Subjective Happiness. The Second hypothesis which stated that, “*There would be a positive and significant contribution of Meaning in Life in the determination of Subjective Happiness*”, has been accepted.

Various studies have been conducted whose results are more or less in tune with the result of the present investigation. Cunha et al. (2022) results indicated positive associations between the cognitive reassessment strategy and the presence of Subjective Happiness and Meaning of Life, while the strategy of emotional suppression negatively interfered. Cognitive change was an effective emotion regulation strategy, aiding both in reassessing the situation and managing the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. Deb et al. (2020) found a significant positive correlation between spirituality and subjective happiness. Spirituality was also correlated with meaning in life and life satisfaction. No significant gender difference was observed statistically in Subjective Happiness, meaning, satisfaction in life and spirituality, although female students scored higher in all four psychological domains on average. The study highlights the urgent need for educational institutions to address students' mental health through comprehensive programs. Based on SEM analysis, Krok and Telka (2019) found that Meaning in Life and optimism was positively related to both subjective and psychological well-being. Optimism partially mediated the relationships between meaning in life and both subjective and psychological well-being..

## CONCLUSION

The present research suggests that there exists a mutually reinforcing connection between Meaning in Life and Subjective Happiness. It has become evident that individuals who perceive a greater sense of meaning in their lives tend to experience higher levels of Subjective Happiness. Conversely, those who report higher levels of Subjective Happiness also tend to derive a deeper sense of meaning from their lives. This reciprocal relationship highlights the importance of considering both meaning and happiness together when seeking to understand psychological well-being. Further, exploration of this synergistic relationship could offer valuable insights into effective strategies for promoting overall life satisfaction and fulfillment.

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## Love: The Source of Happiness, Hope and Quality life

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### ABSTRACT

*Modern man suffers from a societal induced sense of alienation and loneliness. Modern culture and technology depersonalized humans. This resulted in the numbing of individuals ability to love and induce existential crisis for individual. Love is the dominant virtue of the universe and imperative element of human relationship. It is realized truth that love really is all around us. Emotion, cognition and behaviors are the components of love. It is based on intimacy, passion, commitment and relationship satisfaction. It addresses the question of meaning and existence of life. Love is the source of understanding the meaning of human existence. Love is an essential aspect of being human, not simple by-product of biological nature of human being. Love emphasized the personal worth of the individual and the centrality of human value. It is an emotional investment in the relationship. This chapter explains how love affects the existential and humanistic perspective of life and solves basic human conflict about value and meaning of life.*

**Keywords:** Love, Happiness, Hope, Quality life.

### INTRODUCTION

What is the path to happiness? This question is the burning issue in the life of ordinary people. Human beings try to seek the satisfactory answer of the existential question. Direct answer is not possible for human being. He tries to understand the intricacies of life and mechanism of love helps to address the life crisis. In the maze of life experience, love can be realized in every aspect of life enriching the existence. There is co-relation between happiness and

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love, individuals in loving relationship feel higher life satisfaction (Hendrick & Hendrick., 2021). This situation creates doubt about mundane life and existential crisis start to emerge. The existential crises can dominate a person's life any time. The immediate solution of life crisis is reflected in love feeling. Love is a wondrous, deep tender and rewarding state that facilitate to man to come out from existential crisis. Person obsessed with existential issue of death and the meaning of life takes help with love. Sternberg (1986) mentioned love (intimacy) as "feelings of closeness, connectedness, and bondness in relationship" (p.119). There is emotionally satisfying about being loved and is something very practical about it. The benefits of love influenced physical health, by lowering blood pressure and cut cardiovascular disease risk, experienced in individuals in loving relationships (Post., et al). Love seems to be two way affair and grows best when it is both given and received. Love not only the condition of being loved but also the act of loving. Love contributes positively and maximally to personality development. To understand the meaning of love is the central issue of human existence. Love is the dominant virtue of the universe. It happens in many ways throw out life; beginning with child's love for mother, then adolescent's infatuation and in the last love is expressed in caring for others as an adult. Is love the counterpart of hate? Are both opposite sides of the same coin? Or is love, in its way, the most deciding motivator of behavior? How do individuals understand it, its matters? Love helps in a search for life meaning. Love cannot assume a biological or an instinctual phenomenon but has cultural context also.

## DIFFERENT ASPECT OF LOVE

Is love the counterpart of hate? Are both opposite sides of the same coin? Or is love, in its way, the most deciding motivator of behavior? How do individuals understand it, matters? Evolutionary perspective of psychology mentioned that love developed because of its adaptive consequences. Different researchers defined love in different dimension. Freud defined 'love' as the "frustrated desire" (1951) and Watson present 'love' as "erogenous stimulation". Humanistic psychoanalyst Erich Fromm observed that love is an art (Fromm, 1956). In this way love is understood in different perspective. Attraction to opposite sex is to produces offspring that will grow to produces. Where does the love come into this picture? From male perspective, it is necessary for male to ensure the paternity of offspring. An emotional commitment between male and female has adaptive value and ensure that female will not mate with others. From female side, love helps to ensure that male will provide resources, until the child is grown. Freud viewed love as arising from sexual instincts. In oral stage, mother becomes the child's first object of love. According Freud, the strong feeling accompanying mature sexual attraction is love. Erick Erikson considered the sixth stage of psychosocial development (person established own Identity) as appropriate time at which love develop. at this stage (intimacy verses Isolation) adult is ready to commit to another and experiencing love. Only those who established identity experience love. it means love is the result healthy and normal development. Another idea is that the nature of childhood attachment relationship is indicator of later romantic relationships. Can Individual cunts

the ways he is able to love? The cognitive approach of love tries to classify the various type of loving. Unfortunately, love cannot be fixed in any simple classification. Someone distinguishes a respectful, companionate love from an emotional devotion, comparing infatuation to true love. There are so many kinds of love because there are so many ways that individuals reflect and interpreted pure drives and interpersonal relations (Bell & Strenberg, 1985). The humanistic psychologists have explained the etiology of love in different way. They believed that person who realize his potential to become best, is the person who can has truest love. They also observed that a lover first accept himself then he gives real love to others. Love helps in a search for life meaning. Maslow puts the need for love on third stage of his need pyramid. He emphasized that after physiological and safety needs, one can work on need for love. The achieving the need of love facilitate the self-actualization. Maslow describes two types of love, being love and deficiency love. Deficiency love is selfish and needy and being love is unselfish and respect for the needs of the other. Being -lover is more self-actualize and motivates partner toward self -actualization.

### **NATURE OF LOVE IS SUBJECTIVE**

Is true love a product of the mind, or is it an ephemeral (having a very short life cycle) and unimportant product of some neurophysical state? Mostly it is neither. Love has various aspects and should be addressed from different perspective. As Hall mentioned that "love, a derivative of the sex instinct, can neutralize hate, a derivative of the death instinct. Love can replace hate, and hate love" (p.42). Love is inherent emotion of human being. Deprivation of any emotion is harmful. But deprivation of love is highly damaging. Technological age has introduced negative aspect in love making, resulting in people obsession for sex and ignoring positive aspect of love. As a result, tenderness and closeness are absent in sexual unions. Love is active and positive aspect of human growth and achievement. Love is a special characteristic of person that actually humanizes men and women. In feeling of loneliness, individual makes contact with immediate world and other individuals. Love is the consequence of individuals attempt to join with others. Love becomes immature when seeking of love overwhelms the giving of love. The mature person is capable of true giving and receives genuine love. According to Fromm, love is the absolute answer to the unavoidable question, the problem of human existence. Cultural context influences the experiences and expectation of love.

### **LOVE AND HAPPINESS:**

Pursuit of happiness is never ending desire of human being. It is not an isolate state of being. It is collective entity of diverse human feeling and needs satisfaction. Love is psychological and biological source of happiness to human being. Common thought of happiness is that someone with good food to eat, safe place to live, good friend or companion, good health, and family with love is indicators of happiness. Such factors of happiness are general in nature. Happiness seems subjective construct of individual. The aspect of happiness is what the individuals themselves think. This approach to happiness is known as 'subjective well-being (Diener, 2000). Both personality factors and situational

factors are important for happiness. Happiness is not a simple function of being in favorable circumstances (Friedman & Schustack, 2016 .P, 340). It is more a function of internal rationalization than external encounters. It evolved in human being and influenced the personal and social aspects. Love prepared young and willing to accept the identities of partners. Love seeks relationship of intimacy, partnership, and affiliation that is the foundation of happiness. Love is not a means to seek immediate sexual attraction or fulfillment of immature needs. It nurtures the spirituality that lay stable foundation for feeling of happiness. Through love, individual shares a trusting relationship with others and accept the existence of each other. Love is joint relationship, in which lovers' mode of life is shared. Erikson wrote, "Love is mutuality of devotion forever subduing the antagonisms inherent in divided function"

In mature love, partners are caring for and feel a sense of responsibilities toward each other. Mature love has respect for the development of the partner. In true and mature love each partner must have knowledge of his partner. Love is much more complex than simply means of satisfying sexual desire. Brotherly love unites the isolated individuals. Love needs will (effort) to be lasting and meaning full. Love without will is unrestrained and irresponsible and end all discipline and commitment. Passionate love is correlated with marital satisfaction whereas practical attitude about love initiates mutual respect between partners.

### **QUALITY OF LIFE AND FEELING OF LOVE**

Warmth of love serves to stimulate intellectual, social, spiritual and emotional development. All kinds of human developments are directly and indirectly related to the feeling of love. Love is basic instinct of human being. No one clime to be deprived of it. Deprivation of love can be damaging to the self-concept in both childhood and adulthood (Hurlock, 2016.p, 211). It contributes positively and maximally to personality development. It must be appropriate in term of quality, quantity and method of experience. Too much love leads over protectiveness and is bad psychologically. Too much love develops personality patterns that ill-fitted to face realistic life. Much loved child is likely to become submissive, gullible and lacking in self –confidence and leadership quality. He also tends to become intellectual rigid and to have difficulty adjusting to new situation and people. Emotional warmth of love stimulates intellectual development that set the base for all type of future development.

### **CONCLUSION**

In general opinion, love has a biological basis and become initiator of reproductive process. The romantic ideal tells us that passionate love make life romantic and livable. Love must be expressed in ways that meet the one's needs at that age, especially the needs for attention, interest, understanding and sympathy. Love also grows out of a meaningful friendship. Love sets merry way in life, and distracts human from suffering. Experiences have emphasized that true love, or long-lasting love happened when it is part of an unselfish and mature concern for another. Without love in real life, the person who is struggling for a value and direction in his life is overwhelmed with anxiety, become neurotic and psychologically impaired. An individual who has realistic and practical

approach to mundane life could not ignore the importance and positive role of love in progressive life.

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## Self-Compassion: Key to Happiness

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### ABSTRACT

*The current paper attempts to present diversified evidence through research that shows how self-compassion is a significant source of happiness and well-being. First, it defines self-compassion and pathways to eudaimonic happiness. Further, it explains how self-compassion significantly indicates one's well-being. Lastly, the article considers the emerging research suggesting that learning or intervention for self-compassion can be helpful, particularly for those who have experienced severe types of adversity (rape survivors, victims of domestic violence, etc.), as suffering is an unavoidable part of one's condition. Hence, it would be beneficial to teach those people specific skills for soothing and comforting themselves when they need it the most. Apart from this, possible implications and recommendations are also discussed in this chapter.*

**Keywords:** *Self Compassion, Happiness, Mental health, Emotion-Focused Training for Self-Compassion and Self-Protection.*

### INTRODUCTION

Self-compassion is becoming a popular concept in the field of psychology. Many studies have been conducted to identify the effect of self-compassion on various variables. According to Neff (2003a), self-compassion is an attitude towards

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oneself that entails being kind and understanding towards oneself through difficult times and accepting that making errors is a natural aspect of being human. Neff, Bluth, and Blanton (2015) have described it as an open mindset that progresses from one's suffering, experiences, and feelings to caring for and doing good to others, understanding others, having non-judgmental attitudes towards incompetence and failure, and realizing one's experience as part of the experience of being human. Self-kindness versus self-judgment, shared humanity versus isolation, and mindfulness versus over-identification are the three essential aspects of self-compassion that interact. Neff (2003) stated that "Self-compassion is an emotionally positive self-attitude that should protect against the negative consequences of self-judgment, isolation, and rumination (such as depression)." Further, Neff and Beretvas (2012) have defined "Self-compassion involves being kind to oneself when confronting personal inadequacies or situational difficulties, framing the imperfection of life in terms of common humanity, and being mindful of negative emotions so that one neither suppresses nor ruminates on them."

Self-compassion is a potent source of inspiration for development and fortitude that equips people to deal with challenges and change. Individuals with self-compassion can see how all aspects of human nature are interconnected and accept themselves in painful circumstances gently and non-judgmentally. Excellent personal initiative for self-change and self-improvement, as well as positive psychological functioning such as happiness, optimism, wisdom, curiosity, initiative, and positive affect, are proven to correlate with self-compassion significantly and positively (Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick, 2007). As a result, self-compassionate people do not hold themselves accountable for their mistakes, which increases the likelihood that they will be willing to accept responsibility for their actions and try new things (Neff, 2009).

## **SELF-COMPASSION AND HAPPINESS**

Self-compassion is a psychological concept that involves treating oneself with kindness, understanding, and acceptance during personal suffering or failure. Research suggests that cultivating self-compassion can lead to increased happiness and well-being. Leary, Tate, Adams, Allen, and Hancock, (2007) found that self-compassion was associated with greater happiness, emotional resilience, and less negative self-judgment. They also discovered that self-compassion buffers the negative impact of self-criticism on well-being. Allen and Leary (2010) explored the role of self-compassion in stress management and coping strategies. It revealed that individuals high in self-compassion reported lower stress levels and greater happiness due to their ability to handle difficulties with self-kindness and understanding. Cunha and Paixão (2019) examined the relationship between self-compassion and happiness in adolescents. The findings demonstrated that self-compassion was positively associated with happiness and overall well-being, highlighting the importance of cultivating self-compassion during adolescence.

Raab (2014) explores the relationships between mindfulness, self-compassion, and empathy. The findings suggest that self-compassion is vital in enhancing happiness and well-being among healthcare professionals, which positively



influences patient outcomes. Breines and Chen (2012) demonstrated that individuals high in self-compassion are more motivated to improve themselves than those low in self-compassion. It showed that individuals with higher levels of self-compassion were more motivated to make positive changes, leading to increased happiness and personal growth. Smeets, Neff, Alberts, and Peters (2014) found that a brief self-compassion intervention significantly increased self-compassion, happiness, and life satisfaction and reduced depressive symptoms in female college students. Parihar, Tiwari, and Rai (2020) explored the relationship between self-compassion and inter-dependent happiness in married Hindu couples. The study revealed that demographic factors like age, year of marriage, and number of family members were related positively, whereas number of children and socio-economic status were related negatively. Neff, Kirkpatrick, and Rude (2007) found that self-compassion is associated positively with happiness, life satisfaction, and overall psychological well-being. It also showed that self-compassion is a buffer against negative emotions and enhances emotional resilience.

Sirois and Kitner (2015) examined the relationship between self-compassion, procrastination, and coping. It found that self-compassion was associated with less procrastination and more effective coping strategies, leading to higher happiness and well-being. These studies provide evidence for the positive impact of self-compassion on happiness and overall psychological well-being. Practising self-compassion can help individuals cultivate a kinder and more accepting attitude towards themselves, leading to greater happiness and resilience in facing life's challenges. Pastore, Brett, and Fortier (2022) demonstrated a positive bi-directional relationship between self-compassion and happiness. They explained that happier individuals are kinder to themselves and highly connected with others. Additionally, results revealed that mindfulness was the most robust subcomponent of self-compassion to influence happiness positively. Similar observations have been made by other researchers that self-compassionate people report more happiness than those lacking self-compassion (Hollis-Walker & Colosimo, 2011; Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick, 2007; Shapira & Mongrain, 2010; Smeets, Neff, Alberts, & Peters, 2014). Self-compassionate people display happiness and higher levels of optimism, gratitude, emotional intelligence, and positive affect (Breen, Kashdan, Lenser, & Fincham, 2010; Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick, 2007).

From the above-reviewed studies, it is clear that self-compassion produces necessary psychological changes in negative emotions. Self-compassionate techniques help calm negative emotions and allow one to recall that they are not alone in their experiences of loss, sadness, or grief. People are less likely to report depression and anxiety and are more likely to experience happiness and optimism. Further, the sense of negative emotion can be reduced by using compassionate statements and reappraisal, allowing our increased attention and wise decision-making. Thus, self-compassion can be a barrier between people and depressive symptoms, including self-judgement, solitude, and over-identification.

In addition, self-compassionate individuals are better equipped to deal with themselves than those who do not (Krner et al., 2015). This is probably because

happier people are kinder to them and more connected to others. The earlier research reminds us how compassionate behaviours have an upward influence on positive but not negative affect (Dulin & Dominy 2008). Magnus et al. (2010) state that self-compassion is associated with competence, connectivity, independence, and self-determination, all necessary conditions for well-being and happiness. Further, self-compassion serves as an emotion-regulation technique that teaches people how to deal with unpleasant feelings gently, improving their well-being (Neff, 2004). Additionally, self-compassion promotes feelings of fulfillment and connection that serve as a protective barrier against all the harmful and destructive emotions brought on by complex or challenging events in our everyday lives (Wei, Liao, Ku, & Shaffer, 2011).

## CONCLUSION

Taking good care of oneself positively impacts both interpersonal and intrapersonal well-being. Due to this, one is better equipped to handle life's challenges, aware of their pain, and more compassionate in their actions. By cultivating a caring, connected, and balanced mental and emotional state, we can reduce psychopathology while enhancing happiness and well-being. When we commit errors or face difficulties in life, self-compassion supports us to carry it wherever we go. Self-compassion can be developed and maintained through practice. Further, psychological therapies can focus on cultivating self-compassion to improve happiness and well-being. Further, counselors may promote mindfulness in their treatments to foster happiness and pleasurable experiences and to increase overall self-compassion.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is recommended that educational institutions, health organizations, or corporate sectors help their entrants develop self-compassionate training by asking people to be mindful without judging their thoughts, feelings, and sensations in the present moment, recognizing that they are not alone in their adversities; however, these adversities may be familiar to others, and also by telling them to be gentle, supportive, and encouraging towards themselves rather than being critical or punitive. For example, Smeets, Neff, Alberts, and Peters (2014) found that three weeks of self-compassion training for college students resulted in significantly increased optimism and self-efficacy and a massive decline in rumination compared to the control group. Thus, these programs may have positive short- and long-term advantages for distressed individuals. Thus, the emergence of self-compassion must be necessary for parents and teachers to ensure greater happiness, precisely for adolescents in their critical developmental period (puberty) or experiencing a transition from adolescence to adulthood. Therefore, psychological interventions to enhance well-being and happiness in individuals' lives should focus on developing self-compassion.
2. To increase self-compassion, one may write self-compassionate journals of everyday life to improve mental health and happiness. An attempt by Shapira and Mongrain (2010) has demonstrated that writing self-compassionate letters for months has improved symptoms of depression and increased

happiness in life. By wrapping one's pain in the warm embrace of self-compassion, positive feelings are generated that help balance the negative ones, allowing for more joyful states of mind. By wrapping one's miseries or painful experiences in self-compassion, positive and healthy feelings are produced and help the person balance the negative memories by enabling more joyful mental states. That is the beauty of self-compassion.

3. Emotion-Focused Training for Self-Compassion and Self-Protection (EFT-SCP) is a novel intervention in enhancing the self-compassion of an individual, as these programs are designed to cultivate compassion. For example, Halamová, Koróniová, Kanovský, Túniyová, and Kupeli (2019) have reported that 12 weeks of weekly intervention significantly reduced the self-criticism and uncompassionate responses of the individuals. This intervention encourages individuals to cultivate self-compassion and develop protective anger to reduce self-criticism.

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## The Discipline of Kindness that Transforms Mindsets for Well-being

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### ABSTRACT

*In the contemporary landscape, kindness has emerged as an indispensable element for the very survival of humanity. Prominent studies have revealed compelling links between the act of kindness and our psychological well-being (Mathers, 2016), emphasizing its crucial role as a fundamental ingredient for happiness- a pursuit embraced universally (Bruhn & Schnebelen, 2017). Beyond its psychological benefits, decades of research have affirmed that kindness and social cohesion not only contribute to mental health but also foster longevity (Seppal et al., 2013). Furthermore, this chapter illuminates the importance of the mindsets of individual leaders who play a pivotal role in shaping the overall positive ambience of a region (Amy Gutmann, Dennis Thompson, 2010; Ryan K. Gottfredson a, Christopher S. Reina, 2021). Exploring the historical tapestry of leadership, it becomes apparent that certain leaders wield immense influence, steering nations towards conflicts driven by personal agendas and ideologies. Social scientists have meticulously categorized these leadership styles, from tyrannical to visionary, kindness to cruelty, providing insights into the far-reaching generosity of their mindsets. Reflecting on the tumultuous 20th century, marked by devastating wars and ideological conflicts, underscores the imperative of compassion in leadership. Delving further into the science behind kindness, this chapter explores its intricate relationship with hormones, revealing the transformative effects of acts of kindness on individual mindset and better happiness or psychological well-being.*

**Keywords:** Kindness, Happiness, Mindsets, Well-being.

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## INTRODUCTION

In an age marked by relentless progress and unprecedented challenges, the discipline of kindness emerges as a transformative force, not only for individual well-being but also for the very survival of humanity. The contemporary landscape underscores the indispensable role of kindness, revealing compelling links to psychological well-being and happiness that resonate universally. As studies illuminate the profound impact of acts of kindness on individual mindsets, this chapter delves into the nuanced tapestry of leadership mindsets, historical narratives, and the intricate science behind the transformative effects of kindness.

From the poignant reflections of leaders like Nelson Mandela to the historical legacies of figures such as Abraham Lincoln and Gandhi, the narrative weaves through the virtues of forgiveness and reconciliation. These visionary leaders, embodying kindness and wisdom, not only healed wounds but also paved the way for progress by leaving behind the burdens of pain and bitterness. However, the chapter also acknowledges the darker sides of leadership, highlighting the devastating consequences when power becomes a toxic addiction, steering nations towards conflict and chaos. The historical echoes of leaders like Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin serve as stark reminders of the dangers of unchecked ambition and cruelty.

Transitioning from historical reflections to the realm of science, the chapter explores the intricate relationship between kindness and hormones, shedding light on the profound impacts of generosity on individual mindsets and overall well-being. As research reveals the linkages between hormonal balance and behaviours rooted in kindness, the narrative expands to encompass the broader landscape of global leadership. In the quest for a flourishing century, the discourse unfolds into a blueprint that champions moral values as the bedrock of civilizations throughout history. Kindness, forgiveness, and compromise emerge as pivotal pillars, offering a path towards enduring success amidst the challenges of the 21st century.

As the chapter draws to a close, it emphasizes the urgent need for leaders of kindness and reason in a world marked by suspicion, nationalism, and widening economic disparities. It calls for a shift in focus towards virtues that transcend borders and ideologies, offering hope for a future where unity triumphs over division. Through a nuanced exploration of historical narratives, scientific insights, and moral imperatives, this chapter seeks to illuminate the transformative potential of kindness—a discipline that not only enriches individual lives but also holds the key to a more equitable, harmonious, and resilient world. As we stand on the precipice of significant changes, the call for kindness resonates as a potent force that can shape the course of human history for generations to come.

## MINDSETS OF LEADERS AND KINDNESS: A WELL-BEING PERSPECTIVE

*“As I stand before the door to my freedom, I realize that to truly step forward, I must leave my pain, anger, and bitterness behind. Otherwise, I am still in prison.”* These were the

poignant words of 71-year-old Nelson Mandela upon leaving prison after 27 years of confinement. The white-haired, humble man also humbly stated. "I stand here before you not as a prophet, but as a humble servant of the people." From Abraham Lincoln to Nelson Mandela, visionary and kind leaders have become legendary for their ability to forgive their opponents and oppressors. Rather than seeking retribution, these wise leaders extended gestures of reconciliation that not only healed wounds but also allowed them to focus on pressing matters.

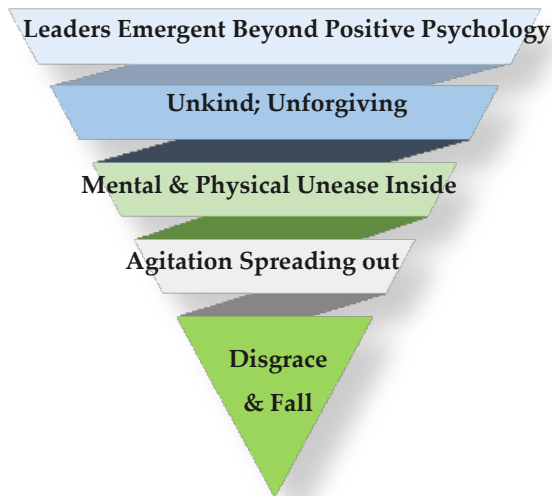
Kindness and forgiveness are the hallmarks of wisdom. These leaders understood the power of letting go of past grievances to pursue a brighter future. They were keenly aware of the benefits, including improved psychological well-being, that come with embracing forgiveness and kindness for the greater good. In exploring the impact of leadership mindsets on global history, it becomes apparent that certain individuals wielded immense influence, often steering nations towards unwarranted conflicts fueled by personal agendas and misguided ideologies. For some, the allure of power evolved into a destructive addiction, blinding them to the genuine welfare of their people.

Renowned social scientists such as Hermann have delved into the concept of a single leader acting as the ultimate "decision unit," shaping the course of pivotal moments in history (MG Hermann, 2001). Scholars have sought to categorize the diverse range of leadership styles, from the tyrannical to the visionary (Hermann, MG., T. Preston, B. Korany, and TM Shaw, 2001; FI Greenstein, 2009; Dyson, SB 2014). Reflecting on the tumultuous 20th century, it's impossible to ignore figures like Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, or Mao Zedong. Each left an indelible mark, their actions rippling across continents, often with devastating consequences. Similarly, the partition of the South Asian subcontinent stands as a stark reminder, with figures like Redcliff, Mountbatten, Nehru, Gandhi, and Jinnah central to its narrative of upheaval and bloodshed. It is observed that some leaders, or the circles around them, wield an unassailable influence, often steering their nations towards unwarranted hostilities fueled by personal agendas and misguided philosophies. Power, for them, has become a toxic addiction.

In "Modern Times," British historian Paul Johnson attributed the staggering death toll of the 20th century to the unchecked expansion of state power, the erosion of religious influence, and the rise of tyrannical ideologies championed by megalomaniacal statesmen (Paul Johnson, & Linda Osband, 1983). This era saw European empires particularly the British, French, and Spanish-dominating vast swathes of the globe, dictating the fate of millions. Yet, amidst this historical tapestry of domination and conflict, there emerges a growing recognition of the need for empathy and kindness in leadership. While many official leaders still shy away from acknowledging past injustices or atrocities, there are encouraging signs of change. Canada's former prime minister Steven Harper, for instance, publicly expressed remorse for the treatment of indigenous peoples- a step towards reconciliation and healing (Samantha Loppie, Charlotte Reading & Sarah de Leeuw, 2013). Around the world, scattered voices of apology and remorse hint at a shift towards a more forgiving and compassionate era. As we navigate the complexities of the 21st century, marked by unprecedented global challenges, these gestures of kindness and acknowledgement of historical



wrongs serve as guiding lights towards a more equitable and harmonious future. The course of history unveils a solemn truth: excessive triumphs often breed arrogance, leading well-meaning intentions down treacherous paths. The British and French empires, despite their conquests, bore enduring scars- both societal and psychological that never truly faded. Across the distant shores of Japan, the harrowing toll of unchecked militarism and unbridled ambition stands as a stark warning of the dangers of untampered success. In this critical juncture, as Western and burgeoning Eastern powers converge, there arises a pressing need to revisit the essence of amity. It may be time to engage in dialogue with the wisdom of Pacific sages, to rekindle kind values that nurture harmony and mutual understanding (Hui BPH et al. 2020). Neglecting this call may propel us toward the brink of yet another, potentially more devastating, conflict- one that could hasten varied forms of retreat. The 20th century bore witness to humanity's darkest hours: two world wars of cataclysmic scale, man-made famines, and the ominous arrival of the nuclear age, with its arsenal of chemical weapons and poison gas. Despite the relentless march of technological advancement, some held onto hope that progress would eventually stem the tide of senseless casualties driven by divisions of race, religion, and ethnicity. This volatile century, marked by conflict, staggering socio-economic disparities, and the rise of new ideologies from Marxism to Cultural Globalization, prompted a profound shift in our collective consciousness. Notably, concepts like the "Global Theory of Justice," championed by luminaries such as Amartya Sen (Sen's Capability 1999) and Martha Nussbaum, challenged established norms, sparking a reevaluation of morality itself (Anders Burman & Synne Myrebøe, 2019).



**Figure 1: Leadership without positive psychology of Morality makes an Inverse Pyramid of 'Rise & Fall' (developed by the authors).**

Gone are the days when apologies carried weight, forgiveness was sought, and virtues of humility and kindness were universally revered. In their stead, the supremacy of trade, the prowess of military might, and the unyielding force

of global marketing now steer the course of human affairs. Today, moral dilemmas seem confined to the realms of the elite and the worldly, a distant echo of times past. In this evolving tapestry of values and power dynamics, the imperative remains clear: to forge a path that honours the lessons of yesteryears while daring to envision a future where the legacy of peace, compassion, and genuine understanding prevails. It is a clarion call to transcend the temptations of hubris, embrace humility, and rediscover the timeless wisdom that binds us all as inhabitants of this fragile planet.

## SCIENCE BEHIND KINDNESS TO WELLBEING

At the start of the twentieth century, most individuals in Western countries embraced the authority of morality. Intellectuals of the time held firm beliefs in the existence of an honourable moral law. They also maintained faith in moral progress, viewing human viciousness and barbarism as on the decline. However, by the century's end, it becomes challenging to take a definitive stance on moral topics. Regarding the importance of home and family, the great philosopher Confucius once said, "We conceive that social monsters are indeed created at home and so are great achievers." It is speculated that even Hitler himself developed a brutal mindset and a lack of compassion due to a loveless home environment. His narcissistic-sociopathic tendencies meant that he couldn't handle rejection or criticism without consequences, often resorting to blaming others for his failings.

Remarkably, the interrelation between political leaders' upbringing and the importance of hormones is well-documented. Researchers at a University in Jerusalem found a link between a gene and the ruthless behaviour of leaders (Michael Hopkin, 2008). A wide range of research has also linked different forms of generosity to better health, even among the sick and elderly. Hormones are essential for our everyday survival. They control our sleep, attitude, stress, anxiety, growth, and more (Han KS, Kim L, & Shim I, 2012). One could compare their influence to that of temperature on temperament.

These days, from a General to a common soldier, all are aware of the personal health benefits of exercise and selecting foods. However, many people are not familiar with the importance of hormones. We are often unaware of the significant relationship between the power of practicing forgiveness, gratitude, donation, and maintaining a sound body and mind. When it comes to heart health, hormones also play a leading role (Coulter SA. 2011; Bhupathy P, Haines CD, & Leinwand LA., 2017). They coordinate the physiology and behaviour of individuals by regulating, integrating, and controlling bodily functions.

Over evolutionary time, hormones have often been co-opted by the nervous system to influence behaviour, ensuring reproductive success. Gonadal hormones, produced by the ovaries and testes in response to precursor hormones found in the pituitary gland and other brain areas, impact brain chemistry and circuitry, thus influencing emotions, mood, and behaviour. Most research into "why good habits (like forgiveness, kindness, giving) make us feel better" has centred around these gonadal hormones (Boivin JR, et al., 2017) It's been also reported in scientific papers that all these 'good habits' towards others have been shown to increase health benefits even in people with chronic illnesses

like multiple sclerosis. (Pataky MW., Young WF., Nair KS. 2021; Razi et al., 2022). Numerous authors have explored the profound impacts that individual powerful leaders of major nations wield over their countries and the world at large.

Well-known social scientists such as Fred Greenstein, Byman, and Pollack have introduced the topic of leader characteristics and their influence on policy (Greenstein, *FI Personality and Politics*, 1987; Byman, DL., and KM Pollack. 2001). They specified conditions under which leaders' personalities matter, describing the steps in the process of explaining leaders' actions. Some of these scholars provided specific historical examples of the importance of personality in affecting outcomes. In today's era of increasing geopolitical turbulence, the influence of political leaders appears more formidable than ever. Meanwhile, the landscape of democracy continues to evolve. Amidst these shifts, the global populace often feels powerless. Modern science and social scientists now recognize the intricate relationship between the science of hormones and its significant effects on individuals, particularly influential leaders. The insights derived from this research must be duly acknowledged and integrated into our understanding (Abend G. 2013; Smrithi Prasad et al., 2021).

## THE BLUEPRINT FOR A FLOURISHING CENTURY

The interplay of morals, particularly kindness, with our overall well-being, is a vital theme for the 21st century, a pivotal era marked by relentless progress. In this age of ceaseless motion, pausing to reflect becomes a luxury. The debate around whether to halt the relentless march of technology towards war or peace seems futile to many thinkers. Their rationale is straightforward: monumental challenges confront us in this century, challenges we must surmount to secure any semblance of a future. Central to this task is a deep understanding of the pivotal role moral values play in the sustenance of civilizations throughout human history.

Throughout history, no civilization has endured without embracing reconciliation and peace rooted in moral values. The pillars of gratitude, forgiveness, kindness, and compromise stand as the bedrock upon which we can secure a future for generations filled up with positive psychology and well-being yet to come (Godwin C. 2016; Rowland, L. 2018; Ghosh, M. 2020). While kindness and other moral values may at times seem like an investment in negativity, it is, in fact, a strategic avenue that leads to harmony, paving the way for enduring success (Aquino, K. et al., 2011; Haines, G. 2019).

"Revenge is not justice," proclaimed the US Military victors in the Pacific theatre at the close of World War II. Although there are many debates regarding the bombing of the atomic bombs and other tragic consequences during WWII towards Japan, this pivotal moment saw pressure from US leaders on the mainland to punish the Emperor of Japan. Yet, their Military General, recognizing the fragile state of Japan and the reverence for its Emperor, chose a different path—a path of reconciliation. The emperor remained, albeit stripped of divine status, and in an act of profound humility, Emperor Hirohito visited American headquarters for the first time. In this historical photograph of MacArthur and Hirohito standing side by side, we catch a glimpse of forgiveness and magnanimity that laid the

foundation for Japan's remarkable post-war recovery.

Had the world been graced with more leaders embodying the virtues of kindness and a spirit of giving, our reality could have been vastly different- free from hunger, pollution, and the scourge of devastating conflicts. It is within the personal behaviors of leaders that crises are either ignited or resolved, where peace and cooperation flourish or intolerance and extremism take root.

History cautions us against the dangers of elevating individuals or groups to dangerous heights of influence. Today, as we grapple with a world marked by suspicion, nationalism, and economic disparities, the personalities of our leaders play a central role in shaping our collective fate. From political power to corporate dominance, our policies often mirror the personalities of those in positions of influence, whether they be selfish local elites or despots amassing wealth at the expense of their people.

In the early decades of this century, a troubling trend towards suspicion, nationalism, and hostility towards diverse religions has become all too familiar. Meanwhile, economic disparities have widened to unprecedented levels. Now, more than ever, we require leaders of kindness and reason- individuals who champion forgiveness, foster friendly relations with neighbors and nations alike, and cultivate a spirit of trust and cooperation. The social psychology of generosity offers a roadmap for reconciliation among people of differing political persuasions or religious beliefs, pointing towards a future where unity triumphs over division.

## POWER OF VIRTUES

Mark Twain once wisely remarked, "Kindness is a language which the deaf can hear and the blind can read." To usher in an era of lasting well-being or broader happiness, we must embrace virtues such as kindness and a culture of giving (UNESCO MGIEP, 2021). These intangibles, invisible yet life-saving like the air we breathe, are essential for navigating the challenges of the 21st century- an era that threatens to surpass the destructiveness of the tumultuous 20th century. Where the realm of science ends, the domain of moral imperatives begins.

The behaviour of selfish or oppressive individuals often finds roots in upbringing, environment, and even physiological functions, as numerous studies suggest these personalities to be unyielding (Gilbert P. 2020; Bar-Tal, D., et al.,2007). Save for a few regions like North America and sparsely populated continents, much of the world has endured the brutality of conflicts and wars. It is no wonder, then, that many have strived to consign warfare to the annals of history. Peace stands as the sole antidote to anarchy, unrest, and the prevalence of 'double standards. Ordinary people yearn for the elegance of simplicity in their lives.



Figure 2: Key Pillars of Kindness (developed by the authors)

For decades, accolades have been bestowed upon leaders for their prowess in leadership, technical achievements, and material wealth. Yet, apart from a handful of exceptions, few have been honored specifically for acts of profound kindness or forgiveness.

The world is still embroiled in the largest psychological experiment of history, prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As the dean of the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai observed and commented a couple of years back, "There will emerge a new science of resilience. We could learn how to bolster resilience in individuals before calamities strike (Denworth, L. 2020)." Similarly, we must embark on empirical research into the realms of generosity and well-being, fundamental pillars for global reconciliation. The United Nations and top authorities concerned about this issue contemplate a 'Kindness Awareness Mission towards well-being or broader happiness' akin to its Peace Mission, engaging a spectrum from 'Generosity Activists' to humanitarian workers, social scientists, and psychologists.

Empathy and forgiveness serve as the wings of well-being, while acts of kindness are its legs. By embracing these qualities, we pave the way for harmony locally and globally, offering hope for a brighter future. It's clear now that ignoring the significance of forgiveness, kindness, and moral traits in individual leaders would be a mistake. However, many understand that personal flaws can hinder unity on a global level.

## CONCLUSION

Amid this historic episode that is reshaping our world, we find ourselves on the brink of significant changes in our social fabric, health landscape, and individual personas. The impacts will reverberate through the global economy, geopolitics, and the very fabric of our societies. However, perhaps most importantly, this period will usher in a profound shift in 'individual personality'. This chapter aimed to highlight the significance of the discipline of kindness in human survival, its profound impact on psychological well-being, and the transformative role of leadership mindsets. The profound link between practicing kindness and psychological well-being is no longer a new concept (Aquino, et al., 2011).

Well-being, a multifaceted concept, is intricately tied to greater happiness. It encompasses the richness of meaningful relationships, a sense of purpose, and improved physical health. Kindness emerges as the quintessential ingredient for happiness, the ultimate aspiration for many.

Though terms like 'Kindness and well-being, or their linguistic equivalents, find expression in nearly every language, this concept has been twisted and distorted in the annals of social sciences, especially in recent history. The inherent beauty of giving without expectation, of receiving something intangible in return, was often overlooked. Kindness, recognized by social scientists as crucial for well-being, also encounters a cross-cultural challenge. Western scholars uphold specific happiness standards, while the East presents diverse views. This divide stresses the need for inclusive happiness research. More Eastern voices are vital, illuminating kindness as a foundation of mental health for individuals and communities. An evolving global study can then honour human diversity and the varied routes to contentment. Among the fallout of the post-COVID era, the current global unrest, and geopolitical tensions, the significance of kindness and its ability to bolster the well-being of ordinary citizens stands out as a critical concern. Kindness is not synonymous with weakness; it is, in fact, a potent force.

In the clamour for technological progress and economic prosperity, a chorus rises to elevate kindness and celebrate compassionate souls for psychological well-being. This focus can transform our status quo positively. Delving into 'kindness and psychological well-being' and its profound impact on our mental health becomes imperative. Studies strongly link noble deeds, hormonal balance, and happiness. Pursuing 'kind people' fosters positive relationships, social cohesion, personal well-being, and organizational peace. Amidst global change, the call for kindness and well-being resounds louder than ever.

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**Theme - 4**  
**Happiness and Cognitive Health**

## Association Between Cognitive Health and Happiness: Theoretical Perspectives and Influential Factors

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### ABSTRACT

*Background of the study: Happiness as a concept has been extensively investigated in positive psychology, which focuses on the role of emotions, life satisfaction, and the absence of negative emotions in overall well-being. The relationship between cognitive health and happiness is intricate and varied, having been studied from various theoretical perspectives and contexts. Moreover, happiness has been connected to diverse aspects of cognitive wellness, encompassing factors such as cognitive functioning, mental health conditions like depression, engagement in physical activity, and choices regarding one's lifestyle. Aim: This chapter explores the correlation between cognitive health and happiness, and examines the theoretical frameworks that elucidate the interconnectedness of these two concepts. Moreover, the chapter expounds on how various cognitive processes or functions can affect an individual's perception of happiness. Method: The chapter examines and analyzes empirical findings to identify patterns, trends, and associations between cognitive processes or functions and happiness. Findings and Implications: The findings suggest that an individual's cognitive health or cognitive functions substantially impact their subjective well-being or happiness. Understanding the relationship between the concepts encourages us to enhance our well-being and overcome problems more effectively.*

**Keywords:** Cognitive Health, Happiness, Subjective Well-Being, Cognitive Functions.

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## INTRODUCTION

Happiness, also known as subjective well-being (SWB), is widely regarded as a primary objective for human beings (Veenhoven, 2009) and a central theme in positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Conversely, cognitive health encompasses a range of cognitive processes, such as reasoning, learning, memory, and emotional interpretation (Anstey, Cherbuin & Herath, 2013). Hence, individuals with robust cognitive health may effectively respond to life circumstances by optimizing cognitive, psychological, emotional, and behavioral functions. This chapter endeavors to explore the multifaceted relationship between cognitive health and happiness, influenced by theoretical perspectives, frameworks, and interconnected variables.

## OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of this chapter is to establish a connection between cognitive health and happiness or subjective well-being (SWB). The aim is to comprehend the impact of cognitive processes on our level of happiness and vice versa. This understanding can facilitate the development of strategies to improve overall well-being.

## METHOD

The authors sourced a large number of articles from databases such as Google Scholar, PubMed, and APA PsychNet, using keywords including "cognitive health," "cognition," "cognitive process," "happiness," "subjective well-being," and "cognitive perspectives." These articles were selected based on their relevance to the research topic, as determined by the authors. The chapter aims to provide a general overview of the key findings that emerged from the literature review.

## HAPPINESS RESEARCH AND COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE

From antiquity, philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle have attempted to define happiness in a way that went beyond circumstances and established it apart from the ups and downs of everyday existence. Happiness has long been a central theme in Western philosophies. Historically, it has appeared in three different eras: Greek philosophy, moral philosophy in post-enlightenment Western Europe, especially utilitarianism, and quality-of-life research in wealthy welfare states today. In contemporary debates, "happiness" often serves as a synonym for "the good," yet a consensus on its precise usage remains elusive. However, some philosophers, such as Dalai Lama, say that the search for a better life, with happiness as the ultimate emotion, is a common human desire. This viewpoint holds that happiness is a trait that penetrates one's entire life or course, rather than just a transient emotion (Noddings, 2003).

It was after the seminal review paper of Ed Diener (1984), that research on SWB has gained momentum in psychology (Diener, Lucas, and Oishi, 2002). SWB has been defined as "a person's cognitive and affective evaluations of his or her life" (Diener, Lucas, & Oishi, 2002, p. 63). Since then, SWB has been used interchangeably with happiness to avoid its ambiguous meaning in psychological research (cf.. Proctor, 2015; Veenhoven, 2012).

## COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE

Various perspectives on happiness exist, including set-point theories, affective theories, and cognitive theories, with different implications for the experience of happiness (See, Veenhoven, 2009 for details). However, we will briefly cover the cognitive perspective that postulates that happiness is the result of comparison with the standards set for a good life comparison can be either lifetime comparison, comparing whether one is doing worse or better than before, or a social comparison, which is a relative comparison between oneself and the society or people alike. These standards of a good life are, in turn, the social construction that we adopt from our cultures and societies. This makes one appraise one's own life with others' eyes, that is, how others think and how happy they are, which is a reflected appraisal (Veenhove, 2009).

Similarly, Lyubomirsky, Boehm, Kasri, & Zehm (2011) reviewed a series of experiments they conducted supporting the construction theory of well-being, which postulates that individuals who are happy and satisfied differ systematically in several cognitive processes, including self-reflection and regulation (Lyubomirsky 2001). For example, rumination, or self-focused thought, is more common in sad people than in cheerful ones and is associated with depressive symptoms (Lyubomirsky et al., 2011). This brings us to the focus of this chapter on how cognition, cognitive health, and happiness are related.

## THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF HAPPINESS AND COGNITIVE HEALTH

Empirical research indicates that positive emotions, like happiness, may boost cognitive function. A multi-method study by Tugade and Fredrickson (2004) found that positive emotion contributed to resilience and emotion regulation which was demonstrated by accelerated cardiovascular recovery in the participant. Another study states that happiness is linked to changes in neurobiology that might affect cognitive health. Positive emotions, for example, have been linked to increased activity in brain areas involved in cognitive control and emotional regulation, such as the prefrontal cortex and limbic system (Davidson et al., 2003).

Good mental health is crucial for managing daily stressors and functioning effectively, encompassing various components, such as self-perceptions, mental health literacy, attitudes toward mental disorders, cognitive skills, emotions, behaviours, and social skills (Fusar-Poli et al., 2020). Similarly, maintaining cognitive health is vital for preserving general well-being and quality of life, including mental functions such as memory, attention, language, and problem-solving.

### Memory

Happiness, according to research by Lyubomirsky and Tucker (1998), may have less to do with having pleasant experiences and more to do with how we recall them. Happy people usually see life more optimistically and interpret both good and bad events favourably. Their view of the world is shaped by this optimistic lens, which makes their mental landscape more flexible and upbeat. Relationships are strengthened when you can recall specifics about the people in

your life. Feelings of connection and belonging are cultivated by remembering inner jokes and shared experiences.

### **Attention**

According to research, one can greatly increase happiness by emphasizing the positive aspects of life's experiences (Fredrickson et al., 2000). While concentrating on the negative can result in rumination and decreased life satisfaction, this emphasis promotes pleasant emotions and well-being (Nolen-Hoeksema, 1991).

Fascinatingly, research indicates that happiness may have a negative effect on attentiveness (Di Giovinazzo, 2015). Due to their relaxed attitude, happy people may be less concentrated, which could affect their performance in specific circumstances. Interesting questions concerning the connection between happiness, attentiveness, and perception are brought up by this recent finding.

### **Problem-Solving**

According to Nolen-Hoeksema, Wisco, & Lyubomirsky (2008), happy people typically use language in a way that minimizes negativity and self-criticism, fostering resilience. Solving problems improves cognitive flexibility, which is essential for maintaining good cognitive health (Miyake et al., 2000). This promotes resilience in the face of setbacks by enabling us to tackle difficulties from various perspectives (Masten, 2001). We gain some self-assurance and a sense of accomplishment by facing and overcoming challenges, which improves our capacity to take on new challenges. This is an enduring positive cycle. We feel happier and less stressed as we get more adept at addressing problems and gaining resilience. This strengthens our ability to solve problems by improving cognitive function.

### **Metacognition**

Being able to recognize and comprehend our thoughts and emotions, or metacognition, is an important skill for developing happiness. We can significantly increase our well-being by challenging and reframing negative thought patterns once we are aware of them. But there's an intriguing twist, according to research: metacognition might have two sides. Although metacognition aids in emotion regulation, Sariçam's (2015) study points to a possible drawback. According to their research, metacognition itself can give rise to maladaptive coping techniques like avoidance or rumination, which function as a mediator between perceived stress and happiness. Stated differently, overanalyzing negative feelings can occasionally result in maladaptive coping strategies that impede happiness. Research by Sidi, Ackerman, & Erez (2017) emphasizes this complexity even more. According to their research, metacognition can paradoxically benefit from pleasant emotions. Pleasant events have the potential to improve cognitive functioning, but they can also impair our capacity to check our thoughts. This could result in our becoming overconfident in our assessments and possibly ignoring unfavourable biases or faulty mental processes.

### **Cognitive Appraisal**

Our emotional reaction is greatly influenced by the meaning we assign to certain occurrences. According to Lazarus and Folkman's cognitive appraisal theory

(1984), stressful situations are evaluated for their importance and possible coping techniques. Resilience and happiness during hardship can be enhanced by adopting healthy assessment practices, such as seeing obstacles as chances for personal development.

- **Fostering a Positive View:** Rephrasing your negative mental patterns. Reframe obstacles as short-term barriers and challenges as chances.
- **Pay Attention to the Positive:** Even in trying circumstances, try to find the good things that happened to you. Exercises focusing on gratitude can be beneficial in this way.
- **Preserve Perspective:** Recall the wider picture. A small setback doesn't determine your value as a person or your prospects for success.

Furthermore, the relationship between cognitive health and happiness is multifaceted and altered by theoretical perspectives and interconnected variables. Understanding this relationship can help guide interventions to improve general wellbeing. Cognitive health allows people to retain social connections, engage in meaningful activities, and deal with life problems, all of which contribute to their happiness and fulfilment (Hendrie et al. 2006).

Thus, individuals with good brain health may adapt to life situations while optimizing cognitive, psychological, emotional, and behavioral functions. Brain health is influenced by a variety of factors including ageing, accidents, mood disorders, substance addiction, and disease. While certain aspects cannot be changed, research indicates that lifestyle factors like food, physical activity, social involvement, and cognitive activity can stabilize or improve cognitive performance. These factors may affect the risk of dementia through various mechanisms. Furthermore, developing a cognitive reserve can protect against brain malfunction and postpone the onset of cognitive decline or dementia symptoms (Clare et al., 2017).

## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

In summary, the growing corpus of evidence indicates that happiness is more than just a brief emotional experience, but a powerful element that promotes cognitive health and well-being throughout the lifespan. Individuals who cultivate good emotions and encourage pleasure may experience not only increased subjective well-being but also long-term cognitive benefits.

The mechanisms underlying the link between happiness and cognitive health are still being explored. Pleasant emotions are thought to boost brain plasticity, rapid recovery and enhance neurogenesis, all of which contribute to improved cognitive function and resilience. Understanding the significance of both mental and cognitive health is critical for enhancing well-being.

## Conscious Adaptability: Exploring Mindfulness, Cognitive Flexibility and Self-Efficacy among Students

Kavita Kumar\* & Shivani Gautam\*\*

### ABSTRACT

*The present paper focusses to comprehend and investigate the relationship between mindfulness, cognitive flexibility, and self-efficacy among students. It delves into providing valuable insights on how these factors are interrelated and influence students' ability to adapt to change, thereby, changing educational practices aimed at enhancing students' adaptability and overall well-being. Three psychological tools 'The Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale' (MAAS) by Brown and Ryan (2003), 'The cognitive flexibility inventory' (CFI) by Dennis and Vander (2010) and 'General Self-Efficacy Scale' (GSE) by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) were administered on a sample of 222 undergraduate students through convenient sampling. Regression analysis was applied to compute the data. The results indicate that there is a positive and high significant correlation between mindfulness, cognitive flexibility, and self-efficacy ( $r = 0.330, 0.462$  and  $0.544$   $p < 0.01$ ), respectively. Moreover, mindfulness and cognitive flexibility had a significant contribution in the determination of self-efficacy ( $F = 68.872, p < 0.01$ ).*

*These empirical evidences have profound implications for integrating mindfulness practices into educational curricula and adopt valuable strategies for promoting their overall well-being and academic success. Finally, educators can empower the young minds to navigate through the complexities of the modern world and contribute meaningfully to sustainable development.*

**Keyword:** Mindfulness, Cognitive flexibility and Self-Efficacy.

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## INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly changing world, the ability to adapt consciously and effectively is more crucial than ever. This is especially true for students, who are navigating not only their academic journeys but also the complexities of personal growth and development. Conscious adaptability is a crucial skill in today's rapidly changing world, especially for students who are facing the challenges of academic, social, and personal growth. This skill encompasses the ability to be mindful, cognitively flexible, and self-efficacious, allowing individuals to effectively manage challenges, embrace new ideas, and thrive in various environments. "Conscious Adaptability" refers to the capacity to adapt intentionally and thoughtfully, drawing on key psychological factors such as mindfulness, cognitive flexibility, and self-efficacy.

Mindfulness, the practice of being aware of one's thoughts, feelings, and surroundings in a non-judgmental manner, has been linked to numerous benefits, including improved focus, reduced stress, and enhanced well-being. Cognitive flexibility, the ability to switch between different tasks or ways of thinking, is essential for problem-solving and decision-making in complex and uncertain situations. Self-efficacy, the belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task, plays a crucial role in determining how individuals approach challenges and persevere in the face of obstacles. While research has shown that individuals benefit from mindfulness, cognitive flexibility, and self-efficacy, there is a growing interest in understanding how these factors interact and contribute to overall adaptability, particularly among Indian students at the era of rapid economic growth, and evolving education system, provides a unique context to explore these dynamics.

Antony and Prasad (2023) found in their investigation that within the intervention group, there was a significant reduction in stress, anxiety, and depression from pretest to post-administration of mindfulness meditation ( $p < 0.05$ ). Additionally, the reduction in stress, anxiety, and depression in the intervention group was significantly different from that of the control group ( $p < 0.05$ ). Gürpınar and İkiz (2022) found significant negative correlations between mental symptoms and both mindful attention awareness and cognitive flexibility, especially in its control sub-dimension (depression, hostility, anxiety, negative self-image, and somatization). Mindful attention awareness collaborates with cognitive flexibility as mental health protective structures, and the development of mindful attention awareness has positive effects on cognitive flexibility. Dinesh et al. (2022) conducted the first empirical test to investigate the predictive effects of perceived stress, mindfulness, social support, and self-efficacy on psychological well-being among 794 Life Insurance Agents in India. Results indicated mindfulness as the strongest and most effective predictor of positive psychological well-being.

Akdeniz and Gültekin Ahç (2022) found that loneliness significantly and positively predicted psychological adjustment problems. This relationship was partially mediated by hope. Additionally, psychological flexibility moderated the link between loneliness and hope during the COVID-19 pandemic curfew in Turkey. Huang et al. (2024) found that childhood trauma and stressful life events were both negative predictors of cognitive flexibility, which in turn was a negative



predictor of depression. Cognitive flexibility partially mediated the relationship between childhood trauma and depression as well as the relationship between stressful life events and depression. The study by Mishra and Singh (2024) found significant positive relationships between emotional intelligence (EI) and cognitive flexibility (CF) with EI (entrepreneurial intention), examining the mediating effect of entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) in this relationship. Additionally, ESE was identified as a partial mediator between EI and EI, and a full mediator between CF and EI. Bertiz and Karoğlu (2020) explored the correlation between cognitive flexibility levels and motivation among distance education students, indicating a modest positive relationship between students' cognitive flexibility levels and their motivation for distance education. Additionally, computer usage time was identified as the sole factor affecting cognitive flexibility levels. No significant relationships were found between gender, age, internet usage time, and cognitive flexibility or distance education motivation. Feng et al. (2020) results indicate that cognitive flexibility is linked to performance following rule acquisition in the probabilistic rule task. Kercood et al. (2017) found that while the students' cognitive flexibility did not significantly differ based on their college majors, the interplay between cognitive flexibility and ADHD was found to be significantly associated with their confidence in their career choices

The findings by Luo Q et al. (2022) revealed positive correlations between academic self-efficacy and both academic achievement and learning engagement, as well as between learning engagement and academic achievement. Julius (2022) findings indicated that the levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy were high, and there was a positive relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy among the students. Verma and Bhandari (2022) analysed that self-efficacy improves academic achievement, emotional health, and well-being, and serves as a valid predictor of motivation and learning. Readiness to learn, reinforcement, and extrinsic motivation can boost an individual's potential, leading to improved outcomes. Guha and Chakraborty (2021) conducted several research studies to demonstrate the positive correlation between occupational self-efficacy and work performance across various industries. Habib (2021) investigated the relationship between self-efficacy and perceived academic work, as well as the influence of gender and age among students at the University of Lomé in Togo. The results revealed that students' self-efficacy was associated with both their age and perceived academic work. While girls had a slightly higher average score compared to boys, though not significant. Bouih, Nadif, and Benattabou (2021) discovered a moderately significant correlation between self-efficacy and academic achievement, as assessed by GPA. Furthermore, an independent sample t-test comparing gender differences in self-efficacy indicated that females reported higher research self-efficacy beliefs than males. Tiyuri et al. (2018) study found a direct and significant relationship between self-efficacy scores and students' academic performance, suggesting that enhancing research self-efficacy could lead to improvements in academic performance. Bryant (2017) discovered that students formulated their self-efficacy perceptions based on experiences from various sources in their lives, especially those related to mastering tasks. The study also found that students' perceptions of self-efficacy

were influenced by their academic successes and failures, particularly focusing on persuasion, physiological, and emotional factors.

Based on the above research literature the present investigation was taken up to offer valuable insights for practitioners and stakeholders into how students develop their self-efficacy and how it impacts their academic motivation.

## **JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM**

The exploration of mindfulness, cognitive flexibility, and self-efficacy among students is crucial in understanding and enhancing their psychological well-being and adaptability in today's complex and fast-paced world. By exploring these dimensions, one can gain insights into how students perceive and face challenges, and how educational institutions can support their holistic development. Hence, by examining how these factors are interrelated and how they influence students' ability to adapt to change, this research seeks to provide valuable insights into educational practices and interventions aimed at enhancing students' adaptability and overall well-being.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- To study the relationship of Mindfulness and Cognitive flexibility with Self-efficacy, respectively.
- To study the relationship of Mindfulness and Cognitive flexibility.
- To study the relative contribution of Mindfulness and Cognitive flexibility with Self-efficacy, respectively.

## **HYPOTHESES**

- There would be a positive significant relationship between Mindfulness and Cognitive flexibility with Self-efficacy, respectively.
- There would be a positive significant relationship between Mindfulness and Cognitive flexibility.
- Mindfulness and Cognitive flexibility would have significant contribution in the determination of Self-efficacy, respectively.

## **VARIABLES**

- Predictor Variables- Mindfulness and Cognitive flexibility
- Criterion Variable- Self-efficacy

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL TOOLS**

The following three standardized scales were used

- The Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) by Brown, & Ryan (2003).
- The cognitive flexibility inventory (CFI) by Dennis and Vander (2010).
- General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995):

## **SAMPLE:**

The study was conducted on a sample of 222 undergraduates (both males and

females), between 18-21years of age through convenient sampling technique:

**Procedure:** After obtaining official permission from the concerned authorities, written consent from the respondents was obtained. The three psychological scales were administered and the raw data was statistically treated with the help of Multiple regression analysis.

**Ethical Consideration:** Trust and confidentiality were maintained regarding the responses.

## DATA ANALYSES AND DISCUSSION

Pearson Correlation and Regression analysis were used for statistical analysis of the data for the current study.

**Table-1: Descriptive Statistics**

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Self-Efficacy	29.1532	5.84444	222
Mindfulness	52.6757	14.15407	222
Cognitive Flexibility	90.6171	14.03590	222

Table-1 shows the mean and standard deviation for Mindfulness and Cognitive Flexibility as predictors of Self-Efficacy.

For statistical analysis of the obtained raw scores, the coefficients of correlation were computed to test the anticipated hypotheses. Table-2 shows inter correlations among the proposed variables, viz., Mindfulness and Cognitive Flexibility and Self-Efficacy.

**Table-2: Correlation Matrix**

	Mindfulness	Cognitive Flexibility	Self-Efficacy
Mindfulness	1	0.330**	0.462**
Cognitive Flexibility		1	0.544**
Self-Efficacy			1

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table-2 indicates that **there is a positive and significant relationship between Mindfulness and Cognitive flexibility with Self-efficacy, respectively ( $r = 0.462$  and  $0.544$ ,  $p < 0.01$ )**. These values indicate that Mindfulness and Cognitive Flexibility are substantially correlated to Self- efficacy and they are significant at  $p < 0.01$  level of significance. Hence, the first hypothesis which stated that, there would be a positive significant relationship between Mindfulness and Cognitive Flexibility with Self-Efficacy respectively" is accepted. Table-2 also depicts that there is a positive significant relationship between Mindfulness and Cognitive flexibility ( $r = 0.330$ ,  $p > 0.01$ ). The second hypothesis which stated that, "There would be a positive significant relationship between Mindfulness and Cognitive Flexibility," has been accepted.

Further, the multiple regression analysis was done to examine the extent to which predictor variables (Mindfulness and Cognitive Flexibility) predict criterion variable (Self- efficacy), respectively. For interpreting the results obtained from Multiple Regression Analysis, the variance caused by the combined effect of all

predictor variables is seen by obtained R square (Table-3).

**Table-3: Multiple Regression Analysis for Self-Efficacy**

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.621
R Square	0.386
Adjusted R Square	0.381
Standard Error	4.600
Observations	222

The above Table-3 shows the calculated Multiple R value is 0.621 which indicates the direction of the relationship is positive. This also specifies that the larger the value, the stronger the relationship. The above Table-3, shows that the obtained value for R square = 0.386, which means that about 39% of contribution is jointly accounted for by the predictor variables (Mindfulness and Cognitive Flexibility) in causing variation in the criterion variable, i.e., Self- efficacy. The remaining variation of 61% is due to other factors. The statistical test for the significance of R is an F ratio. Table-4 shows the F value for Self- efficacy.

**Table-4: Showing The F-Value for Self-Efficacy**

	Df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	2	2914.687	1457.344	68.872	.000
Residual	219	4634.106	21.160		
Total	221	7548.793			

Table-4, depicts the value of F = 68.872, where it is significant at  $p < 0.01$  level of significance, indicating that there is significant contribution of Mindfulness and Cognitive Flexibility in determining Self- efficacy.

**Table-5: Regression Coefficient of Predictor Variables for Self-Efficacy**

S. No.	Name of Variable	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error of Coefficient	Correlation Coefficient	t-value	B	Coefficient of Determination
1	Mindfulness	0.131	0.023	0.462	5.655	0.317	0.146
2	Cognitive Flexibility	0.183	0.023	0.544	7.845	0.440	0.239

**Regression equation between Self-Efficacy and Predictor Variables:**

$$Y = 0.131X_1 + 0.183X_2 + 5.655$$

Table-5 reveals that the predictor (Mindfulness and Cognitive Flexibility) has accounted for 39% of the contribution in determining the criterion variable i.e., Self- efficacy and the remaining 61% is accounted for by other variables. A careful study of the regression equation reveals that 1 unit variation in  $X_1$  i.e. Mindfulness will bring about a variation of 0.131units ( $b = 0.131$ ) in the Self- efficacy. The predictor variable  $X_1$  holds for about 15% of the contribution to Self- efficacy. The second predictor variable, Cognitive Flexibility also holds for about 24% in Self- efficacy and 1 unit variation in  $X_2$  will bring about 0.183 unit variation in the Self- efficacy. The last hypothesis which stated that, "There

would be a positive and significant contribution of Mindfulness and Cognitive flexibility in the determination of Self-efficacy, respectively," has been accepted. Some other empirical studies are in harmony with the results of the present study. The regression analysis results (Ay, 2023) showed that cognitive flexibility and mindfulness significantly predicted self-regulation. Specifically, cognitive flexibility predicted 20% of the variance in self-regulation, while mindfulness predicted 11% of the variance. Moreover, together, these two variables explained a substantial portion (46%) of the variance in self-regulation. These findings align closely with the current study's results.

In their study, Fan and Cui (2024) discovered that mindfulness and self-efficacy were direct predictors of psychological well-being among Chinese EFL learners. Additionally, self-regulation emerged as a significant mediator in the relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being, suggesting that mindfulness indirectly enhances well-being through improved self-regulation skills. Cede and Gözen (2021) aimed to focus the mind's attention using a specific method in mindfulness meditation. Self-efficacy, as a sub-dimension of positive psychological capital, focuses on the belief that a person will perform successfully in a specific area, considering the feeling of believing in one's own self and traits for any work or situation. The research concluded that there is a positive and significant relationship between mindfulness and self-efficacy.

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings underscore the need for educational institutions to integrate mindfulness practices and cognitive flexibility training into their curricula to foster students' self-efficacy and adaptability. Further, more research and practical interventions in this area are profound for promoting holistic well-being and sustainable development. Students can not only navigate academic and personal challenges more effectively but also become more conscious and proactive in addressing environmental and societal issues. Mindfulness practices and tailor-made interventions can be integrated into educational curricula to improve cognitive skills. Additionally, self-efficacy beliefs can empower students to persevere through difficulties and believe in their ability to succeed and can develop a resilient mindset that not only benefits their academic performance but also equips them with essential life skills for navigating an increasingly complex and unpredictable world.

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## Good Experience Good Brain Structural Change: A Systematic Review

Punita Borpujari Deori\* & Prof (Dr.) Gayatree Goswamee\*\*

### ABSTRACT

*This systematic review examines the relationship between positive experiential practices, such as mindfulness, physical exercise, and other lifestyle interventions, and their impact on brain structural changes from 2015 to 2023. Following the PRISMA guidelines, this review synthesizes evidence from recent neuroimaging studies, highlighting the neural plasticity that accompanies positive behavioral interventions.*

### INTRODUCTION

Positive life experiences, such as engaging in mindfulness and physical activity, are increasingly recognized for their profound impact on cognitive and emotional well-being. Advances in neuroimaging, particularly through techniques like structural MRI, have provided evidence that such experiences can lead to brain plasticity—structural changes in brain regions critical for emotional regulation, memory, and executive function. Mindfulness practices, including meditation and yoga, have shown significant effects on brain structure. Studies reveal increased cortical thickness in areas such as the prefrontal cortex and the anterior cingulate cortex, which are associated with enhanced attention, emotion regulation, and self-awareness. Regular mindfulness meditation also promotes gray matter density in the hippocampus, a region vital for learning and memory. Physical exercise, especially aerobic and mind-body practices like Tai Chi, has been linked to volumetric increases in the hippocampus, improving memory and spatial navigation. Additionally, aerobic exercise enhances white matter integrity and promotes vascularization, which supports overall brain health. These structural changes underline the role of exercise in mitigating

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age-related cognitive decline and fostering resilience against stress. These findings highlight the potential of lifestyle interventions to induce meaningful neuroplastic changes, which could inform strategies to improve mental health and cognitive performance across the lifespan. For more detailed analyses, check out systematic reviews on the effects of such interventions

## METHODS

A systematic search was conducted across PubMed, Scopus, and Web of Science databases for studies published between 2015 and 2023. The PRISMA framework guided the selection, which focused on interventions like mindfulness-based practices, physical exercise. Only peer-reviewed studies employing structural MRI or similar neuroimaging modalities were included.

Here is a table summarizing 20 key findings from recent studies (2015–2023) on the effects of positive life experiences, such as mindfulness and physical activity, on brain plasticity:

No.	Author & Year	Title	Method	Sample	Findings	Source
1	Hölzel et al., 2016	<i>Mindfulness and Gray Matter</i>	Structural MRI	20 meditators	Increased cortical thickness in the prefrontal cortex	MDPI
2	Tang et al., 2017	<i>Meditation and Brain Plasticity</i>	sMRI	25 meditators	Enhanced gray matter density in the hippocampus	MDPI
3	Colcombe et al., 2018	<i>Exercise and White Matter</i>	DTI	40 adults	Improved white matter integrity in the corpus callosum	Eurapa
4	Erickson et al., 2017	<i>Aerobic Exercise and Hippocampal Volume</i>	sMRI	50 older adults	Increased hippocampal volume	Eurapa
5	Jaeggi et al., 2016	<i>Cognitive Training and Brain Adaptation</i>	Functional MRI	30 participants	Enhanced executive function in the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex	MDPI
6	Creswell et al., 2017	<i>Mindfulness-Based Emotional Regulation</i>	fMRI	22 individuals	Improved emotion regulation in the anterior cingulate cortex	MDPI
7	Gard et al., 2018	<i>Yoga Enhances Neural Connectivity</i>	Resting-State MRI	35 yoga practitioners	Strengthened functional connectivity in the default mode network	MDPI
8	Taren et al., 2017	<i>Stress Reduction and Amygdala Changes</i>	Structural MRI	45 participants	Increased gray matter volume in the amygdala	Eurapa

9	Pereira et al., 2015	<i>Exercise-Induced Neurogenesis</i>	sMRI, PET	30 participants	Neurogenesis promotion in the hippocampus	MDPI
10	Voss et al., 2016	<i>Exercise and Synaptic Growth</i>	Functional MRI	40 adults	Enhanced synaptic density in prefrontal regions	Eurapa
11	Baniqued et al., 2018	<i>Cognitive Training in Older Adults</i>	Cognitive Task, MRI	50 older adults	Improved cognitive flexibility in the prefrontal cortex	MDPI
12	MacLean et al., 2016	<i>Mindfulness and Attention Networks</i>	fMRI	30 meditators	Better attention regulation in the parietal cortex	MDPI
13	Erickson et al., 2018	<i>Exercise Prevents Brain Aging</i>	Longitudinal sMRI	100 adults	Reduced age-related atrophy in entire brain volume	Eurapa
14	Dinoff et al., 2017	<i>Exercise Boosts Neurotrophic Factors</i>	Blood assays, MRI	50 participants	Increased BDNF levels in the hippocampus	Eurapa
15	Karbach et al., 2019	<i>Memory Gains via Cognitive Training</i>	Behavioral & MRI	35 adults	Enhanced memory performance in the hippocampus	MDPI
16	Hölzel et al., 2018	<i>MBSR Reduces Stress-Induced Brain Changes</i>	sMRI	20 participants	Stress reduction benefits in the amygdala	Eurapa
17	Jha et al., 2017	<i>Meditation Improves Memory Networks</i>	Functional MRI	25 individuals	Strengthened working memory in the prefrontal cortex	MDPI
18	Wayne et al., 2019	<i>Tai Chi Improves Motor Skills</i>	Functional MRI	40 elderly	Improved motor coordination in the cerebellum	MDPI
19	Froeliger et al., 2018	<i>Yoga and Reward System Plasticity</i>	sMRI	35 practitioners	Increased volume in reward pathways in the striatum	MDPI
20	Creswell et al., 2020	<i>Mindfulness Enhances Recovery</i>	Stress task, fMRI	30 participants	Faster neural recovery post-stress in prefrontal and limbic regions	Eurapa

This table demonstrates the diverse and robust effects of positive life experiences on brain structure and function. Let me know if you need elaboration on specific findings.

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The review synthesizes findings across 20 studies focusing on mindfulness, exercise, and cognitive training interventions and their impacts on brain structure and function. These studies employed a variety of neuroimaging methods, including structural MRI (sMRI), functional MRI (fMRI), resting-state MRI, diffusion tensor imaging (DTI), and positron emission tomography (PET). Key patterns emerge across the reviewed literature, shedding light on the neural mechanisms underlying these interventions.

### 1. Mindfulness and meditation practices were consistently associated with structural and functional changes in brain regions involved in executive control, emotional regulation, and memory.

- Prefrontal Cortex and Executive Function: Hölzel et al. (2016) and Jaeggi et al. (2016) demonstrated increased cortical thickness and improved executive functions in the prefrontal cortex, respectively. These findings suggest enhanced top-down control mechanisms, aligning with improvements in attention regulation reported by MacLean et al. (2016).
- Emotion Regulation: Creswell et al. (2017) and Taren et al. (2017) reported improved emotion regulation capacities and stress-related changes, particularly in the anterior cingulate cortex and amygdala, respectively. These regions are critical for managing emotional responses, highlighting mindfulness' role in reducing stress and enhancing emotional resilience.
- Memory and Attention Networks: Strengthening of working memory networks was observed by Jha et al. (2017), while MacLean et al. (2016) found better regulation of attention in the parietal cortex, emphasizing mindfulness' role in cognitive enhancement.

### 2. Physical Activity/Exercise and Brain Plasticity

Exercise studies showed robust effects on structural integrity, neural plasticity, and neurogenesis, particularly in the hippocampus and prefrontal cortex.

- Hippocampal Volume and Neurogenesis: Erickson et al. (2017) and Pereira et al. (2015) demonstrated exercise-induced increases in hippocampal volume and neurogenesis, respectively. These findings corroborate exercise's potential to counteract age-related hippocampal atrophy (Erickson et al., 2018).
- White Matter Integrity: Colcombe et al. (2018) highlighted improvements in white matter integrity within the corpus callosum. These changes are critical for efficient interhemispheric communication, supporting broader cognitive and motor functions.
- Neurotrophic Factors and Synaptic Growth: Dinoff et al. (2017) found increased brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) levels, while Voss et al. (2016) observed enhanced synaptic density in prefrontal regions. These findings highlight molecular and synaptic adaptations underlying exercise-induced brain health.

### 3. Cognitive Training and Functional Adaptations

Cognitive training showed improvements in task-specific neural plasticity, particularly in regions associated with higher-order cognitive processes.

- **Prefrontal Cortex:** Studies by Jaeggi et al. (2016) and Baniqued et al. (2018) revealed enhancements in executive function and cognitive flexibility, respectively, in the prefrontal cortex. These findings suggest targeted benefits of cognitive training in enhancing mental adaptability and problem-solving skills.
- **Memory Systems:** Karbach et al. (2019) demonstrated improved memory performance with corresponding changes in hippocampal activation, underscoring the potential of cognitive training to strengthen memory-related networks.

### YOGA AND TAI CHI

Default Mode Network Yoga and Tai Chi, combining physical and mindfulness elements, were found to enhance both structural and functional brain connectivity.

- **(DMN) and Reward Systems:** Gard et al. (2018) reported strengthened DMN connectivity, while Froeliger et al. (2018) observed increased striatum volume, indicating enhanced self-referential processing and reward system sensitivity, respectively.
- **Motor and Coordination Improvements:** Wayne et al. (2019) highlighted improvements in motor coordination linked to cerebellar activity, emphasizing Tai Chi's role in promoting motor skills, particularly in elderly populations.

### DISCUSSION OF IMPLICATIONS

The cumulative evidence suggests that positive life experiences induce structural and functional changes in key brain regions, fostering cognitive and emotional health. These findings are particularly relevant for designing interventions aimed at preventing or mitigating cognitive decline and mental health issues.

1. **Clinical Relevance:** Mindfulness and physical activity could be integrated into therapeutic protocols for mental health conditions, enhancing emotional regulation and reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression.
2. **Educational Interventions:** Cognitive training programs could be tailored for students and older adults to enhance cognitive performance and reduce the risk of cognitive decline.
3. **Public Health Strategies:** Promoting active lifestyles and mindfulness-based programs at a community level could contribute to better population mental health and cognitive outcomes.

### CONCLUSION

The reviewed studies collectively demonstrate that mindfulness, exercise, and cognitive training foster significant neuroplastic changes, enhancing brain

health and cognitive function. These findings highlight the potential of such interventions as non-pharmacological strategies for cognitive enhancement, emotional well-being, and neuroprotection across the lifespan.

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## Emotional Intelligence as the Predictor of Mental Health of Students -An Analysis

**Mrs. Laxmiprava Mishra\* & Dr.Satyanarayan Rath\*\***

In the realm of education, mental health has acquired a pivotal concern, with increasing attention directed towards understanding the factors influencing students' psychological well-being. Among these factors, emotional intelligence (EI) has garnered significant interest due to its prime role in shaping individuals' ability to navigate the complexities of emotions, relationships, and stressors effectively. As educational institutions strive to foster environments conducive to holistic student development, it becomes imperative to elucidate the intricate relationship between emotional intelligence and mental health outcomes.

Emotional intelligence, a concept popularized by psychologists Peter Salovey and John Mayer and later expanded upon by Daniel Goleman, encompasses a spectrum of abilities ranging from self-awareness and self-regulation to empathy and social skills. The capacity to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions, as well as those of others, forms the keystone of emotional intelligence. Within educational environment where students encounter diverse challenges, both academic and interpersonal, the cultivation of emotional intelligence holds promise as a means to enhance resilience, coping mechanisms, and overall mental well-being.

This analytical exploration seeks to delve into the intricate interplay between emotional intelligence and the mental health of students, with a specific focus on its predictive nature. By examining empirical research, theoretical frameworks, and practical implications, this analysis aims to elucidate the extent to which emotional intelligence serves as a reliable predictor of students' mental health outcomes. Moreover, it endeavours to identify potential avenues for interventions and support systems that leverage emotional intelligence as a modifiable factor in promoting positive mental health trajectories among students.

American College Health Association [ACHA,2019]in their study, reported

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that 26% of students reported feeling of severe depression and 43% of students reported overwhelming anxiety. These psychopathological or mental health problems as indicated by the researchers are the result of psychosocial stress. Robert W Moeller et al. [ 2020]also stated that mental health problems are the result of increased psycho-social stress. In their study, the effect of E Q on the psycho-social well-being of [N=2094] students, was studied and results indicate that EQ skills can reduce perceived rejection and promote students' well-being. In the FALL [2021] National College Health Assessment, about 30% of students report that anxiety affects their academic performance negatively and one out of five students is diagnosed with the symptoms of depression. Mood disturbance is also another common mental health problem among students. Other challenges to the mental health of students include suicidal tendencies, eating disorders, and substance abuse. The top five mental health problems of students are the following.

- i) **Depression** or mood disorder which involves persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, worthlessness, and loss of interest in previously enjoyable activities. Although there are individual differences in symptoms, American College Health Association [2024 ] indicates some common symptoms of depression such as changes in sleep habits and appetite, feelings of sadness, worthlessness, changes in social interactions, isolating oneself from others, pessimism, trouble in concentration and difficulty in task completion etc.
- ii) **Anxiety** includes feelings of worry, tension and disruption in daily life etc. In a Pennsylvania State University study [2016 ], anxiety is identified as the leading mental health problem of students. The most common types of anxiety disorders are -Generalized anxiety disorder (G A D), Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (O C , panic disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (P T S D) and social anxiety disorder. Common symptoms of anxiety disorder include – stress, restlessness, fearfulness, irritability, trouble in concentration, sweating, dizziness, muscular pain, headaches, frequent urination and diarrhea.
- iii) **Suicidal** tendencies refer to planning or thinking to hurt oneself or to die. Research findings state that one in five U S college students, a suicidal tendency. People with such tendencies display a variety of moods including anxiety, irritability, loss of interest and enjoyment, etc . and exhibit specific behavior patterns like withdrawing from social life, aggressiveness substance abuse, etc.
- iv) **Eating** disorder is also common in students which refers to irregularities in eating habits and consciousness about one's body image and shape. Common eating disorders are Anorexia nervosa ,Bulimia nervosa and Binge eating disorder . Anorexia nervosa refers to the eagerness for thinness or fear of gaining weight and has the highest mortality rate among the mental health problems of students. Bulimia nervosa refers to unusual and frequent episodes of eating. Binge eating disorder is characterized by constant over eating and is associated with poor body image, low self-esteem and excessive exercise. Eating disorders can be life-threatening and will be a serious health issue if not treated in time.

- v) **Substance** abuse by students also creates serious health problems. Some common symptoms due to substance abuse are - slurred speech, bloodshot eyes, impaired coordination in thought and action, fear, anxiety, suspicious behavior, financial crisis, weight loss, changes in appearance, impaired social interaction, etc.

Gregg Henriques [2022] stated three mental health coping strategies for college students. In recent years students' mental crisis is at its peak due to COVID-19. Increased stress, mental imbalance, inability to cope with life challenges, increased rates of suicidal behavior, difficulty in achieving work-life balance, eating disorders etc. are increasing day by day in students. According to him, these can be managed properly to maintain the mental health of students in the following ways.

- **Check-in process** , which refers to the students' honest assessment of themselves by asking questions whether they do something wrong or distracted from their study .
- **Use of three A scan** may be helpful to maintain mental health of students .Awareness, Acceptance and Active change are the three steps that can help to promote mental health of students . Awareness refers to understanding that happens in the feelings, action , thoughts, and social relationships. Acceptance refers to self-acceptance and resilience in negative circumstances. Active change refers to the modification of behavior to reach the goal.
- **Mindfulness with CALM MO**, can also help the students to overcome mental health challenges .Here 'C' stands for curiosity to investigate. 'A' stands for acceptance i.e accepting your own feelings , experience etc. 'L' refers to an attitude of love and compassion for oneself and others . 'M' stands for motivation to achieve the goal . 'MO' stands for meta-cognitive observer or the ability to focus on our own thinking and feelings.

### SOME COMMON ISSUES IN STUDENTS' LIFE ---

Students life is a challenging and complex period that needs special attention from researchers. These are -

- i) Management of time .
- (ii) Lack of motivation.
- iii) Lack of concentration
- iv) Homesickness.
- v) Depression.
- vi) Lack of resources such as money ,social support or educational opportunities.
- vii) Anxiety .
- viii) Technology-related problems such as lack of internet or online facilities etc .
- ix) Heavy curriculum also overburdens the students .
- x) The physical health of students also have a tale on their mental health .

**Its' impacts on students .**

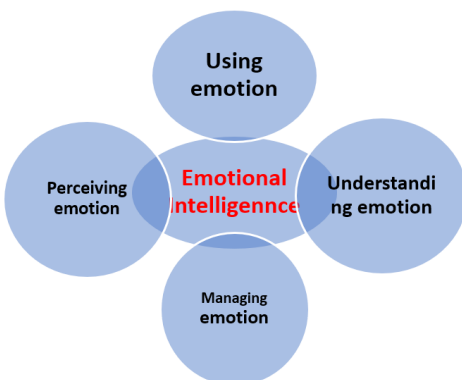


- Academic and social challenges can lead to anxiety, stress and depression .
- Heavy curriculum can lead to frustration and low self esteem .
- Personal wellbeing and social interaction will also be affected .
- It also interfere with the students ability to concentrate .
- Students may feel ignored , discomfort and disconnected .

The above problems in students' life can be lessened by the following steps –

- Schedule your task on priority basis and break down large tasks .
- Reward yourself and communicate your difficulties to the experts .
- Create proper study environment .
- Set a dead line to complete the task .
- Use music to cleanup your mind .
- If you have difficulty in concentrating, find a good learning style and do not overburden yourself .
- If needed take the help of school counselor .
- To deal with homesickness ,make friends, participate in social functions and do the task that you love.
- Depression can be handled by mindfulness exercises.
- Talking to friends and loved ones, improving sleeping habits and regular exercises can lessen stress.
- Social problems can be overcome by making a good social network .
- Acquiring major life skills or mental hardiness can make you more stronger .
- Positive self-talk is another technique to increase motivation.

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE



According to Daniel Goleman, 80% to 90% of the competencies that differentiate the top performers are in the domain of emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence addresses the emotional, personal social, and survival dimensions of intelligence. EI is the predictor of life satisfaction, better performance, effective leadership, better decision-making, improved problem-solving, and increased personal well-being. So if

you lack emotional abilities, do not have self-awareness, are unable to manage your negative emotions, have no empathy, and are unable to establish good relationships, then no matter how intelligent are you, you will not succeed in life . Aristotle rightly said that 'knowing your self is the beginning of all wisdom' .

E I or E Q is the ability to understand, use and manage your own emotions in a positive way to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others , overcome challenges and defuse conflict .

Daniel Goleman[1995 ] defines emotional intelligence as the array of skills and characteristics that drive leadership performance. It refers to the ability to perceive , control and evaluate emotions or emotional information to guide thinking and behavior. So E I is that cognitive capability which facilitates inter-personal and intra-personal behavior . It is the predictor of success in all aspects of life .

**Rightly Plato says ‘All learning has an emotional base’ .**

According to David Caruso, ‘It is very important to understand that E I is not the opposite of intelligence. It is not the triumph of heart over head, it is the unique interaction of both .’

It is rightly said that ‘Thoughts shape emotion and emotions shape thought’ . Emotions are thought to arise from the coordinated activity of complex neural circuits. These circuits involve multiple brain regions that communicate with each other through synaptic connections and neurotransmitter signaling. Functional imaging techniques, such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) and positron emission tomography (PET), have provided insights into the activation patterns of these circuits during emotional experiences. The neuroscience of emotion states that emotions are chemicals that carry information and energy inside us . Emotional intelligence which is the key to every success can be learned and measured . With advances in neuro science , scientists are able to distinguish between the emotional centers of the brain that give rise to feelings and emotions and the neocortex that is responsible for thinking and reasoning . Scientists believe that Amygdala can trigger an emotional response before the cortical center .

**Some characteristics of emotionally intelligent people.**

- They accept change easily.
- Self-awareness.
- Empathy.
- Self-acceptance.
- People with high E I lead a balanced life.
- Curiosity
- Gratitude and gratefulness.
- They are assertive.
- Resilience
- They accept criticism easily and take it as a vital opportunity to improve.
- Self-regulation..

## **MENTAL HEALTH**

W H O [ 2022] ‘Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and

work well and contribute to their community.' Mental health problems refer to the impairment of mental functioning. Health is a dynamic state in which the individual adapts to external and internal stimuli to maintain physical, mental, emotional, intellectual, and social wellbeing. Mental health means a harmonious working of the mind which results in a well-adjusted personality.

Karl Menninger,[1947] defines mental health as an adjustment of human beings to the world or reality with maximum effectiveness and happiness.

A P A [1980 ] defines mental health as simultaneous success in working, loving and creating with the capacity for mature and flexible resolution of conflict between instincts, conscience and reality.

Positive mental health is linked to improved quality of life, better productivity, good social relationships, higher educational achievement, and improved personal growth. Life satisfaction is influenced by good relationships, a sense of belongingness, engagement, being active in work and leisure, a sense of achievement and pride and a positive self-concept. The people who are resilient enough to cope with challenges, tend to be mentally healthy. Emotional flexibility and cognitive flexibility are also another characteristics of mentally healthy people.

### **CHALLENGES TO MENTAL HEALTH ---**

- Discrimination due to personal characteristics , age , sex , race , ethnicity ,disability etc. are linked to anxiety and depression.
- Exposure to traumatic conditions is linked to anxiety, depression, irritability, PT S D, etc.
- Family history of mental illness and some mental illnesses such as ADHD, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia may be inherited.
- Low-income level is linked to higher stress.
- Chronic physical illness may cause stress.
- Poor access to health services may lead to physical and mental health problems.
- Poor self-esteem leads to feelings of worthlessness and are at risk of substance abuse.
- Poor social skills hinder positive social relationships and are the cause of loneliness which is the main cause of stress.
- Prevailing social inequalities are the cause of mental illness in most cases.

### **HOW TO STAY MENTALLY HEALTHY --**

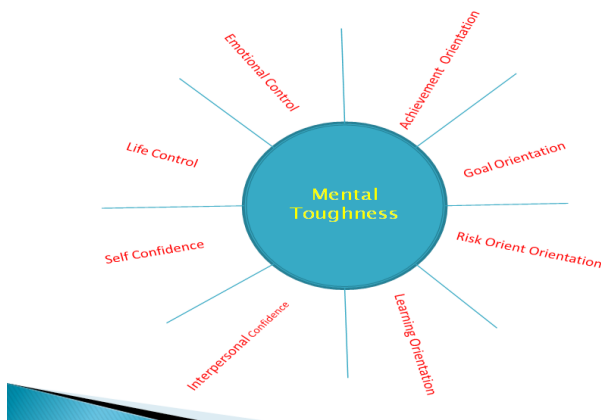
Mental health is the most important aspect of our wellbeing. To stay mentally healthy, the following steps should be followed.

- Physical exercise is one way out of mental illness . So a balanced body can reduce the level of stress hormone and increase the level of endorphins which promotes mood regulation and a feeling of wellbeing.
- Sleep disturbance can worsen mental health problems. American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends at least seven hours of sleep at night.

- Helping others is linked to authentic happiness. The act of kindness may boost your mood and keep you mentally balanced.
- Learning coping skills and healthy coping mechanisms can help you to manage stress effectively.
- Stay connected. This is regarded as group therapy which is especially beneficial in P T S D .
- Keep a positive outlook.

### IMPACT OF E I ON MENTAL HEALTH ---

EI is described by the researchers as the most important factor for good mental health. Murat Yildirim, and Gokmen Arslan [2022] are of the opinion that developing E I could be helpful in improving adaptive coping strategies which is beneficial in maintaining positive mental health. Robert W Moeller et al. (2020) also indicate that improvement of EQ could be targeted to reduce perceived rejection and promote students' well-being. During 1950s a humanistic psychologist Abraham Maslow outlined the importance of emotional strength in our all-round behavior. Ravneet Kaur(2029) described that high EI is positively and significantly related to the mental health of the employees. The picture below describes the 4C model.



Mental toughness and emotional intelligence-AQR International, April 19, 2021.

Life control, Emotional control-Control

Achievement orientation, Goal orientation-Commitment

Risk orientation, Learning orientation-Challenge

Self confidence, Interpersonal confidence-Confidence

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Amir Bhojhbhoya(2020) indicates that physical activity, EI and mental health significantly correlated.

Abiodun Musbau Lawal [2018] also state that E I dimensions are helpful in reducing depression symptoms .Self control , empathy and social skills appear significant for the mental health of students . Neda Esmasili and Ezzatallah

BOLOUI[2013] states that a significant positive relationship exists between emotional intelligence and mental health .

The three coping strategies cited by Gregg Henriques [2022] such as check in process , awareness acceptance and active change or three A's, and psychological mindfulness or CALM MO , can help the students to overcome mental health challenges . Daniel Goleman also stated that 80% to 90% of the competencies that differentiate the top performers are in the domain of emotional intelligence .

Murat Yildirim and Gokman Arslan [2020] also opine that developing EI could also be helpful in improving adaptive coping strategies which is beneficial in maintaining positive mental health .

Ravneet Kaur [2019] also described that high EI is positively and significantly linked to mental health of employees.

Robert W Moeller et al [2020] also indicate that improvement of EQ could be targeted to reduce perceived rejection and promote students wellbeing .

Reviewing the above literature , it can be concluded that emotional intelligence is one of the most important predictor of good mental health and satisfied life .Motivation being the main aspect of emotional intelligence can help the students to improve their learning .

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

Mental health is an integral part of everybody's all-round wellbeing. Students' mental health is crucial because they are the future of the nation and the development of society solely depends on their psychological wellbeing. Emotional intelligence is an important variable which triggers the mental balance and wellbeing .Implementing emotional intelligence-based intervention programs to improve mental health and wellbeing, can be useful for promoting positive affective states. This paper aims at uncovering the advantages of EI for the promotion and correction of our mental health.

## **RESEARCH GAP**

Although many researchers focus on mental health of students and the factors affecting it , yet few studies sought the importance of EI for maintaining positive mental health . This study aims to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and mental health . Empirical findings are analyzed to reach at a conclusion . The present findings also clarify that higher levels of EI is positively and significantly linked to better mental health

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

- To measure the emotional intelligence score by the Schutte scale.
- To measure mental health score.
- To correlate EI score with mental health.

## **HYPOTHESES**

Ho – There will be no significant correlation between the scores obtained by the

students on emotional intelligence scale and mental health scale.

H1 – Emotional intelligence will have some significant positive effects on the mental health of students.

## CONCLUSION

This study focuses on the qualitative analysis of previous findings. The research pieces of evidence cited above clearly prove the fact that emotional intelligence affects our all-round well-being. It is that capability that helps to resolve all the conflicts, manage all the hurdles of life and establish positive relationships with others. So it is very much essential in students' lives to maintain their well-being. It is not fully inherited but rather be learned and developed. If proper attention is given to E Q development of students, undoubtedly they can be free from all mental health problems.

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**Theme - 5**  
**Positive Aspects of Internet Use**

## Positive Psychology and its importance in Teaching Learning Process

Md. Aynul Bari\* & Prof. (Dr.) Gayatree Goswamee\*\*

### ABSTRACT

*The field of positive psychology has garnered significant attention in recent years for its focus on fostering human flourishing, well-being, and optimal functioning. Within the context of education, positive psychology holds particular relevance, especially in teacher training institutions. This paper explores the importance of integrating positive psychology principles into teacher training programs and its implications for both educators and students. By shifting the focus from deficits to strengths, positive psychology offers valuable insights into creating supportive, nurturing classroom environments where all students can thrive. Moreover, positive psychology equips educators with strategies for promoting well-being, enhancing emotional intelligence, and preventing burnout, ultimately leading to improved learning outcomes and teacher effectiveness. This abstract highlights the significance of incorporating positive psychology into teacher training institutions to empower educators with the skills and mindset necessary to cultivate positive learning experiences and maximize student potential.*

**Keywords:** Positive Psychology, Importance, Teaching Learning Process etc.

### INTRODUCTION

Positive Psychology is a branch of psychology that focuses on understanding and promoting human well-being and optimal functioning. Unlike traditional psychology, which often focuses on diagnosing and treating mental illness, Positive Psychology examines factors that contribute to a fulfilling and meaningful life, such as positive emotions, strengths and virtues, resilience, and personal growth. In recent years, Positive Psychology has gained increasing attention in various fields, including education. Teacher training institutions, in particular, have recognized the importance of integrating Positive Psychology

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principles into their programs to better prepare educators for the complex challenges they face in the classroom. The incorporation of Positive Psychology in teacher training institutions serves several crucial purposes. It equips educators with the knowledge and tools to foster positive emotions and well-being among their students. Research has consistently shown that positive emotions not only contribute to a conducive learning environment but also enhance students' academic performance and overall satisfaction with school. By understanding how to cultivate positive emotions in the classroom, teachers can create a more engaging and supportive learning environment that promotes students' holistic development. "Positive psychology is a perspective within psychology that studies optimal experience, people being and doing their best." (Peterson C, 2003) Positive Psychology emphasizes the importance of identifying and nurturing students' strengths and virtues. Instead of focusing solely on addressing weaknesses and deficits, educators trained in Positive Psychology are encouraged to adopt a strengths-based approach to teaching and learning. By recognizing and leveraging students' unique strengths, teachers can empower them to achieve their full potential and develop a sense of competence and self-efficacy. This approach not only enhances students' academic success but also fosters their psychological well-being and resilience in the face of challenges. Positive Psychology promotes the development of essential socio-emotional skills in both teachers and students. Educators trained in Positive Psychology learn strategies for enhancing their own well-being and managing stress effectively, which ultimately enables them to be more empathetic, supportive, and compassionate towards their students. Moreover, they are better equipped to teach social and emotional learning (SEL) skills, such as self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and relationship building, which are increasingly recognized as critical for students' success in school and life. In addition to benefiting students, integrating Positive Psychology into teacher training programs can also contribute to the overall well-being of educators themselves. Teaching can be a highly demanding and stressful profession, with teachers often facing burnout and other mental health challenges. By promoting self-care, resilience, and positive coping strategies, Positive Psychology helps educators prioritize their own well-being, which in turn enables them to be more effective and fulfilled in their roles.

Positive Psychology offers valuable insights and tools for promoting well-being, strengths, and positive relationships in educational settings. By incorporating Positive Psychology principles into teacher training institutions, educators can cultivate a more positive and supportive learning environment that nurtures students' academic success and overall flourishing. Moreover, it enables teachers to prioritize their own well-being, ultimately benefiting both educators and students alike.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Positive psychology shifts the focus from merely addressing weaknesses to nurturing strengths. In teacher training, this approach is invaluable as it helps educators recognize and cultivate the unique talents and capabilities of each student. By emphasizing strengths, teachers can tailor their teaching methods

to suit individual learning styles, fostering a more inclusive and empowering classroom environment. The significance of the study is highlighted below:

- i) Positive psychology emphasizes the cultivation of well-being and flourishing, both for students and teachers themselves. Educators face numerous challenges, from classroom management to meeting academic standards. By incorporating principles of positive psychology into teacher training programs, institutions can equip educators with the tools to manage stress, enhance resilience, and maintain a healthy work-life balance. This, in turn, leads to greater job satisfaction and overall well-being among teachers, which positively impacts their effectiveness in the classroom.
- ii) Research has shown that a positive learning environment can significantly impact student engagement, motivation, and academic performance. Teacher training institutions that integrate positive psychology principles into their programs can help future educators create supportive, nurturing classrooms where students feel valued, safe, and motivated to learn. By fostering positive relationships, providing constructive feedback, and promoting a growth mindset, teachers can inspire their students to reach their full potential.
- iii) Positive psychology emphasizes the importance of emotional intelligence, including self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills. These competencies are essential for effective teaching, as they enable educators to understand and respond to the diverse needs of their students. Teacher training programs that incorporate positive psychology techniques can help future educators develop these crucial emotional intelligence skills, enabling them to create a positive learning environment where students feel understood, supported, and empowered to succeed.
- iv) Teacher burnout is a significant issue in education, with many educators experiencing high levels of stress, exhaustion, and disillusionment. Positive psychology offers strategies for preventing and mitigating burnout by promoting self-care, resilience, and a sense of purpose. Teacher training institutions can play a vital role in equipping educators with the skills and resources they need to prioritize their well-being, manage stress effectively, and sustain their passion for teaching over the long term.

The study of positive psychology is of paramount importance in teacher training institutions as it offers valuable insights and strategies for promoting student success, enhancing teacher well-being, and creating positive learning environments where all individuals can thrive. By integrating positive psychology principles into their programs, teacher training institutions can empower educators to make a meaningful and lasting impact on the lives of their students.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To know the concept of Positive Psychology
2. To study the Components of Positive Psychology
3. To bring out the Positive Psychology and its importance in Teaching Learning Process.

## **METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:**

This study Descriptive type of research method applied and most of the information and data collected from the secondary. Secondary data collected from Books, Journals, Research paper, Article related Positive Psychology and primary data collected from the observation report of teaching learning process.

## **CONCEPT OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY**

Positive psychology is a branch of psychology that focuses on the scientific study of human strengths, virtues, and optimal functioning, with the aim of promoting well-being and enhancing individuals' quality of life. Unlike traditional psychology, which often emphasizes the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness, positive psychology seeks to understand the factors that contribute to human flourishing, resilience, and happiness.

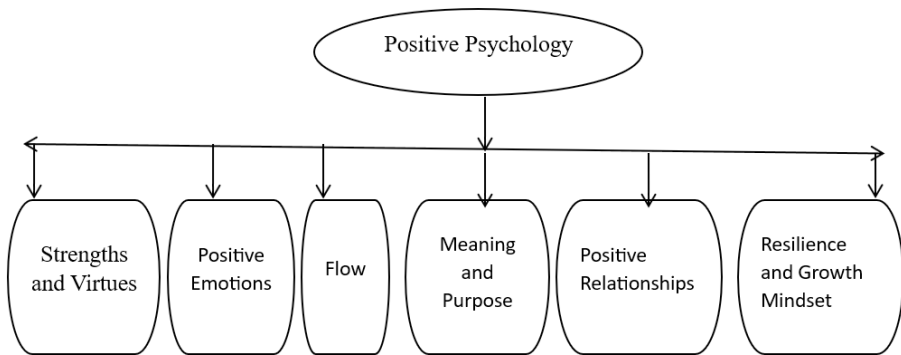
While positive psychology gained prominence in the late 20th century, its roots can be traced back to early philosophical and psychological theories. Philosophers such as Aristotle explored the concept of eudaimonia, or human flourishing, while humanistic psychologists like Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers emphasized the importance of self-actualization and personal growth. The term "positive psychology" was popularized by psychologist Martin Seligman in the late 1990s. Seligman, who served as the president of the American Psychological Association (APA), called for a shift in focus within psychology from merely treating mental illness to studying and promoting human strengths and virtues.

In 1998, Seligman and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi organized a historic summit on positive psychology, which marked the official beginning of the positive psychology movement. The movement aimed to foster a scientific understanding of human flourishing, well-being, and optimal functioning. Since its inception, positive psychology has gained momentum as a vibrant and interdisciplinary field of study. Researchers have explored various aspects of positive psychology, including positive emotions, character strengths, resilience, optimism, and the pursuit of meaning and purpose in life. Groundbreaking studies have contributed to our understanding of how positive psychological factors contribute to overall well-being and success. Positive psychology has also led to the development of practical interventions and applications aimed at promoting well-being and enhancing individuals' quality of life. These include interventions to cultivate gratitude, mindfulness, resilience, and positive relationships. Positive psychology principles have been applied in various settings, including schools, workplaces, healthcare settings, and communities. Despite its widespread popularity, positive psychology has faced critiques and controversies. Some critics argue that it overly emphasizes positivity while neglecting the darker aspects of human experience, such as suffering and adversity. Others raise concerns about the commercialization of positive psychology and its potential to promote individualistic pursuits over collective well-being. Positive psychology continues to evolve and expand as researchers explore new areas of inquiry and develop innovative interventions. Recent developments include the study of positive organizational psychology, positive education, positive aging, and the intersection of positive psychology with other disciplines such as neuroscience,

sociology, and economics. “One of the triggers for the introduction of positive psychology was the realization that since World War II, psychology as a field had devoted much of its effort to identifying, treating, and—occasionally—preventing problems such as anxiety and depression”. (Seligman MEP, 2000)

The development of positive psychology represents a significant shift in the field of psychology, emphasizing the importance of studying human strengths and virtues in addition to addressing psychological problems. As positive psychology continues to grow, its insights and interventions have the potential to contribute to greater well-being and flourishing for individuals and societies worldwide.

### POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY FOCUSES ON



- Positive psychology emphasizes identifying and nurturing individuals' inherent strengths and virtues. This includes character strengths such as courage, wisdom, kindness, and resilience, which are seen as essential for promoting well-being and success in life.
- Positive psychology examines the role of positive emotions such as happiness, gratitude, optimism, and contentment in fostering psychological resilience and overall well-being. It explores strategies for cultivating positive emotions and enhancing individuals' emotional resilience.
- Flow refers to a state of complete immersion and focus in an activity, where individuals experience deep enjoyment and fulfillment. Positive psychology researches the conditions that facilitate flow experiences and their positive impact on performance, creativity, and overall happiness.
- Positive psychology explores the importance of having a sense of meaning and purpose in life for overall well-being. It examines how individuals can cultivate meaning in their lives through activities such as pursuing goals, engaging in meaningful relationships, and contributing to something greater than them.
- Positive psychology emphasizes the significance of positive relationships and social connections for well-being. It investigates the factors that contribute to healthy, supportive relationships and explores strategies for building and maintaining positive social connections.

- Positive psychology focuses on resilience, the ability to bounce back from adversity, and develop a growth mindset, which involves believing in one's ability to learn and grow from challenges. It explores strategies for fostering resilience and cultivating a growth mindset in individuals.

### DEFINITION OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY:

Various psychologists define positive Psychology in difference way:

**Martin Seligman:** Martin Seligman, often considered the founding father of positive psychology, defines it as "the scientific study of what makes life most worth living." He emphasizes the importance of focusing on human strengths and virtues to promote well-being and flourishing.

**Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi:** Csikszentmihalyi, another influential figure in positive psychology, views it as the study of optimal human functioning. He describes positive psychology as exploring the conditions that lead to a state of flow, where individuals are fully engaged and immersed in an activity, experiencing deep enjoyment and fulfillment.

**Christopher Peterson:** Peterson, a leading positive psychology researcher, defines positive psychology as "the scientific study of what goes right in life, from birth to death and at all stops in between." He emphasizes the importance of understanding positive emotions, character strengths, and the pursuit of meaning and purpose in life.

**Barbara Fredrickson:** Fredrickson, known for her broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions, defines positive psychology as "the scientific study of positive emotions and human strengths." She highlights the role of positive emotions in broadening individuals' thought-action repertoires and building personal resources that contribute to resilience and well-being.

**Ed Diener:** Diener, a pioneer in the study of subjective well-being, defines positive psychology as "the scientific study of the strengths and virtues that enable individuals and communities to thrive." He emphasizes the importance of studying positive aspects of human experience, such as happiness, life satisfaction, and fulfillment.

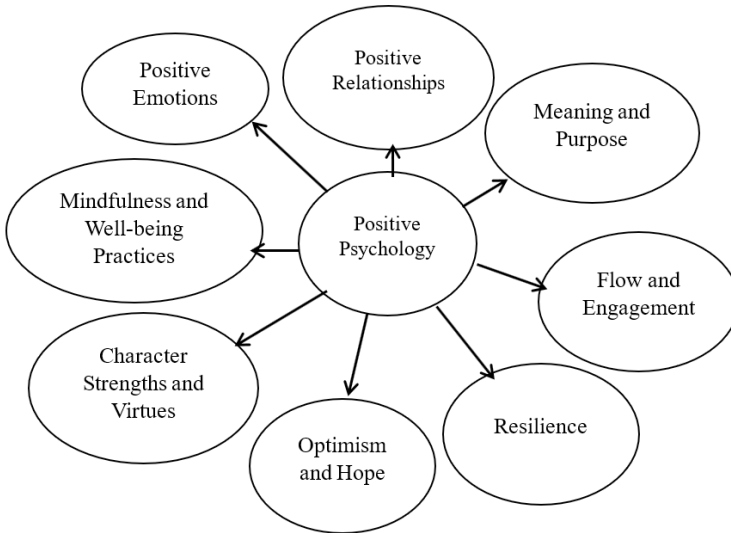
**Sonja Lyubomirsky:** Lyubomirsky, known for her research on the science of happiness, defines positive psychology as "the scientific study of optimal human functioning that aims to discover and promote the factors that allow individuals and communities to thrive." She emphasizes the importance of identifying strategies for increasing happiness and well-being.

Overall, positive psychology seeks to shift the focus of psychology from a primarily problem-oriented approach to a more holistic understanding of human strengths, virtues, and potential for growth. By studying these concepts, positive psychology aims to inform interventions and practices that promote well-being, resilience, and flourishing in individuals and communities.

### COMPONENTS OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY:

Positive psychology encompasses various components that contribute to understanding and promoting human well-being, resilience, and flourishing.

Here are some of the major components:



- Positive psychology recognizes the importance of positive emotions such as happiness, joy, gratitude, hope, and contentment. Research in this area explores the nature of positive emotions, their underlying mechanisms, and their impact on individuals' well-being and overall functioning.
- Positive psychology emphasizes the identification and cultivation of character strengths and virtues that enable individuals to thrive. These include qualities such as courage, wisdom, kindness, resilience, humility, and perseverance. Research in this area aims to understand the role of character strengths in promoting well-being and achieving life satisfaction.
- Optimism and hope are central components of positive psychology, representing individuals' beliefs in their ability to overcome challenges and achieve their goals. Research explores the cognitive processes underlying optimism and hope, their impact on psychological resilience, and strategies for cultivating a positive outlook on life.
- Resilience refers to the ability to bounce back from adversity, adapt to change, and thrive despite challenging circumstances. Positive psychology investigates the factors that contribute to resilience, including coping strategies, social support, optimism, and self-efficacy. Research in this area aims to identify interventions that strengthen resilience and promote positive adaptation in the face of adversity.
- Flow represents a state of complete immersion and focus in an activity, where individuals experience deep enjoyment and fulfillment. Positive psychology explores the conditions that facilitate flow experiences, their impact on motivation and performance, and strategies for fostering engagement in daily life.
- Positive psychology emphasizes the importance of having a sense of meaning and purpose in life for overall well-being. Research explores the pursuit of

meaning and purpose, the factors that contribute to a meaningful life, and interventions to enhance individuals' sense of purpose and fulfillment.

- Positive relationships and social connections play a crucial role in promoting well-being and happiness. Positive psychology investigates the qualities of positive relationships, such as trust, empathy, and support, as well as the benefits of social connection for physical and psychological health.
- Mindfulness and well-being practices, such as meditation, mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), and gratitude exercises, are central components of positive psychology interventions. Research explores the effects of these practices on mental health, stress reduction, and overall well-being.

These components represent key areas of inquiry within positive psychology, reflecting its holistic approach to understanding and promoting human flourishing. By exploring these components, researchers and practitioners seek to enhance individuals' quality of life, resilience, and overall well-being.

### **POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN TEACHING LEARNING PROCESS**

Positive psychology, a relatively recent branch of psychology, focuses on studying human strengths, virtues, and optimal functioning to promote well-being and enhance the quality of life. In the realm of education, positive psychology offers a transformative approach to the teaching-learning process. By integrating positive psychology principles into educational practices, educators can create nurturing learning environments that foster student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement. This essay explores the importance of positive psychology in the teaching-learning process, examining its key concepts and implications for educators and students alike.

Positive psychology encompasses various aspects that are pertinent to the teaching-learning process:

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Focus on Strengths	Positive psychology emphasizes identifying and nurturing students' strengths and talents rather than solely focusing on weaknesses. This approach promotes a sense of competence and self-efficacy, enhancing students' motivation and engagement in the learning process.
Promotion of Well-being	Positive psychology techniques, such as cultivating gratitude, mindfulness, and optimism, contribute to students' overall well-being. A positive classroom environment that prioritizes mental health and emotional well-being fosters a sense of belonging, reduces stress, and enhances students' ability to focus and learn effectively.
Enhanced Learning Outcomes	Research indicates that a positive learning environment can significantly impact student engagement, motivation, and academic performance. By integrating positive psychology principles into teaching practices, educators can create classrooms where students feel safe, supported, and empowered to explore, inquire, and achieve their full potential.

Development of Emotional Intelligence	Positive psychology emphasizes the development of emotional intelligence skills, such as self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills. These skills are essential for effective teaching and learning, as they enable educators to understand and respond to students' diverse needs and create supportive, respectful relationships in the classroom.
Prevention of Burn-out	Teaching can be emotionally demanding, and educators often face high levels of stress and burnout. Positive psychology offers strategies for preventing and mitigating burnout by promoting self-care, resilience, and a sense of purpose. Educators who prioritize their well-being are better equipped to meet the challenges of teaching and maintain their passion and enthusiasm for their profession over the long term.
Cultivation of Growth Mindset	Positive psychology encourages the adoption of a growth mindset, which involves believing in one's ability to learn and grow from challenges. By promoting a growth mindset in the classroom, educators empower students to embrace mistakes as opportunities for learning, persist in the face of obstacles, and develop a lifelong love of learning and personal growth.

Integrating positive psychology principles into the teaching-learning process enhances students' well-being, motivation, and academic success while supporting educators' professional growth and resilience. By fostering a positive classroom environment that prioritizes strengths, well-being, and growth, educators can create transformative learning experiences that empower students to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

### IMPORTANCE OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY IN THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS:

Positive psychology offers numerous importance and insights that are crucial to enhancing the teaching-learning process:

1. **Student engagement and motivation:** By incorporating positive psychology principles into their teaching practices, educators can create engaging and meaningful learning experiences that captivate students' interest and enthusiasm. Fostering a positive classroom climate where students feel valued, respected, and supported enhances their intrinsic motivation to learn and succeed.
2. **Academic achievement:** Research has shown that positive emotions and attitudes significantly influence academic performance. Students who experience positive emotions such as curiosity, excitement, and joy are more likely to be actively engaged in their learning and achieve higher academic outcomes.
3. **Personalized learning:** A strengths-based approach to teaching allows educators to customize instruction to meet individual students' needs and preferences. By leveraging students' strengths and interests, educators can create personalized learning experiences that cater to diverse learning styles and abilities.
4. **Social-emotional learning:** Positive psychology promotes the development of social-emotional skills such as empathy, communication, and cooperation. Educators who integrate social-emotional learning into their curriculum



help students build positive relationships, resolve conflicts constructively, and navigate social interactions effectively.

5. **Well-being and resilience:** Educators play a critical role in promoting student well-being and resilience. By nurturing positive emotions, teaching coping skills, and fostering a growth mindset, educators empower students to overcome challenges, adapt to change, and thrive in school and beyond.
6. **Teacher well-being and job satisfaction:** Positive psychology interventions can benefit educators as well as students. By practicing self-care, cultivating resilience, and finding meaning and purpose in their work, educators can prevent burnout, enhance job satisfaction, and maintain their passion for teaching.

Positive psychology offers valuable insights and strategies for enhancing the teaching-learning process. By prioritizing student well-being, fostering engagement and motivation, and cultivating resilience and growth mindset, educators can create transformative learning experiences that empower students to reach their full potential. As educators continue to embrace positive psychology principles in their practice, they contribute to creating a more positive, supportive, and enriching educational environment for all stakeholders involved.

### POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY HOLDS SIGNIFICANT IMPORTANCE IN THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS:

Positive psychology holds significant importance in the teaching-learning process due to its ability to enhance student well-being, engagement, and academic achievement while also supporting educator well-being. A comprehensive discussion on its importance:

1. **Promotes Student Well-being:** Positive psychology emphasizes cultivating positive emotions, resilience, and a sense of purpose among students. By creating a nurturing and supportive classroom environment that prioritizes student well-being, educators contribute to students' overall happiness, satisfaction, and psychological health. When students feel emotionally and psychologically supported, they are more likely to engage actively in learning activities and develop a positive attitude towards school.
2. **Fosters Positive Relationships:** Positive psychology encourages the development of positive relationships among students and between students and educators. These relationships are essential for creating a sense of belonging, trust, and mutual respect within the classroom community. When students feel connected to their peers and educators, they are more likely to collaborate, communicate, and support each other in their academic and personal growth.
3. **Enhances Student Engagement and Motivation:** Positive psychology principles, such as focusing on strengths, fostering a growth mindset, and providing meaningful learning experiences, contribute to increased student engagement and motivation. When educators recognize and celebrate students' strengths and achievements, they create a sense of competence and self-efficacy that motivates students to strive for excellence. Additionally,

promoting a growth mindset encourages students to embrace challenges, persist in the face of obstacles, and view failures as opportunities for learning and growth.

4. **Improves Academic Achievement:** Research has shown that positive emotions and attitudes are strongly associated with academic success. Students who experience positive emotions such as curiosity, interest, and enthusiasm are more likely to be actively engaged in their learning and demonstrate higher levels of achievement. Positive psychology interventions aimed at cultivating positive emotions and creating a supportive learning environment has been found to enhance academic performance across various subjects and grade levels.
5. **Develops Social-Emotional Skills:** Positive psychology emphasizes the importance of developing social-emotional skills such as empathy, communication, and cooperation. These skills are essential for building positive relationships, resolving conflicts constructively, and navigating social interactions effectively. By integrating social-emotional learning into the curriculum, educators help students develop the interpersonal skills needed to succeed academically and thrive in their personal and professional lives.
6. **Supports Educator Well-being:** Positive psychology is not only beneficial for students but also for educators. Teaching can be emotionally demanding, and educators often face high levels of stress and burnout. Positive psychology interventions aimed at promoting educator well-being, such as mindfulness practices, self-care strategies, and gratitude exercises, help educators manage stress, maintain a positive outlook, and sustain their passion for teaching over the long term. When educators prioritize their own well-being, they are better equipped to create supportive and engaging learning environments that benefit both themselves and their students.

Positive psychology plays a vital role in the teaching-learning process by promoting student well-being, engagement, and academic achievement while also supporting educator well-being. By incorporating positive psychology principles into their practice, educators create enriching learning experiences that empower students to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

## FINDING OF THE STUDY

It is found that integrating positive psychology principles into their teaching practices positively impacted students' well-being. Students expressed feeling happier, more motivated, and emotionally supported in classrooms where positive psychology was emphasized. They reported lower levels of stress and anxiety and a greater sense of belonging and connectedness with their peers and educators.

1. A significant increase in student engagement and motivation when positive psychology principles were incorporated into their teaching. Students showed greater enthusiasm for learning, participated more actively in class discussions, and demonstrated a stronger sense of ownership and responsibility for their learning. Educators observed a notable improvement

- in students' attendance, participation, and overall academic performance.
2. Positive psychology interventions were found to have a positive impact on students' academic achievement. Educators reported that students who experienced positive emotions such as curiosity, interest, and excitement were more focused, attentive, and receptive to learning. As a result, students demonstrated higher levels of academic success, including improved grades, test scores, and completion rates.
  3. Positive psychology interventions contributed to the development of students' social-emotional skills, including empathy, communication, and cooperation. Educators observed improvements in students' ability to work collaboratively, resolve conflicts constructively, and demonstrate empathy and understanding towards their peers. Students reported feeling more connected to their classmates and educators, leading to a more positive and supportive classroom climate.
  4. It is found that experiencing personal benefits from integrating positive psychology into their teaching practices. They described feeling more fulfilled, energized, and resilient in their roles as educators. Positive psychology interventions aimed at promoting educator well-being, such as mindfulness practices and self-care strategies, helped educators manage stress, maintain a positive outlook, and sustain their passion for teaching.

The findings of this study suggest that positive psychology is of paramount importance in the teaching-learning process. By integrating positive psychology principles into educational practices, educators can create supportive and enriching learning environments that promote student well-being, engagement, and academic achievement. Additionally, positive psychology interventions support educator well-being, leading to greater job satisfaction and effectiveness in the classroom.

## CONCLUSION

The study on the importance of positive psychology in the teaching-learning process has provided valuable insights into the significant role that positive psychology principles play in enhancing student well-being, engagement, and academic achievement. Through a comprehensive examination of positive psychology interventions and their effects on educators and students, this research has highlighted the transformative potential of integrating positive psychology into educational practices. The findings of this study underscore the importance of prioritizing student well-being and fostering a positive classroom climate that promotes positive emotions, resilience, and social-emotional skills. Educators play a pivotal role in creating supportive and enriching learning environments that empower students to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. By incorporating positive psychology principles into their teaching practices, educators can cultivate a culture of positivity, growth, and resilience that benefits all stakeholders involved in the teaching-learning process. The study has shown that positive psychology interventions not only enhance student outcomes but also support educator well-being and job satisfaction. Educators who prioritize their own well-being are better equipped to create

positive learning environments and provide high-quality instruction that meets the diverse needs of their students.

This study emphasizes the importance of positive psychology in the teaching-learning process and its potential to create transformative educational experiences that empower students to reach their full potential. Moving forward continued research and implementation of positive psychology principles in education are essential for fostering student well-being, engagement, and academic achievement in classrooms worldwide. By embracing positive psychology, educators can create a brighter future for themselves and their students, one characterized by positivity, growth, and success.

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## Relationship between Internet Dependency and Student Life Satisfaction in Metropolitan Cities

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### ABSTRACT

*The aim of this study is to understand the relationship between internet usage habits/ addiction and life satisfaction among adolescents. With the technological revolution reaching around the globe, smartphones, and particularly the use of the internet, has become a staple to human lives. While it succeeds in keeping us ever-connected and when used appropriately, is even a tool to advance ourselves, its detrimental effects on physiological and psychological health are worth reminding ourselves about. In a decade where young children and adolescents have access to the internet around the clock, the need to understand its impact on their lives becomes imperative. The study aims to find the levels of internet addiction and its impact on life satisfaction levels of adolescents. A sample group of 60 participants between the age group 12-18 was taken for the study. Convenience sampling was used for sampling. Internet addiction test, developed by Dr. Kimberly S Young and Students' Life satisfaction scale, developed by Huebner, E. S were used to assess internet addiction and life satisfaction levels of students respectively. Pearson correlation was used to test the hypothesis. We hypothesise a null correlation between internet addiction and life satisfaction.*

**Keywords:** *Internet, Addiction, Life Satisfaction, Technology, Adolescents.*

### INTRODUCTION

APA defines Internet Addiction as a behavioural pattern characterised by excessive or obsessive online and offline computer use that leads to distress

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and impairment. It is generally defined as problematic, uncontrollable use of the internet, that results in substantial impairment in an individual's function in various aspects of life over a prolonged period of time.

Excessive Internet use has not been recognized as a disorder by the World Health Organization, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) or the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11). However, the diagnosis of gaming disorder has been included in the ICD-11. Debate around the diagnosis includes whether the disorder is a separate clinical entity.

Adolescents are more susceptible to internet addiction. As adolescents (12–19 year olds) access the Internet more than any other age group, the problem of Internet behaviour disorder is most relevant to them.

However, in the question of students' life satisfaction and internet usage it has been found that there are several outcomes; it may be positive or negative. Positive effects include increased access to information, educational resources, social connections, and skill development. However, negative effects such as cyberbullying, information overload, sedentary behaviour, and sleep disturbances can also influence life satisfaction.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kimberley Young's 1996 study found that 66% of Internet users could be categorised as "Internet dependent." These individuals exhibited a range of addictive behaviours, including loss of control, tolerance, withdrawal, and impaired functioning. The study also found that Internet addiction can have a negative impact on individuals' physical health, family life, and academic performance.

A study in Taiwan found that Internet addiction is associated with ADHD and depressive disorders. This suggests that Internet addiction is not limited to a particular region, but rather affects people around the world. Internet addiction can have a negative impact on relationships, finances, academics, and careers. It can also lead to social isolation, poor academic performance, and strained personal relationships. The frequency of this problem varies from place to place, but it is a global concern.

Greenfield's study found that Internet addicts often neglect their real-world responsibilities and relationships in favour of their online activities. They may miss work deadlines, spend less time with their family and friends, and withdraw from their social circles. As their addiction deepens, they may become increasingly isolated and spend all of their time online. This can have a devastating impact on their lives, and it is important to recognize and treat Internet addiction early on.

The Internet can be used for a variety of purposes, but some people engage in excessive activities such as chatting, gambling, and viewing pornography. This can lead to loss of control over Internet usage, which can have negative consequences on daily life, social interactions, academic performance, and psychological well-being. Excessive Internet use can also lead to feelings of isolation, which can further decrease mood and life satisfaction. It is important to be aware of the potential negative effects of excessive Internet use and to

promote a healthy balance between online and offline activities.

## Method

**Problem Statement** - to understand the relationship between internet addiction and life satisfaction levels in adolescents.

**Hypothesis:** a null correlation between Internet addiction and life satisfaction.

**Objective:** to administer 'Internet Addiction test developed by Kimberly S Young' and 'Students' Life satisfaction Scale developed by E.S Hubener' and interpret the scores of the subjects by referring to the norms.

**Sample** - Convenience sampling was used for sampling. The samples of the study were 60 adolescent students aged 12 to 18 years from metropolitan cities of India. 43.1% of them were 18 year olds and approximately 3.9% were 12 year olds.

**Tools** - For all measures in the study, except demographic questions, respondents indicated their level of agreement with the items using a 5-point's Likert response scale ranging from (1) Rarely to (5) Always. Each measure is illustrated as the followings:

Internet addiction test consisted of 20 items developed by the authors. The example items include "How often do your grades or school work suffer because of the amount of time you spend online", "How often do you make new relationships with fellow online users," and "How often do you block out disturbing thoughts about your life with the soothing thoughts of the internet."

Life satisfaction was measured using a 7-item questionnaire developed by the authors.

The example items included "My life is just right" and "I would like to change many things in my life."

**Analysis** - Descriptive statistics such as mean, frequency, and standard deviation were employed to analyse and explain some attributes of the variables. In addition, Pearson's correlation statistics was employed for hypothesis testing.

## RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

**Table 1: Showing the Internet Addiction levels of adolescents**

Parameter	Values
Mean	45.93
Range	61
Standard Deviation	16.9
Coefficient of variation	0.36

Table 1 shows the mean, range and standard deviation scores of the sample on the internet addiction test. The group has a mean score of 45.93, range of 61, and a standard deviation of 16.9. The mean is interpreted as mild level of internet addiction in the group, and the range indicates a high presence of individual differences. The standard deviation scores have been further interpreted using the coefficient of variation which indicates a low standard deviation, that is, the group scores, on an average, are clustered around the mean. The internet

addiction test indicates 45% of adolescents to be moderately addicted to the internet, 26% to be mildly addicted and 25% to have normal levels of internet usage.

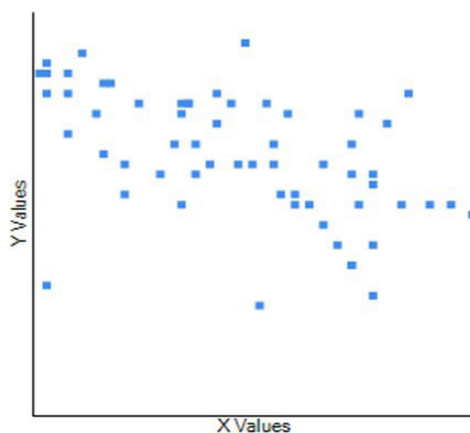
**Table 2: Showing the Life Satisfaction Levels of adolescents**

Parameter	Values
Mean	25.85
Range	26
Standard Deviation	6.25
Coefficient of variation	0.24

Table 2 shows the mean, range and standard deviation scores of the sample on the internet addiction test. The group has a mean score of 25.85, which is interpreted as the group is slightly satisfied, range of 26, indicating the presence of comparatively lower individual differences within the group. The group has a standard deviation score of 6.25, which has been further interpreted using the coefficient of variation, indicating a low standard deviation, that is, the group scores, on an average, are clustered around the mean. 30% of the sample population scored slightly satisfied, 28% reported satisfied, 1.6% was extremely satisfied, and 6.6% scored neutral on the life satisfaction scale. On the other end, 21% was slightly dissatisfied, 8.3% scored dissatisfied, and 3.3% of the sample group reported extreme dissatisfaction on the life satisfaction scale.

**Table 3: Showing the Relationship between Internet Addiction and Life Satisfaction Levels**

Parameter	Values
Pearson correlation coefficient (r)	-0.5136
P-value	0.00002711
Covariance	-54.2814
Sample size (n)	60
Statistic	-4.5582



The value of R is -0.5136.



The correlation coefficient of  $-0.513$  indicates a moderate negative correlation between internet addiction and life satisfaction. As internet addiction increases, life satisfaction tends to decrease. These results contradict the null hypothesis, suggesting a significant negative correlation between the variables. Internet addiction may lead to decreased social interactions, reduced productivity, and increased feelings of isolation or loneliness, contributing to lower life satisfaction. The sample characteristics should be considered, and the findings may not be generalizable to other populations. Other factors like age, gender, and socioeconomic status might also influence the correlation between life satisfaction and internet addiction but were not controlled for in this study.

However, it is important to note that correlation does not equal causation. Just because there is a correlation between two variables does not mean that one variable causes the other. It is possible that there is a third variable that is causing both internet addiction and decreased life satisfaction. For example, it is possible that people who are unhappy with their lives are more likely to become addicted to the internet. In this case, the internet addiction would not be the cause of the decreased life satisfaction, but rather a symptom of it.

## DISCUSSION

The study's findings shed light on the relationship between internet addiction and life satisfaction, revealing a moderate negative correlation of  $-0.513$ . This suggests that as internet addiction increases, life satisfaction tends to decrease. The results underscore the potential detrimental effects of excessive internet use on individuals' overall well-being and highlight the importance of addressing this issue.

Analyzing the internet addiction scores, the study found a mean score of 45.93, indicating a mild level of addiction. However, the wide range of 61 suggests significant individual differences within the group, with some participants displaying markedly higher levels of internet addiction. The standard deviation of 16.9 further supports this observation, indicating substantial variability in internet addiction levels among the participants.

Regarding life satisfaction, the group had a mean score of 25.85, indicating a slightly satisfied level. The range of 26 indicates relatively lower individual differences within the group, implying that the majority of individuals experience similar levels of life satisfaction. The standard deviation score of 6.25, when considered in relation to the mean using the coefficient of variation, reinforces the notion that the group scores are clustered around the mean, indicating a low standard deviation in life satisfaction.

The study identifies several potential factors contributing to the negative impact of internet addiction on life satisfaction. Excessive internet use can lead to decreased social interactions, as individuals spend more time online, reducing face-to-face connections that are crucial for meaningful relationships and a sense of belonging. This virtual disconnection may lead to feelings of isolation and negatively affect overall life satisfaction.

Moreover, excessive internet use, especially on non-productive activities like social media or online gaming, can detract from real-life responsibilities and

goals. This reduced productivity may lead to dissatisfaction with personal achievements and overall development, as time spent online substitutes more fulfilling activities.

Furthermore, excessive internet use may contribute to increased feelings of isolation or loneliness, as individuals become socially isolated from offline communities. The lack of real-life social support can impact life satisfaction and well-being.

Considering the study's limitations, including its focus on adolescents and the absence of controls for factors such as gender and socioeconomic status, it is crucial to interpret the findings cautiously. However, the results underscore the significance of understanding and addressing internet addiction to promote healthier internet use habits and overall well-being, particularly among adolescents.

## CONCLUSION

- The study reveals a moderate negative correlation (-0.513) between internet addiction and life satisfaction, indicating that increased internet addiction is associated with decreased life satisfaction.
- The correlation coefficient is statistically significant, allowing rejection of the null hypothesis and indicating a significant negative correlation between the two variables.
- Possible explanations for the correlation include decreased social interactions, reduced productivity, increased feelings of isolation or loneliness, and internet addiction as a symptom of underlying psychological problems like depression or anxiety.
- The study's small sample of adolescents raises concerns about generalizability to other populations.
- The study lacks control for potential confounding factors such as age, gender, and socioeconomic status, which could influence the correlation between internet addiction and life satisfaction.
- Despite its limitations, the study offers valuable insights into the relationship between internet addiction and life satisfaction, emphasizing the importance of promoting healthy internet use habits and individualized interventions.
- Further research is needed to confirm the findings and explore underlying mechanisms, but the study serves as a starting point in understanding this relationship.

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

### Theoretical implications:

- The study provides further evidence of the negative consequences of excessive internet use.
- Internet addiction may be a contributing factor to decreased life satisfaction, as suggested by the study.

- The relationship between addiction and well-being gains insights from the study.

#### Practical implications:

- The study could raise awareness of the risks of excessive internet use.
- Clinical practice could benefit from the study's insights, recommending patients to limit internet use.
- Public policy, like restrictions on internet use in specific settings, could be informed by the study.

#### Examples of practical application:

- Clinicians can use the study to help patients struggling with internet addiction.
- Public health officials can develop awareness campaigns about excessive internet use risks.
- Parents can guide their children in developing healthy internet habits.
- Policymakers may consider restricting internet use in certain settings like schools or workplaces.

#### Limitations of the Study

- Unaccounted factors like personality traits and socioeconomic status may influence internet addiction and life satisfaction.
- Study focuses on students from privileged families.
- Limited to 23 male and 37 female students.
- Impact of internet addiction on life satisfaction may differ based on cultures or socioeconomic backgrounds, limiting generalizability.
- Study's limited representation of the entire student population and potential sampling bias affect findings' applicability.
- Study lacks control for gender and socioeconomic status, affecting correlation between internet addiction and life satisfaction.
- Study examines correlation at a single point in time, potentially overlooking changes over time.
- Study doesn't measure severity of internet addiction or life satisfaction, affecting correlation strength.

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## APPENDIX

**Table 4: Internet Addiction level and Life Satisfaction level of the subjects**

NAMES	TOTAL Internet Addiction	Interpretation	TOTAL Life satisfaction	Interpretation
TH	42	mild	25	slightly satisfied
MH	40	mild	24	Neutral
KP	54	moderate	22	Slightly dissatisfied
GG	37	mild	27	Slightly satisfied
SB	22	normal	28	Slightly satisfied
BW	53	moderate	30	Slightly satisfied
SA	52	moderate	22	Slightly dissatisfied
AB	28	normal	33	Satisfied
SU	49	mild	11	Extremely dissatisfied
SR	27	normal	26	Slightly satisfied
MH	43	mild	29	Slightly satisfied
AS	65	moderate	23	Slightly dissatisfied
NV	38	mild	21	Slightly dissatisfied
FH	24	normal	36	Satisfied
VD	19	normal	13	Dissatisfied
AR	39	mild	31	Satisfied
AT	51	moderate	27	Slightly satisfied
RS	67	moderate	29	Slightly satisfied
PN	40	mild	27	Slightly satisfied
AYS	54	moderate	21	Slightly dissatisfied
IF	65	moderate	24	Neutral
IY	38	mild	30	Slightly satisfied
BT	45	mild	31	Satisfied
MAS	19	normal	35	Satisfied

AH	50	moderate	31	Satisfied
TM	51	moderate	25	Slightly satisfied
UK	47	mild	37	Extremely satisfied
DR	62	moderate	27	Slightly satisfied
PS	26	normal	30	Slightly satisfied
JSJ	35	mild	24	Neutral
KB	38	mild	31	Satisfied
MC	58	moderate	19	Slightly dissatisfied
SM	43	mild	32	Satisfied
MS	22	normal	34	Satisfied
SAM	56	moderate	21	Slightly dissatisfied
SHR	30	normal	25	Slightly satisfied
UTK	19	normal	34	Satisfied
AIY	18	normal	34	Satisfied
LY	62	moderate	15	Dissatisfied
AIK	62	moderate	15	Dissatisfied
IJ	48	mild	25	Slightly satisfied
NR	46	mild	25	Slightly satisfied
NA	22	normal	32	Satisfied
CHA	27	normal	33	Satisfied
CG	63	moderate	30	Slightly satisfied
SRK	30	normal	22	Slightly dissatisfied
SU	65	moderate	12	Extremely dissatisfied
LV	60	moderate	17	Dissatisfied
MI	65	moderate	17	Dissatisfied
SC	58	moderate	25	Slightly satisfied
MS	32	mild	31	Satisfied
SRU	19	normal	32	Satisfied
KUL	39	mild	31	Satisfied
VAI	63	moderate	21	Slightly dissatisfied
MOH	62	moderate	24	Neutral
GMP	76	moderate	21	slightly dissatisfied
VBH	79	moderate	20	Slightly dissatisfied
ATI	70	moderate	32	Satisfied
HSH	69	moderate	21	Slightly dissatisfied
UTH	73	moderate	21	Slightly dissatisfied

Table 5: Correlation study between life satisfaction and internet addiction.

Subject	Total Internet Addiction (X)	Total Life satisfaction (Y)	X - M <sub>x</sub>	Y - M <sub>y</sub>	(X- M <sub>x</sub> ) <sup>2</sup>	(Y-M <sub>y</sub> ) <sup>2</sup>	( X - M <sub>x</sub> ) (Y - M <sub>y</sub> )
TH	42	25	-3.933	-0.85	15.471	0.723	3.343
MH	40	24	-5.933	-1.85	35.204	3.423	10.977
KP	54	22	8.067	-3.85	65.071	14.823	-31.057
GG	37	27	-8.933	1.15	79.804	1.322	-10.273
SB	22	28	-23.933	2.15	572.804	4.622	-51.457
BW	53	30	7.067	4.15	49.938	17.222	29.327
SA	52	22	6.067	-3.85	36.804	14.823	-23.357
AB	28	33	-17.933	7.15	321.604	51.122	-128.223
SU	49	11	3.067	-14.85	9.404	220.523	-45.54
SR	27	26	-18.933	0.15	358.471	0.022	-2.84
MH	43	29	-2.933	3.15	8.604	9.922	-9.24
AS	65	23	19.067	-2.85	363.538	8.123	-54.34
NV	38	21	-7.933	-4.85	62.938	23.523	38.477
FH	24	36	-21.933	10.15	481.071	103.022	-222.623
VD	19	13	-26.933	-12.85	725.404	165.123	346.093
AR	39	31	-6.933	5.15	48.071	26.522	-35.707
AT	51	27	5.067	1.15	25.671	1.322	5.827
RS	67	29	21.067	3.15	443.804	9.922	66.36
PN	40	27	-5.933	1.15	35.204	1.322	-6.823
AYS	54	21	8.067	-4.85	65.071	23.523	-39.123
IF	65	24	19.067	-1.85	363.538	3.423	-35.273
IY	38	30	-7.933	4.15	62.938	17.222	-32.923
BT	45	31	-0.933	5.15	0.871	26.522	-4.807
MAS	19	35	-26.933	9.15	725.404	83.722	-246.44
AH	50	31	4.067	5.15	16.538	26.522	20.943
TM	51	25	5.067	-0.85	25.671	0.723	-4.307
UK	47	37	1.067	11.15	1.138	124.322	11.893
DR	62	27	16.067	1.15	258.138	1.322	18.477
PS	26	30	-19.933	4.15	397.338	17.222	-82.723
JSJ	35	24	-10.933	-1.85	119.538	3.423	20.227
KB	38	31	-7.933	5.15	62.938	26.522	-40.857
MC	58	19	12.067	-6.85	145.604	46.923	-82.657
SM	43	32	-2.933	6.15	8.604	37.822	-18.04
MS	22	34	-23.933	8.15	572.804	66.422	-195.057
SAM	56	21	10.067	-4.85	101.338	23.523	-48.823
SHR	30	25	-15.933	-0.85	253.871	0.723	13.543

UTK	19	34	-26.933	8.15	725.404	66.422	-219.507
AIY	18	34	-27.933	8.15	780.271	66.422	-227.657
LY	62	15	16.067	-10.85	258.138	117.723	-174.323
AIK	62	15	16.067	-10.85	258.138	117.723	-174.323
IJ	48	25	2.067	-0.85	4.271	0.723	-1.757
NR	46	25	0.067	-0.85	0.004	0.723	-0.057
NA	22	32	-23.933	6.15	572.804	37.822	-147.19
CHA	27	33	-18.933	7.15	358.471	51.122	-135.373
CG	63	30	17.067	4.15	291.271	17.222	70.827
SRK	30	22	-15.933	-3.85	253.871	14.823	61.343
SU	65	12	19.067	-13.85	363.538	191.823	-264.073
LV	60	17	14.067	-8.85	197.871	78.323	-124.49
MI	65	17	19.067	-8.85	363.538	78.323	-168.74
SC	58	25	12.067	-0.85	145.604	0.723	-10.257
MS	32	31	-13.933	5.15	194.138	26.522	-71.757
SRU	19	32	-26.933	6.15	725.404	37.822	-165.64
KUL	39	31	-6.933	5.15	48.071	26.522	-35.707
VAI	63	21	17.067	-4.85	291.271	23.523	-82.773
MOH	62	24	16.067	-1.85	258.138	3.423	-29.723
GMP	76	21	30.067	-4.85	904.004	23.523	-145.823
VBH	79	20	33.067	-5.85	1093.404	34.223	-193.44
ATI	70	32	24.067	6.15	579.204	37.822	148.01
HSH	69	21	23.067	-4.85	532.071	23.523	-111.873
UTH	73	21	27.067	-4.85	732.604	23.523	-131.273

<b>Total</b>			<b>Mx: 45.933</b>	<b>My: 25.850</b>	<b>Sum: 16851.733</b>	<b>Sum: 2307.650</b>	<b>Sum: -3202.600</b>
RANGE	61	26					
SD	16.90037274	6.254015659					

**Key**

X: X Values

Y: Y Values

$M_x$ : Mean of X Values

$M_y$ : Mean of Y Values

$X - M_x$  &  $Y - M_y$ : Deviation scores

$(X - M_x)^2$  &  $(Y - M_y)^2$ : Deviation Squared

$(X - M_x)(Y - M_y)$ : Product of Deviation Scores

## Positive Aspects of Internet Use

Gaurav Sharma\* & Parul Patneja\*\*

### ABSTRACT

*While most discussions concerning the internet centre on its downsides, this study seeks to examine its positive aspects as well. The internet is essential for communication, information access, business, entertainment, education, work, and healthcare. It revolutionised how we live, learn, and interact while enabling global connectivity and collaboration. It acts as a force for transformation with deep ramifications for individuals, communities, and societies worldwide. The internet is not only a vast repository of information but also provides opportunities for cognitive enhancement, fostering entertainment and relaxation, social support, enhancing well-being, and assisting individuals to prosper in the era of digital technology. In conclusion, this chapter emphasises how important it is to acknowledge and capitalise on the positive aspects of internet use for personal growth and community development. Its appropriate use and ongoing evolution have the potential to improve the well-being, innovation, and progress of the global population.*

**Keywords:** *Internet, Well-Being, Digital Technology, Personal Growth, and Community Development.*

With over 4 billion internet users globally as of 2021, internet use has increased dramatically over the previous few decades across all age groups (Internet World Stats, 2021). India ranked second globally in terms of online market size, after China, with over 900 million internet users. (Statista, 2023). Just as the invention of the fire and wheel had a great impact on our development, similarly, the internet has also made a huge contribution to human development. From the Gutenberg press to the Industrial Revolution, digital technologies are growing every decade and facilitating our development. Can you imagine your life without the internet? How will it be? We now find it impossible to imagine living without

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the internet. The internet has integrated itself into our daily lives. Internet use is more than just communication. It has spread its wings in knowledge acquisition (Lankton et al., 2012), cognitive enhancement (Voinea et al., 2020), financial transactions, research, social support (Lee & Cho, 2019), overall well-being, etc. From information access to online interventions, its pervasive influence has made it indispensable in modern life. Although the internet has many benefits, we typically focus on its drawbacks. This chapter focuses on the positive aspects of internet use for personal growth and community development.

### **FROM SURFING TO CREATING: THE INTERNET'S ROLE IN COGNITIVE ENHANCEMENT AND FOSTERING CREATIVITY**

Buchanan contends that computers and the Internet are highly effective technology for enhancing cognitive abilities due to their ability to provide immediate access to knowledge, regardless of time or location. He places these two technologies in the context of a long-standing legacy of "historical non-biomedical cognitive enhancements" such as reading, (social) institutions, and numeracy. These therapies have been found to enhance individuals' cognitive abilities, hence broadening the range of intellectual tasks that humans are capable of undertaking. (Buchanan 2011b, 9).

The internet serves as a vast reservoir of diverse information. With just a few taps, we get immediate access to any topic. It acts as a powerful tool for knowledge acquisition (Molnar et al., 1996; Lewin, 2000; Guan & Subrahmanyam, 2009; Saleh et al., 2011; Reyachay & Aguirre-Urreta, 2013; Emran & Tio, 2019). Various internet-based platforms help to make high-quality education accessible to a global audience. Various tools are engaged in improving the processing of the information by organising and managing it. We can provide a structure and categorise the information using several digital tools that enhance our ability to process and retain the information. Multimedia content leads to a deeper understanding of information (Cairncross & Mannion, 2001). Learning through text, images, audio, and interactive simulation leads to better organisation and retention.

The internet can act as a catalyst for cognitive enhancement (Heersmink, 2016). Cognition refers to the higher mental processes involved in information perception, processing, storage, and retrieval. Thus, cognitive enhancement refers to promoting cognitive abilities. The internet fosters creativity (Wheeler et al., 2002). It provides opportunities to think in diverse ways and generate innovative ideas. It also provides a platform to express novel ideas. Playing action video games improves cognitive functions (Chandra et al., 2016; Dobrowolski et al., 2015; Green & Bavelier, 2015; Choi et al., 2020). It stimulates brain activity, cognitive flexibility, and decision-making ability.

### **E-BLISS: FOSTERING JOY AND RELAXATION IN THE DIGITAL REALM**

Everyone wants to be happy and relaxed. The internet can significantly contribute to achieving this goal. The internet not only serves utilitarian purposes but also plays a key role in enhancing well-being by enabling enjoyment, relaxation, and positive experiences. The internet offers a vast array of opportunities for

joy and relaxation. Adachi and Willoughby (2017) linked playing video games with SDT (self-determination theory). As it leads to autonomy, competence, and relatedness in people, that facilitates overall well-being.

Photography has positive effects on mood, arousal levels, self-reflection, and stress relief (Chen et al, 2016). Playing video games in a balanced way fosters our well-being, problem solving, intergroup relations, and physical activity. Depending on the player's motivation, outside variables, the presence of violence, social interaction, and physical activity, playing video games can either increase aggression or improve well-being (Halbrook et al., 2019). The internet also serves as a versatile platform for practice of relaxation and mindfulness techniques.

An investigation examined if increased internet connectivity in a given location might lessen tension. The results showed that internet use may reduce university student stress. This study found that regional Internet access, city size, and university type affect student mental health. The findings highlight the need to address environmental variables that cause excessive mental stress in Chinese students, particularly internet accessibility. (Jiang et al., 2022)

Through the use of the internet, individuals are able to share their spiritual practices and rituals with one another, which enables them to adopt these practices and rituals into their everyday routines for the purpose of enhancing their relaxation and spiritual connection.

## **DIGITAL SUPPORT: SUPPORT AT YOUR FINGERTIPS**

Humans are inherently sociable creatures. Our survival, comfort, and growth are contingent upon our interdependence. The concept of social support is inherent in human nature. However, the extent to which someone needs social support depends on dispositional traits and circumstances. Different social media platforms serve different purposes for us (Oh & Syan, 2015). Our needs, expectations, motivations, and personal characteristics all influence how we use the internet. A myriad of digital platforms provides opportunities to connect and interact with other people, regardless of geographical barriers. It provides social and emotional support (Lu & Hampton, 2016; Haslam et al., 2017; Utz and Brener, 2017). However, personality acts as a moderating variable between internet use and social support (Swickert et al., 2002).

Even so, people gather information about medical conditions, treatments, and general health-related topics through the internet (Percheski & Hargittai, 2011; Horgan & Sweeney, 2012; Robinson-Whelen et al., 2022). Online mental health interventions are easily available, anonymous, and cost-effective. Although there is no involvement in personal interactions or non-verbal cues, these interventions can be effective for several disorders (Cunningham et al., 2014; Schroder et al., 2016; Sander et al., 2016; Ebert et al., 2017; Andersson, 2018; Ebert et al., 2018). Overall, the internet has revolutionised the way people seek, receive, and provide social support.

According to the research, younger adults during the pandemic's lockdown period spent noticeably more time online than older adults. In comparison to older adults, they exhibited a higher level of proficiency in utilising digital

resources to address their requirements and participate in social interactions. Nevertheless, the mental well-being of younger individuals was subpar, and this was partly attributed to the extent of their internet usage. Previous studies have indicated that an excessive amount of time spent on the internet may result in disordered usage. Consequently, it is plausible that the advantages associated with digital technology may have been diminished during the period of lockdown during the epidemic. This During the period of COVID-19 shutdown, empirical investigations revealed that internet usage served as a partial mediator in the relationship between age and the manifestations of depression, anxiety, and stress. Although excessive internet usage may result in harmful usage, it also served as a coping mechanism for individuals throughout the lockdown measures. (Yu et al., 2024)

### **From Isolation to Connection: The Transformative Influence of the Internet on Older and Transgender Individuals**

The internet has profoundly influenced individuals of all ages, including both children and adults. But it's use among transgender people and the elderly has been astounding. The process of ageing is characterized by a wide range of difficulties that include various dimensions, including physical, psychological and social issues. It provides opportunities for seniors to connect socially, reduced loneliness, enhance well-being (Mellor et al., 2008; Heo et al., 2015). They feel autonomous, socially connected, personal growth through online interactions (Shapira et al., 2007; Bianchi, 2021).

Transgender face various challenges including social stigma, discrimination, lack of access to health care and legal issues related to gender recognition. LGBTQ search their gender identity through online explorations (Pingel et al., 2013). It fosters their well-being (Austin et al., 2020; Selkie et al., 2020).

Throughout this chapter, we have examined the internet's potential for promoting our development and growth. It encompasses all facets of human existence, ranging from the acquisition of knowledge to the holistic state of well-being. The emergence of the Internet has facilitated the acquisition of knowledge in terms of equality, accessibility, and quality. The internet serves as an invaluable platform for individuals to express and promote their novel ideas. The internet offers a momentary escape in the current era of high levels of stress. With its assistance, we can relax. Through engaging with individuals on the Internet, individuals experience a sense of autonomy, competence, authority, self-confidence, and self-worth. To conclude, the internet is a dynamic and ever-changing force that has the capacity to profoundly reshape our world. Through thoughtful usage, we can guarantee that the internet continues to have a positive influence on our society.

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**Theme - 6**  
**Hope, Resilience and Quality  
of Life**

## Finding Hope and Resilience in Life with Positive Psychology Interventions: An Overview

**Dr. Rupan Dhillon\***

### **ABSTRACT**

*Positive Psychology is concerned with the mental strengths and what makes life more purposeful and meaningful. There is a high prevalence of hope based interventions which are helping elderly people fight the issues and of ageism and lead a successful aged life. Clinicians are trying to understand the cognitive framework of hope theory into therapeutic situations. Resilience and recovery based interventions are also making a significant change in the lives of patients with illnesses. Seligman's work has suggested that happiness comprises of positive emotion, engagement and meaning in life and Positive Psychology Interventions (PPIs) are concerned with enhancing at least one of these dimensions. This article will focus on the perspective of Positive Psychology Interventions that aim to increase flourishing thoughts and feelings. These interventions include Gratitude, Hope, Mindfulness, Journaling, writing of positive memories, developing meaningful narratives of past challenges, and more, thus understanding the impact that thoughts have on well-being so that an individual is encouraged to work on his authentic self.*

**Keywords:** PPIs, Hope, Gratitude, Elderly.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Recent research and developments in Positive Psychology have brought a tremendous change in which we perceive and experience life. The role of Positive Psychology has become important as it needs to develop and integrate a model of wellbeing so that it can steer public policies in the positive direction. From a Psychology of negativity, dysfunction, abnormalities and disorders, there is a shift toward Positive Psychology which is primarily concerned with

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the Positive. From the paradigm of mental health, the focus is on wellbeing. There is lot of potential and capacity in the person to change and live a better life. Traditional Positive Psychology focuses on understanding people and believing in their character strengths and virtues. It is concerned with the model of flow and flourishing life, pleasures and optimism. It enables the psychotherapist to replace the distress of his client and enable him to experience a positive state of being. Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) inspired and challenged their viewpoints and enabled them to look at their roots, i.e. to focus on the positives, to focus on what makes their lives fulfilling and complete. However, the role of Positive Psychology is not only to focus on the optimism and positivity but to also look at the problems, weaknesses and sufferings and repairing the lives of people by making them more meaningful and productive.

Successful aging is a concept that is receiving a wide attention because even the elderly want to stay efficient in their daily activities, have good cognitive abilities, social participation and a positive wellbeing. Therefore many hope based interventions are being introduced that are helping older adults to fight depression, chronic diseases, disabilities, loss of loved ones and work on building a good subjective wellbeing, self-esteem, and personality integration. What can make their lives more sustainable? That is the question Psychologists are working on so that the elderly can embrace their lives and develop a new significant meaning to their life. Many new strategies like forgiveness, participation in happiness training programs, keeping gratitude journals or writing a gratitude letter, taking a walk in the nature, thinking of positive events, recalling happy moments can help the elderly increase positive affect. They can even engage in acts of kindness or charity. The interventions also teach them how to shift from one activity to another or engage in two positive activities in a day (Bao & Lyubomirsky, 2014; Burton & King, 2004). These strategies must be anchored in health education so that they promote the individual's participation in groups and in community. Sustainable prevention strategies are needed to help individuals preserve psychophysical well-being in old age.

The structure of a Positive therapy intervention can include building rapport with the elderly, letting them know what is the purpose and objective of the therapy. Second step can include that what are the five abilities they possess and what can be done to demonstrate or utilize these abilities in daily life. Third session can direct their focus on their blessings and ask them to note down their blessings. This will lower their depressive symptoms as they can be explained about all the positive things they have in their life. Next step can include a strategy where they are expressing good thoughts to others, saying thank you, and appreciating the others in their life. They can be taught that simple activities can also bring them joy like hugging a tree, walking barefoot in the garden, enjoying rain showers or even sipping a tea. Charity is also a task that can elevate their life force. Layous et al. (2012) stated that kindness counts result in increasing in life satisfaction, happiness, and positivity in clients. Another session can include writing words of gratitude in their journal. Self-affirmation activities can fight rumination and pessimism and can remove self-doubt from their lives (Sin and Lyubomirsky, 2009; Nelson et al., 2014).

## POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY INTERVENTIONS

There are a number of psychotherapies based on the school of thought it originates from. Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, Psychodynamic Therapy, MBCT, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) are the commonly used therapies which help the elderly to stay active in community settings. It has also been concluded that psychotherapy is the most effective forms of therapy and older adults respond better to this therapy than young adults (Meador et al., 1996). PIPAC (Preserving Identity and Planning for Advance Care) is an intervention that promotes healthy coping mechanisms and improves quality of life by focusing on dementia and other symptoms. DEMA (Daily Enhancement of Meaningful Activity) is a meaning based intervention and targets couples dealing with mild cognitive impairment. The intervention engages them in meaningful activities and also helps them to adapt to changing circumstances. Interpersonal therapies focus on interpersonal relationships.

In recent times, it has been observed that the trends are changing, newer forms of therapies are emerging and these have brought a ray of hope in the lives of many. PPI's are scientific in nature and have a unique purpose of increasing happiness in the individuals. They have the role of strengthening one's positive resources (Ng and Ong, 2022). The traditional systems worked on symptoms and deficits in human functioning and had limited scope but PPIs are designed in a way that they enable optimal functioning and growth (Van Zyl and Salanova, 2022). A study of Ho, Yeung and Kwok (2014) reported that a Positive Psychology Intervention increased levels of life satisfaction, gratitude and overall happiness, and reduced the number of depressive symptoms in older adults. Similarly, Sutipan, Intarakamhang and Macaskill (2017), stated that multiple PPIs are associated with significant improvements in well-being (i.e. happiness, positive emotions, life satisfaction) and reduces depressive symptoms in older adults. A meta-analysis reported that PPIs significantly decreased depression and enhanced wellbeing in the older individuals (Sin and Lyubomirsky, 2009). The analysis concluded that these interventions worked the best for older adults. Another systematic review also showed that PPIs such as well-being training, hope therapy, thinking about positive life experiences, writing about best possible selves, savoring and optimism training, help to enhance subjective wellbeing, psychological well-being and reduce depressive symptoms (Bolier et al., 2013). Studies have proven that these interventions are highly useful and effective and can produce reductions in symptoms of burnout, stress, anxiety, anger and depression (Simon, 2016; Baxter et al., 2012; Cheng et al., 2015).

A few of Positive Psychology Interventions are as follows:

**Autobiographical Memories Intervention:** In a study by Chamorro-Garrido et al. (2021), 11 week intervention was planned for the group of elderly and the focus was to build autobiographical memory and also increasing the use of virtues like hope, forgiveness and gratitude. The experimental group had a gain in life satisfaction with the multi component PPI and it increased their wellbeing and subjective happiness. The purpose of autobiographical memory is to remember your past happy moments which can bring a shift in mood.

**Forgiveness:** Forgiveness transforms bitter experiences to neutral ones and a

person can move on in his life. It is an emotion focused coping strategy. One important model that can be used in the elderly group is Worthington's REACH model. It includes five steps: To recall painful events, Explore means to build empathy and understand the motivation of others, Acknowledge means to have an altruistic stance, Commit means to forgive in a public setting and last step is Hold which means to sustain/ maintain forgiveness over time. Results of many studies have shown that depression, anxiety and other symptoms are mitigated when forgiveness intervention is given (Baskin and Enright, 2004; Wade et al., 2019).

**Gratitude** is another way to magnify ones past memories. Gratitude significantly and positively relates with the variables of self-acceptance, autonomy, purpose in life and personal growth (Mendez et al., 2014). Chopik et al., (2019) also conclude that gratitude's positive association with wellbeing remains relatively constant in all the stages of life. Gratitude journal is an activity they like to follow on daily basis as it reduces negative affect in them. Another intervention is called as Three Good Things (TGT) which involves the use of gratitude by writing three good things they have experienced which will prolong the positive emotions. A study indicates that there is a decrease in depression up to 6 months with the use of this technique (Seligman et al., 2005; Mc Ewan et al., 2019). Killen and Macaskill (2014) also made use of this intervention and it was shown to enhance hedonic and eudemonic well-being by decreasing stress levels, and by significantly increasing psychological well-being as measured by flourishing at the post-test. The 30-day follow-up also revealed that well-being maintained its level.

**Nature Based Interventions:** Apart from these interventions, we can also introduce nature based interventions which means that to be connected with nature, walking outdoors, having some kind of physical activity in the lap of nature. These interventions have aided in reducing stress and anxiety by facilitating self to become part of nature. Ecopsychology works on the connection between human beings and nature and brings people closer to nature. The concept also proposes that many instances of psychological distress are caused by our alienation from nature. These interventions have many types like Ecotherapy, Animal Assisted Therapy, Horticulture Therapy, Forest Bathing etc.

**Bibliotherapy:** In another study conducted by Frieswijk et al. (2006), Bibliotherapy technique was used to enhance the ability of self-management, mastery and wellbeing among a group of older people over a 10-week period. A significant increase was observed in self-management skills and subjective well-being for older people who received the bibliotherapy. Therefore, this technique also has beneficial effects.

**Reminiscence Therapies** encourages the elderly to talk about their prior experiences, memories and even bring pictures and videos to therapy sessions. The elderly are also asked to create a life memory book. The focus is to reduce the symptoms of depression. Meléndez Moral et al. (2013) assessed the effects of a reminiscence program in institutionalized elderly adults and it was found that program brought a significant change in the variables like life satisfaction, self-esteem, and psychological well-being. It also brought a significant decrease in

depressive symptoms. Life review therapy is a technique that focuses on retrieval and organization of participants' memories especially the positive memories of specific life situations from their past. Studies show that interventions based on recollection of memories acts as a buffer against depressive symptoms (Hitchcock et al., 2017; Cantarella et al., 2017). Research also shows that institutionalized adults who were trained in such programs such as Life Review Therapy had reductions in anxiety and fear of death (Jo and An, 2018).

**Humour** is a strategy that is related to mood upliftment. Konradt et al. (2013) made use of a standardized form of Humour Therapy on a group of depressive patients who belonged to the age of 6 years and above. The results showed that the patients who were in the humour group had lower state seriousness and greater satisfaction with life after completion of the program (Hirsch et al., 2010). Gander et al. (2013) has experimented Humour therapy by making individuals write three amusing/ funny things (similar to Three Good Things) and it was found that people built better social bonds after this program and also developed positive emotions.

WHO released a care program for the elderly that promotes active and successful aging by providing community level interventions that are concerned with optimization of environment issues such as transportation, housing, outdoor spaces and buildings. It also involves social participation, respect and inclusion, by directing attention on employment, community support and health services. These all activities can help promote resilience and self-efficacy in elderly. At an individual level, proper diet, active lifestyle, flexibility, positive coping can help maintain their abilities. They will have to become actively involved in their life choices and gain more personal control. This will help the elderly not to be vulnerable to adversity but rather exhibit the characteristics and skills for successful adaptation. A recent study show that elderly above 85 years of age have high levels of resilience by means of good self-efficacy, problem solving abilities, and maintaining personal control. In fact, resilience in this age group can be even higher than in those of younger age (Wahl, 2020). A key point can be stated here that older people have a feeling that they have a few years to live, so they find meaning in their lives by focusing on things that are pleasing and beneficial for them.

## CONCLUSION

Thus, it can be concluded that Positive Psychology Interventions plays a huge role in the elderly age groups. The literature in this field supports the relevance and usefulness of these interventions. Previously, too much focus had been directed at the stereotypical thoughts of decline and losses for the elderly people. Focus is shifting to creating better moods and satisfaction of life as people start entering the old age stage of life. There is an increasing interest in developing wide arrays of PPIs, as researchers have witnessed the effectiveness of these interventions in different contexts, communities and cultures. The focus of Psychologists should continue to move in a more inclusive direction to ensure all communities have access to effective, reliable, and culturally responsive PPIs. Training needs to be given to the elderly so that despite the cognitive impairments, they can recall their experiences, intensify their memories and can have a good

autobiographical recall. The effects of interventions and training should persist even after the intervention period; they should be able to sustain the effects and training. Positive emotions should be increased as it can transform individuals and improve health outcomes by expanding their life force and making them more resilient to the traumatic life experiences.

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## Cultivating Resilience for Positive Living

Archana Bhansali \* & Dr. Bhabana Sharma\*\*

### ABSTRACT

**Background of the Study:** In recent years, there has been an uprising interest in studying wellbeing enhancement which led to studies on resilience becoming increasingly significant. Resilience is a multidimensional construct encompassing social, biological, psychological and environmental factors which gains importance in fields of sociology, psychology, life span studies etc to promote wellbeing and navigating adversities.

**Purpose:** The following chapter focuses on the transformative power of resilience in shaping an individual's quality of life through the theoretical frameworks under the school of thought of positive psychology exploring the outcomes of resilience and its determinants across various contexts. The chapter aims at providing a holistic perspective on resilience and how it acts as a protective shield in an individual's day to day combat with challenges.

**Method:** The study uses existing literature and its findings based on the empirical evidence to understand the multifaceted nature of resilience. It uses the method of review of literature to add in depth understanding of the study. It also includes generalisability of findings of different researchers while also systematizing them.

**Findings and Implication:** The future implications of the chapter involve insights in research and application in evidence-based interventions using resilience to bolster individuals' personality.

**Keywords:** Resilience, Positive Psychology, Wellbeing, Factors, Indian Psychology.

### INTRODUCTION

"The world breaks everyone, and afterward, some are strong at the broken places." (Ernest Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, 1929) The above quote mentions the very apt perception of our existence that change is inevitable and humans are

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expected to accustom to such changes while not succumbing to it. Resilience as a topic of research has gained significance in the last decade where the population and primarily the younger generation has faced ever changing situations like the COVID-19 and has also seen a spike rise in adolescents and adults reporting symptoms of mental health disorders like depression. The statistics by American Psychiatric Association states that from 2005 to 2017 there has been a spike in reported symptoms of major depression amongst adolescents of about 52% and about 63% in young adults since 2009 to 2017. ("Mental Health Issues Increased Significantly in Young Adults Over Last Decade," 2019). Such adversities have not just affected individuals alone but also communities at large. Our paper using systematization and generalizability of different researches will develop an intensive overview on the concept of resilience and how it aids in the well-being of not just individuals but also of societies and communities. The paper will conclude with mentioning the future directions of the research which will promote better policy making decisions to include interventions for developing resilience in the community to combat with life threatening situations like war or economic downturns , also showcasing the roles of professionals like psychiatrists, psychologists and medical professionals in building resilience of individuals through various interventions based on tailor made and holistic approaches for the individual and for different cultural contexts.

## **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

The term resilience was originally borrowed from the field of physics where resilience meant "plasticity, elasticity and stability" (Khaminych, 2016, p. 161). Through the attachment theory proposed by John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth began the concept formation of resilience. They mentioned the importance of childhood attachments to their caregiver for the development of an individual which paved the way for psychologists and psychiatrists to shift their centre of focus of research to childhood traumas and its effects on development. Which led to further research mentioning effects of parental divorce study by Hetherington (1980) and Wallerstein's (1980) or mother child separation study by Rutter; these studies showcased further appreciation for risk factors which led to dysfunctional behaviour (Herrman et al., 2011).

Norman Garnezy, the pioneer of research in resilience (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998; Rolf, 1999) and a developmental psychology professor was studying schizophrenia and he found in his results that some patients showed adaptive functioning more than others and it was A. Masten's work on studying the effects observed in children of schizophrenic mothers led to the significant shift of focus to research in resilience as a protective factor (Fletcher, Sarkar, 2013). The results of their research shifted focus from factors that develop dysfunctional behaviour to "the forces that move such children to survival and to adaptation" (Garnezy, 1971, p. 114; Vernon, 2004). Emma Werner coined the term "resilience" while examining children in adversities like poverty, being raised by alcoholic parents or parents who are mentally ill. She did this study in Kauai where these situations were taking grave turns in the development of children and hence the increasing necessity to be resilient to such situations and she found an astonishing number of children who were competent to navigate

their way through adversity; similar studies were also led by other prominent researchers in the field namely Ann Masten, Sir Michael Rutter, James Anthony among many. (Grygorenko & Naydonova, 2023).

## **METHOD**

The authors meticulously selected articles from prominent databases namely Google scholar, PubMed, IJoResh and APA PsychNet. The chapter is based on systematic and generalised information obtained from purposively selected articles from the sources using keywords like resilience, wellbeing, positive psychology, Indian philosophy etc.

## **DEFINITION**

The concept emerging from developmental psychology has now gained researchers across fields to define it. The main conflict faced by them was to define resilience either as a trait or a dynamic process. Psychologists who agreed to the definition of resilience being a trait mentioned that there are stable assets of an individual like intelligence, flexibility, creativity etc which could help them overcome the adversity of any form like poverty, traumatic event, hopelessness etc (Herrman et al., 2011b). Evidence in further research mentioned that resilience varied over time and hence was a dynamic process rather than a stable one. It varied depending on the contextual or situational variables also according to the demographic factors of individuals namely age, gender, socioeconomic status and culture to name a few. This perspective mainly focused on describing resilience as a process which could wax and wane and could be developed.

Resilience then is defined as “the ability of an individual as well as the dynamic process of positively overcoming circumstantial stress and adversity while maintaining the homeostasis in the psychological as well as physical wellbeing” (Russo et al., 2012; Rutter, 2012b; Southwick and Charney, 2012; eWu et al., 2013)

On the other hand, the definition of well-being which has been accepted widely is “well-being is the overall assessment of an individual's subjective experiences of their emotional states, life satisfaction and functioning both on personal as well as social levels”. (nef (the new economics foundation) & nef consulting, n.d.-b)

Positive psychology studies how factors like hope, optimism and resilience etc can help an individual to enhance their wellbeing. As mentioned by Dr. John Travis that there is no dichotomy of wellness and illness rather it is a continuum, which helps us to study the subjective states of an individual's health and hence provides a more holistic approach to interventions.

## **THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE ON RESILIENCE**

### **Indian Psychology**

The perspective that Indian psychology holds is its significance to a journey inward, with which it means to understand self and consciousness. Indian psychology through its concept of Sthit Prajna (Stith Pragyā in some translations) stated in Bhagavad Gita verse 2.54 to 2.72 mentions the need of steady wisdom in an individual to attain stability and to experience no change while facing



either adversities or pleasure (Prakash, 2017). This wisdom is achieved when the individual is free from all desires and content with its own self. The Bhagavad Gita explained resilience in several verses explained below and how it impacts an individual's wellbeing.

1. Chapter 2 Verse 56(2.56)

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।  
वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥56॥

Shri Krishna explains that an individual who is not upset in pain and does not desire for pleasure who is free from attachment, fear and anger is the one with a stable mindset. (Pandey & Mishra, 2021).

2. From the 14-chapter verse 9 it states:

सत्त्वं सुखे संजति रजः कर्माणि भारत ।  
ज्ञानमावृत्य तु तमः प्रमादे संजतुत् ॥ 9॥

Here the three gunas namely: sattva, rajas and tamas are explained; one of the gunas is predominant in an individual and it governs their personality. If it is the rajas that governs the personality then the individual is flushed with activity, passion, and desire, if it is the tamas which is predominant then apathy, delusion and ignorance like emotions govern the personality but when there is sattva guna then the individual is inherent of balance, harmony and positivity. The sattva guna resembles wellbeing and the joyous state of mind as the individual with these qualities will always stay calm in presence of adversities and maintain his or her wellbeing. (Pandey & Mishra, 2021).

**It also mentions resilience could be built after understanding the concepts of:**

1. Karma Yoga mentions the duty of an individual to fulfil his or her duty without expecting results. Individuals with such a mindset are free from desires of success or failure, happiness or loss. They do not believe that nothing is changeable. (Pandey & Mishra, 2021).
2. Bhakti Yoga mentions the notion of surrendering to the Divine force to attain self-realization and liberation. (Pandey & Mishra, 2021) it also enables individuals to realize that the higher consciousness resides within; it helps them understand their full potential and accustom them to fight any adversity.
3. Gyan Yoga mentions attaining knowledge to safeguard the mind from negative emotions and doubt of self. (Pandey & Mishra, 2021).

## **HUMANISTIC PERSPECTIVE: A CONTRARY VIEW TO POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY**

Resilience is studied under positive psychology as well as humanistic psychology but both of the disciplines vary in their perspectives. Where positive psychology views resiliency as only a virtue, humanistic psychology considers a holistic perspective where it considers not only the virtue but also the circumstantial opportunities that influence those virtues (Friedman & Robbins, 2012). Positive psychology focuses only on the flourishing and positive aspects of human life thereby shadowing the complexities or struggles of humanity. It focuses

on well-being with a view governed by seeking pleasure (hedonic happiness) whereas humanistic psychology views well-being from a eudemonic perspective which focuses on attainment of meaning and purpose of an individual's life. Friedman and Robbins (2012) mention that humanistic psychology mentions that resilience can be built by an individual if he can imbibe the 3C's namely commitment, challenge and control in their lives while also incorporating other virtues namely hope, perseverance. Challenge in terms of adversity can help to develop wisdom in an individual whereas if there is no hope during the challenge the individual wont over the adversity similarly commitment to a task through a sense of integrity is incomplete without perseverance in the task. Control refers to not being a victim to adversity rather controlling the situation to provide a favourable outcome and this will be incomplete if the individual does not have the tendency of regulating his emotions throughout the process. Humanistic psychology hence views resiliency as a balanced combination of various strengths and virtues rather than individual character strength as seen under positive psychology with an aim to pursue healthy adaptive responses to adversities.

## FACTORS INFLUENCING RESILIENCE

There are several factors that underlie and influence resilience understanding these factors could help the medical professionals as well as psychologists and psychiatrists to develop better interventions according to these factors. Also on an individual level, these factors could foster resilience.

1. **Genetic Factors:** Several research studies have found neuropeptides to increasing susceptibility to adversities causing anxiety during adversity(Donner et al., 2012; eWu et al., 2013b) while alteration of CRH1 gene which regulates hypothalamus- pituitary - adrenal axis increased likelihood of developing depressive symptoms in adulthood(Bradley et al., 2008; eWu et al., 2013b) catechol-o-methyltransferase gene which is responsible for noradrenergic and dopaminergic systems developing vulnerability to disorders like posttraumatic stress disorder(Heinz and Smolka, 2006;Skelton et al., 2012;eWu et al., 2013b).
2. **Developmental Factors:** As we have seen in the previous sections, the study of resilience began after studies on children who have received maltreatment during their childhood and how they presented themselves in the face of adversities and aftermath effects on them. This ensures that developmental factors are important in cultivating resilience especially when adversities are experienced during childhood as it affects the child's stress response system. In one of the studies conducted on non-primates it was found that if the stress response system of the animal was hampered during childhood, they were more likely to abuse their own children (Maestripieri et al., 2007; eWu et al., 2013b). Certain factors like control over the stressor can predict the level of stress it is going to have on the individual while also explaining that if the situation is uncontrollable the individual could experience what is called learned helplessness. (Overmier and Seligman, 1967; eWu et al., 2013b).

3. **Psychological Factors:** Developing factors like optimism, coping strategies, cognitive appraisal, having adequate social support etc could help an individual in building resilience
  - 3.1 **Humour:** It is a type of active coping contribution in the face of adversity. If you remember Chandler from friends when he says “I use humour to deflect my insecurities”. Here it is said that humour could gain you social support and also alleviate stress. (eWu et al., 2013b)
  - 3.2 **Social support:** Humans are social creatures and they do require social contact for the sake of their survival. During times of adversity an individual seeks for social support to help him overcome stress and achieve wellbeing. Healthy support from family, friends, teachers etc could be an additional support to his individual strength in combating the situation. Depression was correlated with poorer social support in cancer patients according to some research. (Grassi et al., 1997).
  - 3.3 **Optimism:** The positive effect which leads to an individual believing in good outcomes and hence has a protective layer during stress. It helps in developing coping styles which ensures positive outcomes, subjective wellbeing and good health (Stewart and Yuen, 2011; Galatzer-Levy and Bonanno, 2012; Gonzalez-Herero and Garcia-Martin, 2012; Colby and Shifren, 2013; eWu et al., 2013b).
  - 3.4 **Coping Strategies:** The Behavioral enhancing or psychological techniques which are linked to reduction of stress and building resilience are known as healthy coping mechanisms. According to Holahan and Moos (1987), people who use avoidant coping mechanism usually have higher stress levels and negative thought processes while people who engage in active coping like being optimistic and finding solutions rather than avoiding the problem develop resilience and adaptability.
4. **Social Factors:** Resilience can be enhanced by the collective contributions of family, society and community of the individual. Family connectedness, peer relations, educational support, fraternal bonds, neighbourhood dynamics etc contribute to the cultivation of resilience.

## FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

Building resilience could involve interventions based on the factors mentioned above ensuring tailor made approach provided to different individuals as the level of adversities maybe same but the requirement of resilience could differ from individual to individual. We have discussed that resilience is a personality trait but also is a dynamic process an individual goes through and hence every individual has different requirements in attaining resilience. As mentioned earlier in developmental factors that adversities faced during childhood can have impact on the adult life of the child which posits importance on parenting styles, family environment, relationships as all these factors constitute the microsystem as mentioned in the theory of Urie Bronfenbrenner. Also inculcating learnings from various philosophies like Indian philosophy in therapeutic approaches, the importance of sattva Guna and the state of Sthit Prajna in inculcating resilience for positive living could be understood and applied. Also, by teaching Bhakti

yoga, Gyan yoga and Karma yoga the Bhagavad Gita teaches how an individual can attain self-realization, safeguard mind from negative emotions and self-doubt and also not desire failure or success in their duties.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion the paper states that there is still an ongoing debate as to addressing resilience as trait or a dynamic process and to consider it as the only virtue required or to obtain a holistic perspective over it and describe it as a superordinate virtue and accept that it should only be considered as a virtue if it has a benevolent end rather than a malevolent. Several philosophies have described resilience and how it can be imbibed in an individual's personality to overcome adversities and attain positive living. The paper concludes at providing future interventions using the developmental, psychological, social and biological factors affecting resilience as well as using the philosophical ideas presented in Indian Psychology to build resilience through the teachings of Gita verses and principles. Resilience can the individual in building adaptability, tolerance and flexibility to any situation while also fostering qualities like hope, optimism, perseverance, commitment etc to be more effective in nature.

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## Cultivating Hope: A Transformative Journey in Education

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### ABSTRACT

*The concept of transformative hope in education offers a pedagogical vision that goes beyond traditional approaches, emphasizing the importance of hope in driving positive change and social transformation. Snyder's Hope Theory to provide a foundation for understanding how hope operates in educational settings is highlighted in the search results. The search results show that hope is a powerful motivator that not only enhances academic success but also contributes to students' overall well-being. In addition, hope is an important factor in influencing relationships, learning outcomes, and academic success. Educators can make a substantial positive impact on students' academic performance and emotional wellbeing by including hope-focused tactics into their lesson plans. Teachers can implement various strategies based on the insights from the provided.*

**Keywords:-** *Cultivating Hope, Well Being, Academic Success.*

### INTRODUCTION

“In the educational context, “hope is directly linked to students' beliefs about their future and their ability to overcome obstacles. Research indicates that hopeful individuals exhibit lower levels of anxiety, adapt well to change, and show compassion for others” (Bruce Barnett,2022). “Educators have a significant role in nurturing hope among students by creating a supportive classroom environment that encourages goal-setting, agency development, and problem-solving abilities” (Bruce Barnett,2022)

Teachers can infuse hope into their curriculum by incorporating project-based learning, teaching positive current events, studying examples of impactful individuals, promoting student activism, and embedding mindfulness training.

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“By providing opportunities for students to recognize their potential influence on the world around them, teachers can instill a sense of agency and empowerment in students.” (Heather Wolpert-Gawron,2020)

Additionally, teaching students to enjoy the process of attaining their goals, using positive self-talk, and sharing stories of success can help cultivate hope and resilience among students.

Hope in education serves as a powerful motivator that not only enhances academic success but also contributes to students' overall well-being. By fostering hopeful thinking, educators can empower students to set meaningful goals, persevere through challenges, and envision a brighter future for them.

- Role of Hope in shaping students' beliefs about their capabilities and future prospects:

Hope is a crucial factor in influencing pupils' perceptions of their own skills and educational futures. It gives pupils a sense of hope and action and is closely related to the idea that tomorrow can be better than today. When students develop hopeful thinking, they tend to design positive self-futures, set meaningful goals, believe in their ability to succeed, and persistently work towards their aspirations

### Components of Hope:

- **Goals:** Students envision objects, experiences, or outcomes they desire and imagine achieving them.
- **Agency/Self-Efficacy:** The driving force behind hopeful thinking, providing the mental energy needed to propel students towards their goals.
- **Pathways/Resilience:** The dedication in constructing and conforming to mental blueprints or roadmaps that direct optimistic thoughts.

### Impact on Academic Success:

- Research shows a positive correlation between hope and student success, with high-hope students demonstrating higher GPAs and graduation rates. “Hopeful students are more likely to enroll in courses, earn credits, maintain higher GPAs, and have a greater likelihood of graduating compared to low-hope students” (Holly Seirup and Sage Rose,2011)

## HOPE AND ITS IMPACT ON ACADEMIC SUCCESS IN COLLEGE HIGHLIGHT THE SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCE OF HOPE ON STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS AND WELL-BEING.

### 1. Hope and Academic Success:

Studies show that “hope is a unique predictor of academic performance among college students, with high-hope individuals demonstrating higher GPAs, retention rates, and graduation rates”, (Esther, Shea, Edwards,2021).

Hope remains a “strong predictor of academic achievement even when controlling for other factors like intelligence, previous grades, and entrance exam scores” (Jennie Dilworth). The concept of hope is distinct from related constructs like optimism, self-efficacy, and self-esteem, emphasizing its role

in predicting course grades, GPA, and likelihood of graduating from college," (Jennie Dilworth, 2004)

## 2. Hope and Well-Being:

Hope is directly linked to students' well-being and psychological functioning in educational settings. "Both hope and optimism predict changes in subjective well-being over time, with hope associated with increases in positive affect and life satisfaction, while optimism predicts decreases in negative affect" (Rand et al., 2020)

## 3. Teaching Hope:

The Discipline of Hope: "Effectively teach hope, educators must embody hope themselves. It is essential for teachers to maintain a hopeful outlook to inspire and guide their students towards a brighter future" (Hewes & Kohl, 1999). Educators play a crucial role in teaching and developing hopeful thinking in students to enhance their academic success.

Students' hope can be effectively cultivated through strategies like seeing the future, defining goals, establishing pathways to success, utilizing rubrics for clear results, and creating a high-hope classroom environment..

### STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING HOPE:

- "Encourage students to set clear and attainable goals that align with their future aspirations.
- Foster a growth mindset by teaching students multiple strategies to overcome obstacles and stay motivated.
- Provide support through mentorship, positive reinforcement, and creating a nurturing classroom environment that promotes resilience and perseverance" (Vicki Zakrzewski, 2012)

In summary, teachers who foster optimism in their pupils can help them to see their own potential, make big plans, and overcome obstacles head-on. Students' academic success, personal development, and optimistic view of the future are all accelerated by hope..

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Snyder's Hope Theory to provide a foundation for understanding how hope operates in educational settings.

"Snyder's Hope Theory, developed by Charles Richard Snyder, provides a foundational understanding of how hope operates in educational settings. This theory defines hope as a dynamic motivational experience derived from two distinct cognitive tools: goals and pathways" (Colla et al., 2022)

Here are key insights from the search results that shed light on Snyder's Hope Theory and its application in education:

- Snyder's Hope Theory consists of three main components: goals, paths, and freedom of choice. Goals represent desired outcomes, paths are the routes to achieve these goals, and freedom of choice refers to the belief in one's ability to pursue these paths effectively. The theory emphasizes the importance of



focused thoughts, motivation, and agency in driving hopeful thinking and behavior among individuals". (Chan et al., 2013)

### **Application in Education:**

- In educational settings, "Snyder's Hope Theory can guide educators in fostering hopeful thinking among students by helping them set meaningful goals, develop strategies to achieve these goals, and believe in their capacity to overcome obstacles". (Orly & Malka, 2013)

By the use of project-based learning, teaching about positive current events, examining influential people, encouraging student activism, and integrating mindfulness training into the curriculum, educators can cultivate optimism inside the classroom and enable students to envision a more promising future. "Snyder also developed an evaluation tool called the Adult Dispositional Hope Scale (ADHS) to measure hope in individuals over fifteen years old. This self-assessment tool consists of questions related to pathways thinking (cognitive ability to devise steps towards a goal) and agency thinking (motivation and belief in striving towards the goal)" (Pacico et al., 2011)

Snyder's Hope Theory, in conclusion, provides an invaluable paradigm for comprehending how hope affects resilience, goal-setting, and motivation in educational settings. By incorporating this notion into curriculum design and teaching methods, educators can encourage students to think optimistically, set high standards, and face obstacles head-on.

### **IMPACT OF HOPE IN EDUCATION**

- Examine research findings on the correlation between hope and academic achievement, well-being, and goal attainment

Hope is linked to improved academic performance and psychological well-being. Furthermore, it has been discovered that hope can forecast changes in subjective well-being over time; higher optimism can forecast declines in negative effects and increases in good affect and life satisfaction.

With "hope predicting benchmarks of academic progress and success such as GPA, ongoing enrollment, and graduation rates," hopeful students perform better in school. Compared to their hopeful peers, low-hope students are more likely to experience difficulties including academic dismissal.

Students that are hopeful exhibit traits that help them succeed, such as a positive outlook on the future, a persistent drive to achieve their objectives, and regular attendance at school. These characteristics have a big impact on how well they do academically.

### **CASE STUDIES**

#### **Transformative Power of Hope in Educational Settings**

Hope plays a significant role in educational settings, influencing relationships, learning outcomes, and overall well-being. Real-life examples and case studies demonstrate how hope can transform educational environments:

### **Junlei Li's Work at Harvard Graduate School of Education:**

Junlei Li's research focus centers on understanding and empowering human relationships across developmental contexts, particularly in the field of early education

His work is dedicated to supporting those who serve children and families in educational settings, emphasizing the importance of helpers on the frontlines of education. Through his research and practice, his aims to enhance the work of educators and caregivers by fostering strong relationships that positively impact children's development and well-being.

Li's work incorporates the HOPE framework, focusing on strength-based approaches rather than deficit-focused perspectives in education." (Hope and Resilience in Childhood, 2022

### **Pedagogy of Transformative Hope:**

The concept of transformative hope in education offers a pedagogical vision that goes beyond traditional approaches, emphasizing the importance of hope in driving positive change and social transformation. Here are key points from the search results to conclude on transformative hope:

- A pedagogy of transformative hope is not only possible but necessary in education. It involves grounding hope in a sense of realism, understanding the current situation in the world, and addressing issues of hopelessness and despair. (Bourn, 2021.)
- Educators play a crucial role in promoting transformative hope by encouraging forward-thinking approaches to learning, posing questions for the future, and engaging students in social action" (Bourn, 2021.)

### **Embracing Transformative Education**

Educators Rising 2024 seeks to empower students through equitable learning opportunities, emphasizing the significance of transformative education in educating students for success in a dynamic world.

In order to promote positive change and societal transformation in educational settings, it is crucial to cultivate transformational learning experiences, as the notion of transformative education, which is highlighted in the search results, emphasizes. The following are some salient points from the search results regarding adopting transformative education and how it relates to hope

1. **Transformative Learning:** Transformative learning involves a perspective transformation or change in worldview, leading to profound shifts in how individuals perceive themselves and the world around them. "Teachers in literacy education, adult basic education, and GED programs can play a crucial role in fostering transformative learning by encouraging critical thought, facilitating discussions, and promoting a broader, more inclusive view of self and society."(Baumgartner, 2019). "Educators are encouraged to be keen observers of change, agenda-setters, and change-makers who have the power to transform classrooms, schools, and society at large by embracing a transformative approach to education". (Cope & Kalantzis, 2020)

- 2. Effective Techniques for Promoting Transformative Education:** Individual experience, critical reflection, discourse, societal and personal influences, and authenticity are all components that foster transformative learning. These components are necessary to promote perspective changes and provide a comprehensive educational experience.

“Teachers can foster transformative learning by creating activating events, asking thought-provoking questions, engaging in dialogue that challenges existing beliefs, and promoting authenticity in teaching practices” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2020)

In order to promote positive transformation and personal development, embracing transformative education entails developing a dynamic learning environment that values critical thought, dialogue, and authenticity. Teachers may foster hope, resilience, and a feeling of agency in their pupils by incorporating transformative learning ideas into their instructional techniques. This will ultimately help to create a society that is more inclusive and socially conscious.

Education may inspire kids to believe in themselves, set meaningful goals, overcome obstacles, and forge their own paths to success. Education can inspire hope beyond positivism. Teachers can make a substantial positive impact on students' academic performance and emotional wellbeing by including hope-focused tactics into their lesson plans.

## STRATEGIES FOR CULTIVATING HOPE

Cultivate hope in students and positively impact their well-being and academic achievement, educators can implement various strategies based on the insights from the provided.

- 1. Teaching Hope:** Teachers can impart life skills, help students create personalized learning plans, explain specific learning objectives, and make sure that they take responsibility for their actions. Building trust, showing students respect, and assisting them in discovering and nurturing hope on their own are all essential components of creating high-hope learning environment.
- 2. Learning through Projects (PBL):** Students can utilize what they learn in the classroom to have an impact outside of it by using project-based learning. PBL encourages student agency by giving them the freedom to choose issues they wish to address, investigate many viewpoints, and hone their communication abilities in areas like persuasive writing and public speaking.
- 3. Positive Current Events:** While positivity and hope are not the same thing, introducing kids to positive current events can help foster a more upbeat atmosphere. By emphasizing positive stories that reflect the good in the world, educators may counteract negative news.
- 4. Study Influential People:** Examining those who have had a positive influence can motivate students and show them how optimism can lead to change. By being exposed to real-world instances of perseverance and

accomplishment, students might be inspired to work hard toward their objectives.

5. **Encourage Student Activism:** Giving students the opportunity to participate in volunteer work or community service gives them the tools they need to fight hopelessness and make a difference. Students who participate in activities that help others might develop a feeling of agency and purpose.
6. **Training in Embedded Mindfulness:** Students who get mindfulness training may better control their emotions, cope with stress, and see the bright side of difficult circumstances. Teaching mindfulness to pupils gives them useful skills for overcoming obstacles and keeping a happy attitude.

By putting these tactics into practice, teachers may foster an environment in the classroom that is encouraging and empowering for students. This will increase students' motivation, hope, and resilience, which will eventually improve their academic performance and overall well-being.

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## Philosophical Reflection on Hope and its Prediction in Cultivating Optimism and Life Satisfaction in Our life: Positive Theoretical Concepts

Dr. Sujata Saha\*

### ABSTRACT

*Striving to achieve happiness is the fundamental goal of any person. Researchers of phenomenon of happiness operationalize this concept using the term of well-being. In the theoretical studies, the subjective state of well-being it is defined as having two dimensions - affective and cognitive - which reflects the way in which each individual assesses his own life or the extent to which he considers his existence to be a fulfilled one. The hopeful person, on the other hand, believes specifically in his or her own capability for securing a successful and fulfilling future. Hope and optimism are hallmarks of psychological health. Both terms have been used in common language for centuries to describe people who hold positive expectations about the future. This chapter indicates how hope is a predictor for optimism and life satisfaction.*

*Keywords: Hope, Optimism, Motivation, Self- Determination Theory, Homelessness, Life Satisfaction Positive Psychology, Hope, Optimism, Quality of Life, Satisfaction With Life, Subjective Well-Being.*

### INTRODUCTION

Optimism and hope are two vital elements for maintaining positive mental health. Positive mental health is a key to happiness and satisfaction in life. It is state of wellness where individuals can function fully and deal effectively with the challenges of life. Hope and optimism both may seem to be very similar and overlapping constructs, based upon positive future expectancies; however, there are differences in how they have been conceptualized by theorists. Satisfaction is a state of mind. It is an evaluative appraisal of something. The term refers to both 'contentment' and 'enjoyment'. As such it covers cognitive- as well as affective-

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appraisals. Satisfaction can be both evanescent and stable through time. Life-satisfaction is one of the indicators of 'apparent' quality of life. Together with indicators of mental and physical health, it indicates how well people thrive. Life-satisfaction is the degree to which a person positively evaluates the overall quality of his/her life as-a-whole. In other words, how much the person likes the life he/she lead . Life satisfaction is the cognitive evaluation of one's life over time. It is not confined to evaluation at a particular moment. Diener, Larsen, and Griffin (1985) define the concept of satisfaction with life as "a cognitive process of judgment through which individuals assess the quality of their life according to their own criteria". Life satisfaction is the sign of the satisfaction that is gathered from all areas of life. Life satisfaction has been found to be positively related to many personal characteristics and protective factors

Late Professor C. R. Synder, one of the central figures in hope research, defines hope: "Hope is a positive motivational state that is based on an interactively derived sense of successful (a) agency (goal-directed energy), and (b) pathways (planning to meet goals)". To elaborate on these two aspects of hope—"agency" and "pathways"—researchers tell us that hopeful people engage in more of something called "pathway thinking," where they are able to come up with lots of different ways in which they can successfully reach a chosen goal. And "agency thinking" is the idea that hopeful people also have greater motivation to use these pathways to initiate and then continue on with the actions that are needed to advance towards those goals. Social psychologists see optimism as the individual's core belief that their future will have good, positive experiences, and won't have bad, negative ones.

More formally, optimism is defined as the degree to which the individual believes that positive outcomes will occur in the future rather than negative outcomes, for themselves, and also for others they know, the economy, the world in general, and so on. Social psychologists see an optimistic disposition as an important part of our personality or natural make-up. Optimism affects how we approach all things in life: our work and professional activities, our romantic relationships, and even our personal finances. Life satisfaction is basically a cognitive, judgmental process (Diener et al., 1985) and a very important aspect of human life because it is sensitive to the entire spectrum of functioning, and thus, provides indicators of both well-being and psychopathology (Proctor, Linley, & Maltby, 2009). It may reflect conscious inner pleasant experiences which encourage people to pursue goals (Frisch, 1999; Frisch et al., 2005). Two separate but related constructs that have received considerable attention in assessing and predicting hope are life satisfaction and optimism.

In positive psychology, hope plays an important role which is recognized as an inspirational perception, one's expectations in life, his/her worth and mental inside of affirmative psychology relations. It consists of an idea which an individual identifies the way to attain his paths, trust that he holds and encouragement to practice those paths to attain his goals. Hope and life satisfaction across the lifespan shows to be more established. People who had high scores for hope were fully satisfied with their life. Hope and optimism are positive responses towards the future and pass on positively to future opportunity. Both are related to the positive belief of future. Hope and optimism

are bright thinking towards the upcoming of life. Optimism is associated to the encouraging belief of expectations. Hope is an optimistic feeling that facilitates individuals to deal with difficulties which can support through involvement.

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSON WITH HOPEFUL AND OPTIMISTIC FRAME-OF-MIND**

A person with a hopeful attitude:

- Is more adaptable
- Is less depressed
- Has a greater sense of personal accomplishment
- Is less burned out
- Has a higher feeling of self-worth
- Sees challenges as setbacks, not disasters
- Is more able to achieve life goals
- Is more able to adapt to serious illness
- Is able to tolerate greater pain

Optimism provides us with a great deal of emotional tools to overcome challenges, too. Optimism can:

- Predict excellence in everything from sports to career success
- Make you healthier and better equipped to fend off infectious illness and chronic diseases of middle age
- Make you less likely to be depressed
- Help you recover quicker from surgery
- Give you more energy
- Create peaceful, happier and calmer feelings

This chapter will be beneficial for the society as it will highlight the relationship between hope, optimism and life satisfaction. Hope take part in the positive side of life and it build up the personality of a person. It will be beneficial for them as a supportive and life-aiding power which put together their hidden abilities. Hope is a cognitive inspirational move up that is now perceive as a possible psychological force which may provide a protective aspect for people in their tough time so this study will provide a shielding effect for them in their complicated circumstances. It will be of great importance as hope and optimism helps them to cope up with difficult situations in our lives. It will encourage us to think positively in a depressive environment and the way to change our mood in a living society. Furthermore, these will be able to know about the association between hope and optimism, hope and life satisfaction and optimism and life satisfaction.

Hope, as a concept related to optimism, is conceptualized in the context of ability to plan paths to achieve the goal that the individual desires in spite of obstacles and a motivation source to utilize these paths (Snyder, 2000). In this framework, hope is defined as the determination to achieve goals and belief that there can be many other ways (Hefferon&Bonniwell, 2011).



According to this, hope is most powerful when it depends on the valuable targets that have moderate reaching possibility and derive from challenging but not impassable obstacles. In other words, the individual does not need to hope when he is sure he will achieve his goals, and he gets desperate when he thinks he will never succeed (Carr, 2013). The approach that deals with optimism in the context of attributional styles and the theory of hope in which Snyder conceptualized hope as the energy of fighting for the important goals suggest that individuals can significantly change their levels of optimism and positive expectations.

Accordingly, individuals can remain optimistic and sustain their hopes through goal setting and having positive opinions about reaching those goals, maintaining motivation to make plans to reach these goals, and feeling of agency in these processes. This will make it easier for someone to reach their goals. Research conducted suggests that hope is also a factor closely related to the level of well-being of the individuals (Dursun, 2012).

In the literature, life satisfaction is expressed as a cognitive evaluation process in which the individual's life is assessed according to certain criteria (Shin & Johnson, 1978; Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985). In this framework, life satisfaction is considered as one of the components of subjective well-being. According to this, life satisfaction is one of the important concepts expressing the well-being of individuals together with positive-negative affectivity as a cognitive evaluation of life.

## CONSTRUCTS OF POSITIVE THINKING

### Relationship between optimism and life satisfaction

Affective dimension refers to the balance of positive emotions / negative emotions, and the cognitive one refers to life satisfaction (judgments on life satisfaction) (Diener, 1984; Diener, Suh, & Oishi 1997). In a series of studies (Trope, Ferguson and Raghumantan, Taylor and Brown, as cited in Argyle, 2001) that focused on the affective dimension of well-being, it was pointed out that positive and negative emotions are relatively independent and that the lack of negative emotions does not attract a greater life satisfaction. The explanation has been identified in concepts such as optimism and pessimism (an individual's tendency to focus on positive or negative events). This means that when a person is optimistic is more likely to perceive life in a positive sense and to feel a higher satisfaction with life.

### Relationship between hope and optimism

Personality psychologists Gene Alarcon, Nathan Bowling, and Steven Khazon provide a nice, succinct comparison that could be one reason: "Simply put, the optimistic person believes that somehow—either through luck, the actions of others, or one's own actions—that his or her future will be successful and fulfilling. Modern research shows that such people, in contrast with those who hold negative expectations, engage in a variety of coordinated, adaptive responses to the challenges and opportunities they encounter in life. The study of hope and optimism also reveals key themes in the development of psychology over the past 30 years, including our grasp of (a) the centrality of goal-strivings

to human behavior, (b) how people's understanding of the causal structure of life events is related to their subsequent emotions and motivation, and (c) factors contributing to the positive range of human experience, including physical and psychological health beyond the absence of illness.

### **Some Adaptive Consequences to establish a positive motivational states**

A vast literature now attests to the adaptive consequences of hope and optimism. Indeed, despite carefully reasoned arguments and substantial research effort, it has been hard to find contexts in which these traits do not have adaptive effects.

In reviewing this literature, it is useful to note that just two broad categories of adaptive outcomes follow directly from the theory of hope and optimism as positive motivational states.

#### **These categories are**

##### **(a) effort and persistence at goal directed tasks –**

The willingness to keep trying in the face of problems or setbacks is a defining quality of both hope and optimism. Accordingly, numerous studies of hope and optimism have shown this behavioural outcome, covering a wide range of goal domains and settings.

##### **(b) positive and negative feelings that arise from on - going goal pursuits –**

When people expect positive outcomes, they are apt to feel relatively good about their current situation, even if it is a challenging one. To begin with, negative feelings will be lower: that is, the challenging aspects of a situation will be less frustrating, distressing, and depressing to individuals who expect things to work out alright in the end, as compared with those who hold negative expectations.

##### **(c) the use of adaptive coping strategies**

To say that people who are hopeful and optimistic tend to redouble their efforts and maintain a favorable affective balance when confronted with stressors further suggests that these individuals have effective ways of coping with problems. Dispositional optimism correlated significantly with the self-reported frequency of use of all of the strategies that were measured in this research. The direction of these correlations suggested both greater use of effective strategies such as planning or positive reinterpretation, and lesser use of questionable strategies such as denial or drug/alcohol use, by individuals higher as opposed to lower in dispositional optimism.

##### **(d) positive physical and psychological health outcomes related to the length and quality of people's lives.**

### **BENEFITS OF OPTIMISM**

- a) Optimism and Academic Performance
- b) Optimism, Physical Health and Well-being - Optimism is believed to result in better physical health, by lowering experienced stress. Optimists tend to have higher self-efficacy or perception of control over situations and more positive thought processes because of which they perceive situations to be manageable and consequently experience lower level of stress (Carver & Scheier, 2014). Studies also point towards the role of

optimism in promoting health protecting behaviors and refraining from health compromising behaviors resulting in a healthy lifestyle (Carver & Scheier, 2014). This healthy lifestyle boosts their immune system and prevents them from developing illness. Even on developing illness, they tend to comply more with medical advice for a faster recovery (Carr, 2004). On the contrary pessimism was linked to negative health effects (Carver et al., 2010). Pessimism was also found to be correlated positively with involvement in health compromising behaviors like substance abuse, suicide (Carver et al., 2010).

- c) **Optimism and Psychological Well-being** - Optimism also contributes to enhanced psychological well-being. Research shows that people with dispositional optimism are more likely to use reappraisal, problem focused coping and adaptive emotion focused coping at the time of stressful situations. Pessimists, on the other hand have a higher tendency to use avoidant coping strategies like escape avoidance or denial in the face of a challenge (Carver et al., 2010).

## **BENEFITS OF HOPE**

### **a) Academic Performance –**

A number of research investigations involving various student populations have revealed a link between hope and academic performance. Snyder et al. (1991) identified the characteristics of high-hope students as self-assured, inspired, enthusiastic, and driven by their intended goals. Higher Hope Scale scores at the start of college have been shown to predict better overall grade point averages and whether students will continue school (Snyder, Shorey, et al., 2002). Furthermore, among college students, higher levels of hope were linked to higher academic life satisfaction and higher use of problem-solving skills and coping mechanisms (Chang, 1998). The studies are reflective of hope being a potential human strength aiding in improving achievement.

### **b) Health and Well-being-**

As a personal attribute, hope has been linked to a number of positive health benefits (Snyder, 2002). Snyder (2002) linked high levels of hope to higher participation in preventative actions that help people avoid developing physical and mental illnesses. For example, people scoring high on hope showed a greater involvement with cancer prevention initiatives (Irving, Snyder and Crowson, 1998) and higher motivation to do physical work out (Harney, 1990 in Snyder, 2002).

### **c) Coping and Adjustment-**

A large number of studies have investigated the effects of hope on dealing with stress. Snyder (2000) showed a positive effect of dispositional hope on ability to cope with problems. Based on research findings, Snyder and Pulvers (2001) stated that individuals low in hope are more likely to have a tragic view of future, as compared to high hoppers who tend to use healthy and productive coping strategies on a regular basis. It is intriguing to know if there is a difference between high hope and low hope in terms of types of coping strategies used by them. This question has been dealt by one of the studies by

Slezackova & Piskova (2017).

## THE DANGERS OF HOPE

### Overconfidence

Hope was famously maligned by Thucydides. For him, hope was a kind of unfounded confidence that things would turn out for the best. He viewed it as a delusion at the root of Athenian political calamity (see Schlosser 2013, p. 172). In essence, Thucydides conceptualizes hope as being similar to the positive illusion model of optimism.

### Demotivation

Another familiar concern about hope is that it can demotivate us (Blöser, Huber, and Moellendorf 2020, p. 3). Adrienne Martin observes that hope can demotivate in a different way. In particular, she observes that hopers risk becoming lost in hopeful fantasies, paying little attention to the concrete steps that need to be taken to achieve their goals (2014, pp. 90-95). Matt Sleson expresses a similar worry but in stronger terms, referring to hope as a “a malevolent force in politics” (Sleat 2013, p. 131; quoted in Blöser, Huber, and Moellendorf 2020, p. 3).

### Otherworldliness

Some also worry about the theological roots of hope (Newheiser 2019). This worry begins with the thought that Christian hope is oriented ultimately toward God and the afterlife, and contemporary Western thinking about hope is certainly influenced by a long history of Christianity.

## CONCLUSION :

Hope is about leaving room for something good to happen. Optimism is about having hope, trusting that things will work out. Hope and optimism are linked to your belief that things will turn out okay when change happens in your life. We know that people can learn to be more optimistic and hopeful, and that engaging in these positive behaviors can improve one’s health. The field of Positive Psychology makes use of hope and optimism. It is about helping people focus on what they do well and on what is good about their lives. Optimism can help people to have more successful relationships and to be more involved in their community. It can also promote a sense of well-being during difficult times.

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## The Mediatory Role of Emotional Intelligence in Resilience

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### ABSTRACT

*Emotional intelligence (EI) plays a vital role in human functioning. EI is associated with better mental health outcomes, adaptive coping strategies, and enhanced interpersonal relationships. Resilience also plays a crucial role in enhancing an individual's well-being by enabling them to effectively manage challenges and maintain an overall positive outlook on life. This chapter delves into the nexus between emotional intelligence and resilience, exploring how emotional intelligence can serve as a catalyst for transforming adversity into strength. Through a review of empirical research and theoretical frameworks, this chapter aims to elucidate the profound impact of emotional intelligence on resilience.*

**Keywords:** *Emotional Intelligence, Managing Emotions, Problem Solving Skills, Resilience, Well-Being.*

### THE MEDIATORY ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN RESILIENCE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EI)

Emotions have been an essential component in human functioning since birth. At birth, an infant has a fully developed amygdala that facilitates the experience of emotions (Power & Dalgleish, 2015). Some theorists consider emotions as signs of an individual's relation to their changing environment (Lazarus, 1991). On the other hand, Power & Dalgleish (2015) regard emotions as lying on a continuum ranging from positive to negative affect. Although there are different and diverse viewpoints about the concept of emotion, it can generally be interpreted as an individual's 'experience and expression of affective information' (Greenberg & Safran, 1987).

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The term Emotional Intelligence was coined by Peter Salovey and John Mayer (1990) and defined EI as “the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions.” Since then, several theories have come up. and currently there is no consensus on a single definition of the concept.

Goleman (1998), another pioneer in the field of EI, defines emotional intelligence as “a person’s ability to recognize personal feelings and those of others, along with the ability to manage emotions within themselves and in their relationships with others.”

Mayer and Salovey (1990) divided emotional intelligence abilities into four areas in their four-branch model: (i) perceiving and expressing emotions; (ii) assimilating emotions in thought; (iii) understanding emotions; (iv) reflectively regulating emotions. On the other hand, Goleman (1998) divided emotional intelligence into five emotional competencies: (i) self-awareness, (ii) mood management, (iii) self-motivation, (iv) empathy, and (v) managing relationships. Thus, EI encompasses the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and utilise emotions effectively. It consists of several components, including emotional awareness, empathy, self-regulation, and interpersonal skills.

EI as a behavioural model was raised to prominence with Daniel Goleman's 1995 book called 'Emotional Intelligence'. Emotional intelligence has been operationalised in a multitude of different ways in the literature. In fact, researchers posit that the term ‘emotional intelligence’ is frequently confused, hence mandating a proper conceptualisation and explanation of the construct (Mayer et al., 2008).

Research has consistently shown that high levels of EI are associated with better mental health outcomes, adaptive coping strategies, and enhanced interpersonal relationships. In fact, EI is a significant predictor of subjective well-being (Andrei et al., 2016), interpersonal relationships with romantic partners (Malouff et al., 2013), social support (Goldenberg et al., 2006), and health (Mikolajczak et al., 2015; Martins et al., 2010)

## RESILIENCE

Resilience refers to the ability to cope with adversity and adapt to challenges or changes. It is the ability to show positive adaptation in spite of significant life adversities and the ability to adapt to difficult and challenging life experiences. Resilience not only allows the individual to cope and recover but also to prepare for and face the next stressful event. It is the ability to bounce back, take on difficult challenges and still find meaning in life, rise above adversity, cope when things look bleak, tap into hope, and transform unfavourable situations into wisdom and insight.

Resilience acts as a protective mechanism, helping individuals maintain psychological well-being and cope with difficulties, contributing to increased levels of happiness and overall well-being (Beri & Dorji, 2021). Resilience is not just about bouncing back from setbacks; it also emphasises the importance of fostering supportive relationships and environments. Resilience also plays a crucial role in enhancing individuals’ well-being by enabling effective

management of challenges and maintaining a positive outlook on life. (Beri & Dorji, 2021; Stewart-Brown & Sarah, 2018)

Resilience therefore the capacity of a dynamic system to adapt successfully in the context of significant threats to system function, viability, or development (Masten, 2013).

Resilience has also been associated with well-being, satisfaction with life, affect, self-concept, and engagement (Sagone & Caroli, 2014; Bajaj & Pande, 2016; Rodríguez-Fernández et al., 2016). Likewise, resilience has been found to be related to personal competence, high standards, and tenacity; trust in one's instincts; tolerance of negative affect; and strengthening effects of stress; positive acceptance of change, and secure relationships; control; and spiritual influences (Connor & Davidson, 2003).

## CHARACTERISTICS OF RESILIENT PEOPLE

Characteristics of resilient people include awareness, self-control, problem-solving skills, and social support. Resilient people are aware of situations, their emotional reactions, and the behavior of those around them.

By remaining aware, they can maintain control of a situation and think of new ways to tackle problems. In many cases, resilient people emerge stronger after such difficulties. While people vary dramatically in the coping skills they use when confronting a crisis, researchers have identified some key characteristics of resilience. The basic characteristics of resilient people are (Cherry, 2024):

1. **Problem-Solving Skills:** Problem-solving skills are essential for resilience. (Ertekin Pinar et al., 2018). When a crisis emerges, resilient people are able to spot the solution that will lead to a safe outcome. In dangerous situations, less resilient people sometimes develop tunnel vision. They fail to note important details or take advantage of opportunities. Resilient individuals are able to calmly and rationally look at a problem and envision a successful solution.
2. **Strong Social Connections:** Resilient people have a network of friends, family members, co-workers, and online support groups to keep them socially connected. (Somasundaram & Devamani, 2016)
3. **Survivor Mentality:** Resilient people avoid thinking like victim of circumstance and instead look for ways to resolve the problem. While the situation may be unavoidable, they stay focused on a positive outcome.
4. **Emotional Regulation:** Resilient people have the ability to recognize that they are having an emotional response and to understand what is causing the response. This helps them better handle emotions and cope with the situation at hand.
5. **Self-Compassion:** Resilient people are also compassionate toward themselves. They tend to notice when they need to take a break and can accept their emotions. Self-compassion can also help boost overall health and resilience.



## THE LINK BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND RESILIENCE

An individual's ability to effectively confront and cope with a problem depends on their ability to regulate their emotions (Aldea & Rice, 2006). This relationship is further supported by research indicating that emotional intelligence is a key protective factor for psychological resilience (Shuo et al., 2022). Greater emotional intelligence is associated with higher levels of effective problem-solving, such as allowing individuals to create a multitude of problem-solving perspectives (Salovey et al., 2000). In addition, individuals who demonstrate high EI also seem to be more adaptable at stress management, decision-making, and faster mood recovery after disturbing and stressful experiences (Bar-On, 2001; Bar-On & Parker, 2000; Mayer et al., 2000).

Research has also demonstrated that EI facilitates stress resilience (Schneider et al., 2013). In the same vein, Armstrong et al. (2011) revealed that EI was related to psychological resilience. Salovey et al. (2002) confirm that people with better EI fare better with the emotional requests of stressful situations as they are able to accurately perceive and appraise their emotions, know how and when to express their feelings, and can effectively regulate their mood states. Cejudo et al. (2016) confirm that people with a high level of EI show a greater degree of resilience.

Having increased emotional intelligence affords individuals more resources, allowing them to utilize the most adaptive problem-solving coping strategy for that particular situation (Bar-On, 1997; Saklofske et al., 2007; Salovey et al., 2002). Research indicates that individuals with high emotional awareness can accurately identify and label their emotions, which is crucial for coping with adversity. Such individuals are more likely to engage in emotion-focused coping strategies, leading to better psychological adjustment and resilience.

Thus, the ability to regulate one's emotions and impulses is a hallmark of emotional intelligence. Resilient individuals exhibit effective self-regulation, managing stressors without being overwhelmed. They can modulate their emotional responses, maintain focus amidst distractions, and make sound decisions even in adverse circumstances.

Strong interpersonal skills, such as communication, conflict resolution, and collaboration, contribute significantly to resilience. Building and nurturing supportive relationships fosters a sense of belonging and security, enhancing an individual's capacity to cope with trauma and bounce back from setbacks.

In terms of the relationship between EI and stress, the literature confirms that emotionally intelligent people show less perceived stress. According to Zysberg et al. (2017), stress levels mediate the association between EI and burnout. Likewise, Jung et al. (2016) found an inverse correlation between EI and self-reported stress. Similarly, Urquijo et al. (2016) suggested that EI enhances well-being, diminishing the experience of stress.

## PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Emotional intelligence plays a significant role in enhancing resilience (Šimunjak, 2023; Sharma & Tiwari, 2023). Studies also suggest that emotional intelligence measures directly impact career success and employee resilience, with

adaptability being a key predictor of success. Furthermore, the development of positive adaptation skills and effective decision-making is linked to emotional intelligence and resilience.

1. **Enhanced self-awareness:** EI training often starts with developing self-awareness, which helps individuals recognize their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors. This awareness enables a better understanding of personal strengths and areas for improvement, leading to increased resilience.
2. **Improved self-regulation:** EI training focuses on teaching skills related to managing emotions and behaviors effectively. This includes strategies like impulse control, stress management, and adaptability, all of which are crucial for building resilience in the face of challenges.
3. **Better interpersonal relationships:** EI training emphasizes empathy, communication skills, and conflict resolution, which contribute to building and maintaining positive relationships. Strong social support networks are an important factor in enhancing resilience.
4. **Cognitive Flexibility:** EI training often involves exercises to enhance cognitive flexibility, which is the ability to adapt thinking patterns and perspectives. This skill helps individuals approach problems and setbacks with a more open and adaptable mindset, enhancing resilience.
5. **Reduced negative impact of stress:** By developing emotional awareness and regulation skills, individuals undergoing EI training may experience a reduced negative impact of stress on their mental and emotional well-being. This can contribute to greater resilience in handling stressful situations.
6. **Long-term benefits:** Research suggests that the benefits of EI training on resilience can be long-lasting, as individuals continue to apply and refine these skills in various life situations.

Thus, in conclusion, it can be noted that people who have high levels of emotional intelligence perceive themselves to be more resilient, that is, more capable of coping with adversity and dealing with negative experiences. High levels of emotional perception and facilitation lead to individuals being aware of their emotions in stressful situations and adapting their behavior and thoughts to communicate in a prosocial manner. Understanding emotions will help improve empathy, which in turn will help strengthen social relations and support. Finally, people with good emotional regulation and control are more likely to respond to personal distress with a more positive attitude and helpful coping skills, thus, improving resilience and helping people respond to life stresses without succumbing to them. Conversely, it has also been found that highly resilient people actively enhance their positive emotionality through altruism, humor, relaxation, and optimism, thus showing that emotional intelligence and resilience have a reciprocal relationship with each other.

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## The Interplay Between Resilience and Quality of Life

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### ABSTRACT

*Resilience as defined by earlier theorists, is the ability to bounce back from difficult life situations. But in today's fast forward world, with the lifestyle changes to meet the challenges of this new era, resilience has become a necessity to navigate the daily hassles as well. It is no longer seen as bouncing back from adversities that an individual may face once or a few times in once lifetime. The exact origin of the term "quality of life"; cannot be traced, however, McCMI (1975) suggested that popular usage seems to date back to 1961 when the phrase was used in a speech given by President Lyndon Johnson. Although the term was used to understand health, welfare and prosperity in totality (quality of life). However, today the term is used in much broader term. It is the amalgamation of social, psychological and physical wellness. It is often used as an umbrella term to denote with wide spectrum of individuals perception of cognitive appraisal of one's life, expectations, goals, standards and concerns. This paper attempts to integrate the literature describing previous understanding of resilience and quality of life. Consequentially, it tries to understand the tandem between resilience and quality of life.*

**Keywords:** Resilience, Quality of Life, Health, Wellness, Cognitive Appraisal.

### INTRODUCTION

The world is changing at an unprecedented pace. Technological advancements, social shifts, and global challenges present a constant stream of obstacles and adjustments. In this context, resilience – the ability to bounce back from adversity – has become an essential tool for navigating life's complexities. This paper explores the concept of resilience, its relationship with quality of life (QoL), and the importance of cultivating resilience in a constantly evolving world.

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Historically, resilience was primarily associated with overcoming significant life traumas or hardships. However, as societal norms and expectations have evolved, so too has the concept of resilience. It is no longer confined to extraordinary circumstances but is recognized as a vital attribute for navigating the everyday challenges of contemporary life. Concurrently, the notion of quality of life has undergone a similar transformation, expanding beyond its initial focus on health and material well-being to encompass broader dimensions of psychological, social, and emotional wellness.

This paper seeks to explore the relationship between resilience and quality of life, examining how these two constructs intersect and influence each other. By synthesizing existing literature and drawing connections between these concepts, we aim to shed light on the mechanisms through which resilience contributes to overall well-being and vice versa. Through this exploration, we can gain a deeper understanding of the factors that contribute to a fulfilling and satisfying life in the modern era.

## **HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON RESILIENCE AND QUALITY OF LIFE**

The concept of resilience has roots in various fields, including psychology, sociology, and biology. Early psychological theories, such as Freud's notion of ego resilience and Erikson's psychosocial stages of development, laid the groundwork for understanding resilience as the capacity to adapt and thrive in the face of adversity. Over time, researchers expanded upon these theories, exploring the role of factors such as personality traits, coping strategies, and social support in fostering resilience.

Similarly, the concept of quality of life has evolved over the years, with early discussions primarily focusing on material well-being and physical health. The term gained prominence in the 1960s and 1970s, coinciding with growing concerns about societal progress and human welfare. Researchers began to recognize that quality of life encompassed not only objective indicators such as income and housing but also subjective experiences such as happiness, satisfaction, and fulfillment.

## **EVOLVING DEFINITIONS OF RESILIENCE**

Historically, resilience was viewed as a binary – one either bounced back from setbacks or succumbed to them. Early theorists like Emmy Werner (1989) focused on resilience as a personality trait that allowed individuals to overcome significant challenges in childhood. However, contemporary understandings emphasize resilience as a dynamic process (Masten, A. S. , 2001). It is not a fixed characteristic but rather a set of skills and attitudes that can be developed and strengthened over time (Luthar, S. S., Sawyer, A., & Cicchetti, D. , 2000). This perspective acknowledges that everyone experiences adversity, but the ability to adapt, learn, and grow from those experiences defines resilience.

## **CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH FINDINGS**

In recent years, there has been a burgeoning interest in understanding the relationship between resilience and quality of life from a multidisciplinary

perspective. Studies have shown that individuals with higher levels of resilience tend to report greater satisfaction with their lives, even in the face of significant challenges. This suggests that resilience plays a crucial role in shaping subjective perceptions of well-being and overall life satisfaction.

Furthermore, research has highlighted the mechanisms through which resilience contributes to various domains of quality of life. For example, resilient individuals are better able to cope with stress, maintain positive relationships, and pursue meaningful goals, all of which are essential components of a fulfilling life. Additionally, resilience has been linked to improved mental and physical health outcomes, further underscoring its importance for overall well-being.

### **QUALITY OF LIFE: A MULTIDIMENSIONAL CONSTRUCT**

Quality of life is a complex concept encompassing various aspects of well-being. While the exact origin remains unclear, the term gained traction in the 1960s, initially associated with health, welfare, and prosperity (McCamley, J. C. , 1975). Today, QoL is understood as a broader concept encompassing physical, social, and psychological well-being (World Health Organization. , 1998). It reflects an individual's subjective perception of their life, encompassing their cognitive appraisal, expectations, goals, standards, and concerns (Veenhoven, R. , 1996). Factors like physical health, access to healthcare, social connections, economic security, and a sense of purpose all contribute to QoL (The World Bank, 2023).

### **THE INTERTWINED PATHS OF RESILIENCE AND QOL**

Research consistently demonstrates the significant link between resilience and QoL. Individuals with higher resilience tend to report higher levels of satisfaction with their lives and experience less distress in the face of challenges (Bonanno, G. A. , 2004), (Carver, C. S., & Connor-Smith, J. , 2003). This association is not unidirectional. Positive experiences and a good QoL can also contribute to developing resilience (Fredrickson, B. L., Tugade, M. M., Waugh, C. E., & Snyder, S. J. , 2003). Resilience equips individuals with the necessary skills to navigate challenges, maintain positive emotions, and cultivate a sense of control over their lives, all of which contribute to a better QoL (Reivich, K. R., & Shatte, D. E. , 2002).

### **MECHANISMS OF RESILIENCE FOSTERING QOL**

#### **Resilience facilitates QoL through several key mechanisms.**

- **Effective Coping:** Resilient individuals possess a wider range of coping strategies. They can utilize problem-solving skills to address stressors, engage in positive reappraisal to reframe challenges into opportunities for growth, and seek social support when needed (Folkman, S., & Lazarus, R. S. (1984, Lazarus, R. S. , 1993).
- **Emotional Regulation:** Resilience facilitates emotional regulation, allowing individuals to manage stress effectively, maintain a positive outlook, and avoid dwelling on negative emotions (Gross, J. J. , 1998).
- **Growth Mindset:** Resilient individuals tend to possess a growth mindset, believing that their abilities are not fixed but can be developed through effort



and learning (Dweck, C. S. (2006). This fosters adaptation and motivation in the face of challenges.

- **Strong Social Support Networks:** Resilience is often bolstered by strong social support networks. These networks provide a sense of belonging, emotional validation, and practical assistance during difficult times, all of which contribute to QoL (Cohen, S., Gottlieb, B. H., & Underwood, L. G. , 2000).

## **BUILDING RESILIENCE FOR A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE**

- The understanding that resilience is not a fixed trait but a set of skills offers an optimistic perspective. Efforts can be directed towards fostering resilience in individuals and communities.
- **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT):** CBT has been shown to be effective in developing coping skills, emotional regulation, and a growth mindset, all of which contribute to resilience.
- **Mindfulness Practices:** Mindfulness practices like meditation can improve emotional regulation and self-awareness, fostering resilience (Hofmann, S. G., Sawyer, A. T., Wittmann, M., Duncan, E. C., & Moos, R. , 2010)
- **Social Support Groups:** Creating strong social support networks is crucial for building resilience. Encouraging social connections and fostering a sense of community can provide valuable support during challenging times.
- **Positive Psychology Interventions:** Positive psychology interventions that focus on gratitude, strengths-based approaches, and cultivating optimism can also contribute to resilience (Seligman, M. E. P., Steen, T. A., Park, N., & Peterson, C. , 2005).

Conversely, there is evidence to suggest that aspects of quality of life, such as social support and access to resources, can influence an individual's level of resilience. For instance, individuals with strong social networks and adequate support systems may be better equipped to overcome adversity and bounce back from setbacks. Similarly, access to education, employment, and healthcare can enhance resilience by providing individuals with the resources and opportunities they need to thrive.

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND POLICY**

Understanding the interplay between resilience and quality of life has important implications for interventions aimed at promoting well-being and resilience in individuals and communities. By identifying the factors that contribute to resilience and enhance quality of life, practitioners can develop targeted strategies to support individuals in building their resilience capacities.

Furthermore, policymakers can use this knowledge to design programs and policies that foster resilience at both the individual and societal levels. This may include initiatives to improve access to education, healthcare, and social services, as well as efforts to create supportive environments that promote positive coping strategies and social connectedness.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, resilience and quality of life are intricately linked concepts that play a vital role in shaping individual well-being and societal progress. By understanding the dynamic interplay between these constructs, we can develop more effective strategies for promoting resilience and enhancing quality of life in today's fast-paced world. Moving forward, continued research and collaboration across disciplines will be essential for advancing our understanding of these complex phenomena and developing innovative approaches to support thriving communities.

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## Resilience and Quality of Life

Dr. Deepthi Balla\*

### ABSTRACT

*Smooth sailing life is a euphoria which often depicted, envisioned in philosophy, political manifestoes, fairy tales but not so in real life. The setbacks that all had to face in life make them grow as true members of a society adhering and complying to its norms. The ability thus manifested uses all resources that an individual use from both within and outside itself, is referred to be 'resilience'. Resilience is instrumental in achieving quality of life, which is an index of subjective experience of contentment with one or many facets of one's life. In this chapter, definition of both resilience and quality of life are discussed. Types of resilience-physical, mental, emotional spiritual, psychological, social, academic, community. Models of respective resilience types are discussed. Psychological resilience mechanisms such as psychological immunity and elasticity using PI=PE model is discussed. Quality of life and its concomitants are also briefly discussed. An understanding of wellbeing to existential quality of life is observed. Finally, carefully selected research encrypts on the relationship between resilience and quality of life is presented.*

**Keywords:** Resilience, Types, Models, Psychological Immunity, Elasticity and Quality of Life.

### INTRODUCTION

We are living in chaotic times where both natural calamities like floods, earth quakes and manmade calamities both external (wars, social disparities) and internal (negativity, prejudice etc.) are vivid. These make individuals life vulnerable and keep them away from living their lives to the fullest peaceably. In a deeper way, these are resulting in the development of depleted inner sources of immunity (both physical and psychological). In this chapter, we are going to deal with the effect of these immune mechanisms on Quality of life of individual in this Perilous age.

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An auto immune psychological resource to the perilous situations is resilience. There emerged a need to train people in resilience as a separate program or a therapeutic module to make them prepared always to be ready, especially to ensure them capable of survival. Where as in yester generations, it manifested itself as a common feature of human beings. Let us now see this resource in detail.

## RESILIENCE

American Psychological Association defined resilience as *“the process and outcome of successfully adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences, especially through mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility and adjustment to external and internal demands.”*

### **American Psychological Association. (2015)**

The first statement conveys it as the flexibility manifested by an individual by successfully utilising all the components of a human (‘mental, emotional, behavioural’) in dealing with the expectations stemming from both inside and those that are stimulating from outside. Here notice should be given to the fact that the individual is not trying to brush off the challenges but manipulating these while focusing on his needs not be trampled in the process of adjustment or adaptation.

According to William Compton and Edward Hoffman (2020), resilience is a coping behaviour to negative happenings in one’s life. These authors cited Masten and Reed (2002) who defined resilience as a “pattern of positive adaptation in the face of significant adversity or risk” In lieu of this 2002 definition, it means that how an individual accepts and deals with an adverse situation defines his or her resilience capability. “Resilience initially referred to an ability to cope effectively with severe stress or emotional loss.”

Further William Compton and Edward Hoffman (2020) have cited the term denoted by Winders in 2014 who opined that “the modern concept of resilience is one of ‘ordinary magic,’ whereby good outcomes can be achieved in the face of adversity”. Winders opinion makes resilience more enviable capability of individuals who embrace adversity thinking it would bring positive changes in oneself as an outcome.

Southwick, Steven Bonanno, George & Masten, Ann & Panter-Brick, Catherine & Yehuda, Rachel. (2014) in their paper composed the following researchers’ definitions of resilience which are formed through their experiences in their fields of expertise.

Dr. George Bonanno – “a stable trajectory of healthy functioning after a highly adverse event.”. He opined that it is a ‘Disequilibrium’ state which commonly experienced by everyone and post the situation, the functioning of the individual elastic to the usual state of health.

Dr. Rachel Yehuda: “a process of moving forward and not returning back.” She observed that when an adverse event results in symptomatic of PTSD, such people showed tendency to leave the bad behind and move forward. This makes Dr. Rachel conceptualize her definition of resilience. Simply put, resilient people

look forward and progress rather than stagnant or regress.

Dr. Ann Masten –“the capacity of a dynamic system to adapt successfully to disturbances that threaten the viability, the function, or the development of that system” . This definition stemmed from the Researcher’s observation of children who escaped from adversity (mass killing at COMBODIA). An elaborative analysis of her definition seems feasible to adapt it to our understanding of resilience. Dynamic system, here represents our human cognitive, physiological, psychological fields which constitute or affect our personality. As an implicative process of the above three fields, the personality of the individual becomes decisive factor in the course of action that the individual will take on in future. Another key word here is ‘Threaten’. The adverse situations that we come across with will have greater effect on our intake of information, perception and especially cognitive appraisal. This appraisal is the basic step for how the information is further processed and taps up one’s personality traits as an attempt to reciprocate or react to the perceived stimuli. Thus an adverse event has direct effect on the dynamic system, i.e. personality of the individual. Now imagine that you encountered an adversity for which you never expected or prepared. You used up all your connections, personal resources and felt tired, vexed and despair. None is there to provide assistance or help to you. Then what will most of the people do? The answers will vary depending on personality (like emotionality, tough poise etc.), thinking direction (Positive, negative, prospective or retrospective) and finally one’s experiences (direct or indirect). Direct experiences represent personal experiences of the individual while indirect represents the observations from other peoples’ experiences. When none is there to help you, you will hold on to your breath and keep on going as per the opportunities that you select for yourself. The more an individual move forward with perseverance the more resilient he becomes.

Dr. Catherine Panter-Brick: “Resilience as a process to harness resources to sustain well-being”. Her opinion is that it is the undergoing process where the individuals in adverse situations look into themselves to gather up their abilities, resources to handle the crisis at hand so that their mental health is maintained or feel satisfied with their life.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF RESILIENT CHILDREN :

an expert in developmental and behavioural paediatrics cited the 7C’s observed in Children

Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg (Adolescent paediatrician ), who observed that among the resilient children and adolescents the following 7C’s are noted :

“competence, confidence, connection, character, contribution, coping, and control.” (Paul Patterson, 2024)

Let us briefly discuss these.

- **Competence** – how well the child through his experiences deals with the adverse event
- **Confidence** –resulting event after competence emerged that makes the child ready enough to come forward to tackle a similar situation

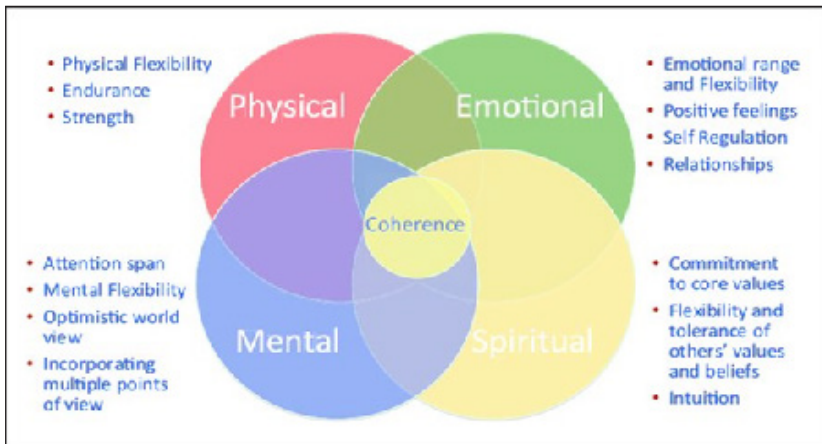
- **Connection** –the ability to bond with others when needed
- **Character** –the discerning capacity of the child to differentiate between ‘right and wrong.’
- **Contribution** –child will be able to feel satisfied with his input in helping the people around him, in turn a small part of the society
- **Coping** –child learn ways to deal with potential stressors
- **Control** –instead of acting upon one’s impulse, child learns when to hold back and not.

Dr Paul Patterson explained that to ensure a stable adulthood state, it is imperative to encourage children when they face adversities while holding them back so that children can muster these 7C’s effectively.

## TYPES OF RESILIENCE

Though resilience is a unified construct, depending on the broader realm it incites, is further typified by the researchers. Quite often a common classification of resilience deals with only 4 types of resilience, which are explained in 1. But recent research when reviewed could throw light on many newer types of resilience. In this chapter, only few of them are selected and debriefed in later sections.

Fig. 1: Types of Resilience



Used with the permission from HeartMath Institute and Rollin McCraty.

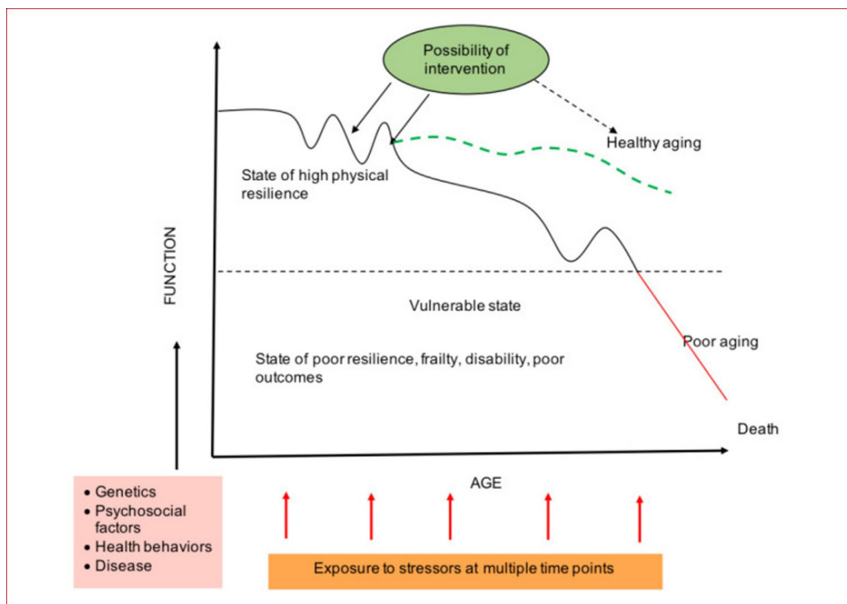
In explaining the above model, McCraty, Rollin & Childre, Doc (2010) proposed that - “Resilience is related to self-management and efficient utilization of energy resources across four domains; physical, emotional, mental and spiritual”. Further, the elements of each domain in congruence with the broad terms of this typification of resilience, Figure 1 explains the specific ‘energy sources’.

### 1. Physical Resilience

According to “Physical resilience, as a dynamic process, indicates the ability to recover or maintain physical function in the face of age-related losses or disease”

(Li, Jiatong & Chhetri, Jagadish & Ma, Lina. 2022). It indicates an individual's capability to sustain physical damage. As per Fig.1, it explains three elements which are developed by making the body face either intentional or unintentional physical exhaustion to make it adjust to the level of adversity it is exposed to. In this context comes exercise which we deliberately introduce our body to go through. Weight loss regimes if one notices, will have the core exercises in the beginning which because of no use or less use of body so far (sedentary life style) seems like making the body feel unbearable to the regime. This adversity experienced by one's physical system, through habitual practice will make one's body flexible to function with ease, indicating a healthy body routine is followed. The routines further involve 'endurance' to promote strength of the body to deal with future unpredictable physical encounters or calamities.

Physical Resilience is most sought out topic for promoting 'healthy aging'. In a study, the researchers postulated the consequences of following a practice (intervention) to envision this goal.



**Fig. 2: model of healthy aging**

Source : Used with permission from Chhetri J.K

Chhetri, J. K., Ma, L., & Chan, P. (2022). Physical Resilience: A novel approach for healthy aging. *Journal of frailty, sarcopenia and falls*, Vol.7(1): 29–31. <https://doi.org/10.22540/JFSF-07-029>

Above figure explains interactive factors which would lead to healthy aging through physical resilience attainment. The figure explains that the adversities we face at different age of our life span, with physical, psychological, genetic transmission of diseases could affect physical resilience. If an intervention is carried upon, 'healthy aging' is expected if not, the opposite scenario could be expected leading to 'poor aging and death.'



## 2. Emotional Resilience

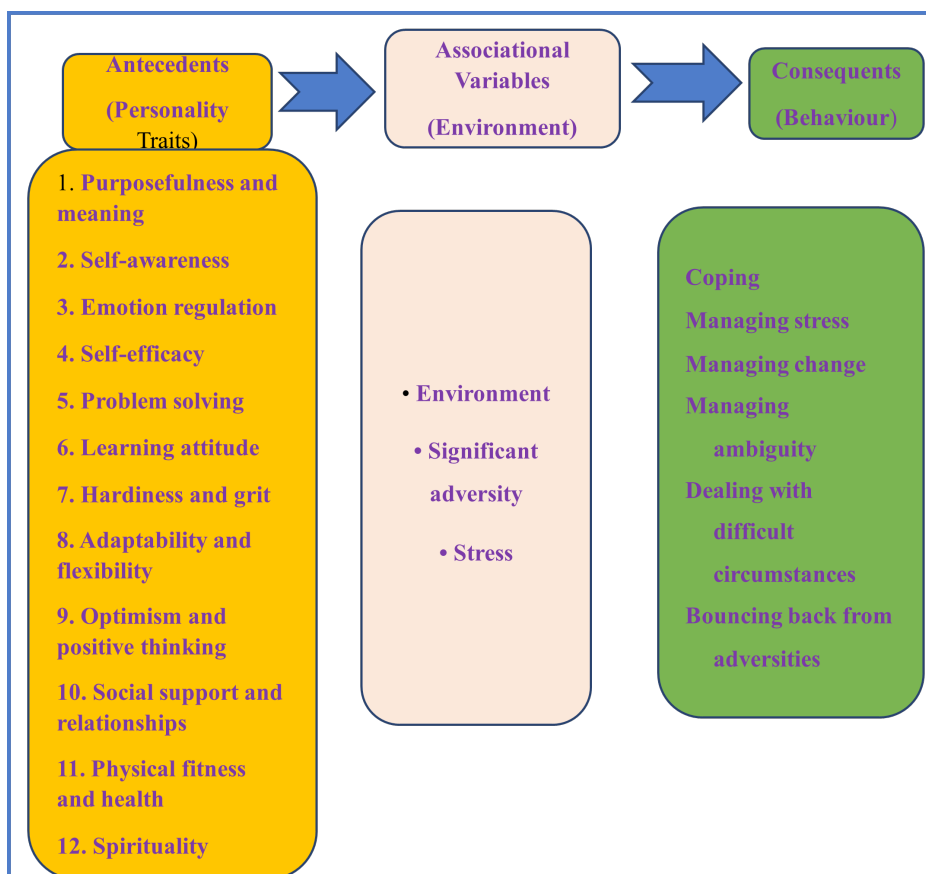
“Emotional resilience may be seen as the ability of an individual to cope with adversities and bounce back from failures.” (Khan, Nusrat. 2022). A close look at this domain as per Fig.1 proposed by McCraty, Rollin & Childre, Doc (2010), indicates a basic content, i.e., how the individual could keep a balanced utilisation of his emotions. In fact, it deals with four core elements emphasizing on the decisive role of individuals on how to tap certain emotions (range of emotions as per fig.1) and use them wisely in social settings for the need of belongingness.



**Fig. 3: Key Factors as Antecedents Contributing to the Emotional Resilience of an Adult**

*Source: Used with Permission from Nusrat Khan (2022) [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/362430414\\_Factors\\_Affecting\\_Emotional\\_Resilience\\_in\\_Adults](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/362430414_Factors_Affecting_Emotional_Resilience_in_Adults)*

Through Fig 3, the researcher Khan, Nusrat (2022) proposed a model where 12 factors were identified to be among emotional resilient people. Further the researcher, had provided a causal explanation of the positive possession of these traits to have positive behavioural consequences. She thus explained it in a tabular as below.



**Fig. 4: Antecedents, Associational Variables and Consequents of Emotional Resilience**

*Source: Used with Permission from Nusrat Khan (2022) [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/362430414\\_Factors\\_Affecting\\_Emotional\\_Resilience\\_in\\_Adults](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/362430414_Factors_Affecting_Emotional_Resilience_in_Adults)*

The above Fig.4 explains that these 12 antecedents when coupled with the ongoing circumstances, will determine the individuals' development of resilience and related concomitants. Antecedents include the stable traits which when come in contact with the unexpected, unpredictable events will give rise to a circumstance to work upon. If the individual positively deals with it, will develop resilience.

**3. Mental Resilience:** the four points described in Fig1 are indicative of cognitive aspects of resilience, where how the individual perceives the stimulus determines how well he is going to deal with adversity and become resilient.

**4. Spiritual Resilience** – “ it is the ability to sustain one’s sense of self and purpose through a set of beliefs, principles or values” (Manning, Ferris, Rosario,, Prues, & Bouchard, 2019). As per Fig. 1, it is evident that to have an understanding of your inner self and to accept and being tolerant with others’ belief system, manifested with the development of ‘intuition’ indicative of spiritual resilience. Research further identified several other types of resilience, namely

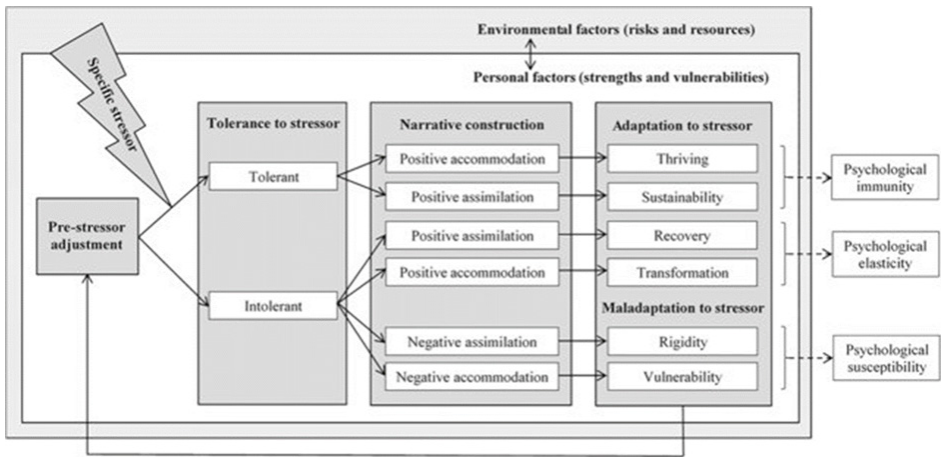
1. Psychological Resilience
2. Social resilience
- 3 Academic Resilience
4. Community Resilience

**1. Psychological Resilience** – “is the ability to recover at the same time as the development of one’s resources and potential in the face of difficulties or stressful events” (Sisto, Vicinanza, Campanozzi, Ricci, Tartaglini, & Tambone, 2019).

The above definition highlights on stress appraisal and coping mechanisms using one’s psychological resources in the face of adverse events. In simple sense, if suddenly I face an adversity, with psychological resilience, I could use the appropriate resource from within myself and use it to cope with the present stressor.

This process of stress coping part of psychological resilience is succinctly explained by ‘Psychological Immunity-Psychological Elasticity (PI-PE) model of psychological resilience’ by Ijntema, Richta & Schaufeli, Wilmar & Burger, Yvonne. (2023)

As per the researchers there is an interaction between Mechanisms (‘tolerance, narrative construction) and conditions resulting in the outcomes illustrating three adaptive pathways (‘Psychological immunity, psychological elasticity, and psychological susceptibility’).



**Fig. 5 Psychological Immunity-Psychological Elasticity (PI-PE) model of psychological resilience**

Source : Ijntema, Richta & Schaufeli, Wilmar & Burger, Yvonne. (2023) [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351437761\\_Resilience\\_mechanisms\\_at\\_work\\_The\\_psychological\\_immunity-psychological\\_elasticity\\_PI-PE\\_model\\_of\\_psychological\\_resilience](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351437761_Resilience_mechanisms_at_work_The_psychological_immunity-psychological_elasticity_PI-PE_model_of_psychological_resilience)

## MECHANISMS

Mechanisms illustrate the cognitive functioning of how the perceived content processed.

- **Tolerance** – determines the extent of bearing or sustaining intruding event. Often used in emotional, stress responses. In Fig.5 it describes the thresholds of individuals based on which one could be tolerant to the event and other could not be intolerant. This could become a gate of further appraisal.
- **Narrative construction** – describes how an individual interprets in mind's eye. In short it is about cognitive appraisal. If he narrates to himself being tolerant that the event in positive connotation, it could either grant positive accommodation or positive assimilation of the situation perceived. If he narrates the event being intolerant, that the event is alarming, then the event will be granted either negative accommodation or negative assimilation in one's mind's eye.

### CONDITIONS:

Conditions are like operative tools which stimulate the necessary operation. These are 3 in number.

- **Pre-stressor Adjustment** – it denotes memories of previous exposure to stress and resulting memories imprinted in cognitive system. These will be on-hand and determine our instantaneous reaction to a stressor. For instance, Vivek is an anxious adolescent with anxious childhood. His brought him up in such a way that he has fear of meeting elders in gatherings. His parents criticized him and punished him for not adhering to some rules of society in gatherings. Through these experiences, he developed fear and seemed obedient to elders, in fact he is struggling within. Now let us suppose that he had to attend a gathering where suddenly someone greeted him, this will trigger his anxiety. So pre-stressor will be the experiences of punishment. This is an example of negative pre-stressor. The opposite scenario, where another child gets rewards every time he meets elders will have positive pre-stressor adjustment. Here adjustment term is used in the context of accepting the event with readiness. If negative pre-stressor is available, then the individual readily perceives it in negative connotation.
- **Specific stressor** – determined by the specific nature of stimulus or event.
- **Environmental and personal factors** – where environment provides 'risks and resources' at a time to the individual, personal factors ('strengths and vulnerabilities') determine what he selects from the environmental factors. If he identifies resources using strengths he can positively adapt to the situation or use appropriate coping mechanism. If he gazes only on risks of the event, he will choose coping strategy in line with it.

### ADAPTIVE OUTCOMES

The researchers in the article also used 'maladaptive outcomes'. It is derivative of combined product of mechanisms and conditions. These are 3 in number, based on the individuals 'adaptation to the stressors'.

- **Psychological immunity** – It develops when a tolerant individual uses either positive accommodation ('thriving') or positive assimilation ('sustainability'). Thriving makes the individual move forward with vigour while

sustainability holds his ability to resist incoming event flow. It refers that for future impediments one's psyche readily shielded from. In analogous to our human defence system of white blood cells, complex psyche develops certain mechanisms to deal with incoming adversity and process them effectively.

- **Psychological elasticity** – It develops when an intolerant individual sustains the damage and persists with it using positive accommodation ('recovery') or positive assimilation('transformation'). Transformation occurs when his views of coping are changed because of his changed perceptions of the event. Thus he bounces backs from the adverse situation reminding the property of elasticity.
- **Psychological Susceptibility** – results when an individual adopts maladjusted coping mechanisms. If he assimilated the event negatively, then he would think and choose rigid coping mechanisms like escapism, for instance. If he accommodated the event in negative connotation, then he would become vulnerable in the face of incoming event flow. These two as seen in Fig.5 were of concern to the authors as these will be active triggers for pre-stressor adjustments in negative direction. Thus the authors used the term 'psychological susceptibility' to denote mental health hazards stemming from it.

Thus the Psychological Immunity-Psychological Elasticity (PI-PE) model succinctly explained the desirable resilience capabilities and blocks to resilience.

## 2. SOCIAL RESILIENCE

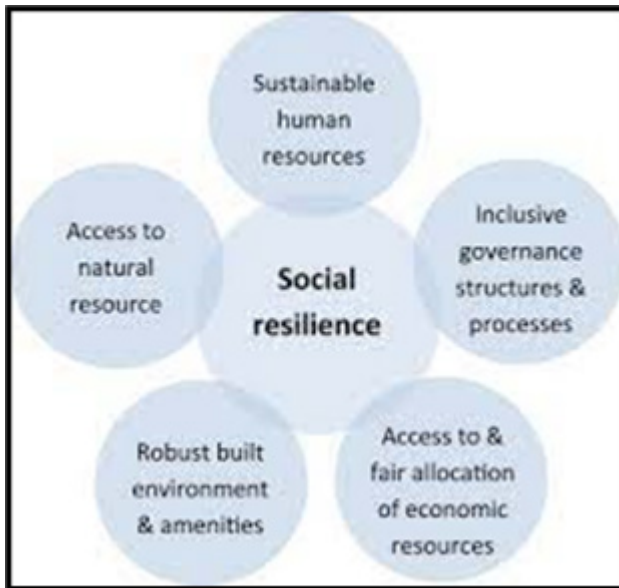
In the words of Keck, Markus & Sakdapolrak, Patrick. (2013), Social resilience reflects the ability pertaining to all "Social entities – be they individuals, organizations or communities – and their abilities or capacities to tolerate, absorb, cope with and adjust to environmental and social threats of various kinds."

The above definition examines social resilience from individual intra-perspective where the external environment is kept unpredictable and unavoidable, uncontrollable and powerful in nature. So an individual had no other way but to accept, adopt it as it is. How one can modulate this power using his own resources as anchor at times of crisis for sustaining in life, thereby become the captains using the rudder of resilience, perseverance –determines one's social resilience.

In the words of Kwok, Alan & H Doyle, Emma & Becker, Julia & Johnston, David & Paton, Douglas. (2016), social resilience denotes -

"the capacity of people and communities to deal with external stresses and shocks – and how it contributes to community preparedness, disaster response, and post-disaster recovery".

The above definition explains social resilience from a collectivistic perspective, where all the entities use this ability to tackle a problem that a community faces with unity.



**Fig. 6: Social Resilience in disaster**

Source : Science direct.com <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212420916302096>

[request permission pending]

Kwok, Alan & H Doyle, Emma & Becker, Julia & Johnston, David & Paton, Douglas. (2016) in their article,(Fig.6) have pointed out the following 5 points to consider as constituting social resilience in times of disaster.

- Access to natural resources
- Sustainable human resources
- Inclusive governance structures & processes,
- Access to and fail allocation of economic resources
- Robust built environments and amenities

Thus it can be understandable that social resilience indicates the capabilities of using resources available for tracking, tackling any social problem at hand. It could be an ability used by an individual independently to address his social problem or collectively by a community to tackle their problem as one single entity.

### 3. ACADEMIC RESILIENCE:

Many research articles cited Wang, Haertel & Walberg's concept of academic resilience propagated in 1994 as the determinants of success observed among students in the face of adversities observed in educational settings. (Jowkar, Kojuri, Kohoulat, & Hayat 2014). In 2004, Morales and Trotman had gone further as an attribute of 'academically successful' individuals. Their attainment as per these researchers is in comparison to their cohorts. Like a seesaw these

researchers reported that the success of academic resilient people are at one extreme who overcome all facets of problems that were hurled at them during their academic tenure experience and those who were not successful at dealing these academic problems at another end (Yang, & Wang, 2022).

During COVID 19, academic resilience concept needed a revamp and a new model emerged. The Academic Resilience Model (ARM) was proposed by Marian Mahat, Joanne Blannin, Caroline Cohrssen, and Elizer Jay de los Reye in 2022. This model suggested that 10 qualities were seemed to be manifested by Academic resilient people.

1. **Recalibration** – academics had undergone major changes in pedagogy during COVID 19 pandemic. Teachers had to compulsory go through ICT training for conduction of online classes to the students. Syllabus coverage and evaluation pattern took a toll for good on students' mental health as Educational Board were lenient in these processes. National Educational Policy -2020 in India, due to the pandemic was readily accepted and implemented by all educational emissarial. In the model, the authors observed that academically resilient people have adapted to the pandemic successfully. In the above narration we could understand that entire Education system of India is recalibrated paving way to academic resiliency among the academia.
2. **Encouragement (internalised)** – Students were internally motivated to learn as traditional way of teaching is recalibrated. As per the model, the authors noted that academically resilient were more internally motivated and encouraged themselves to adapt these changes brought by pandemic. In specific they quoted - the sense of hope, determination to succeed and perseverance' (Mahat, Marian & Blannin, Joanne & Cohrssen, Caroline & de Los Reyes, Elizer Jay. 2022).
3. **Structure**- entire mode education adapted blended mode where both online and offline were managed as per the changes in the pandemic conditions in the society. In the model, the authors observed support systems, access to the faculty made feasible to the students.
4. **Identity** – emergence of 'positive self-esteem and self-confidence' through their productivity ( and contribution) has created a new identity among the Academic Resilient people.
5. **Loyalty** – authors expressed that 'association with a broader purpose, shared aspirations and common goals and ambitions contribute to a sense of loyalty' and is observant among resilient individuals (Mahat, Marian & Blannin, Joanne & Cohrssen, Caroline & de Los Reyes, Elizer Jay. 2022).
6. **Instrumentality** – academic resilient have self-regulation, awareness of their instrumentality in achieving their goals. For this objective, authors identified that these have -'the ability to look beyond themselves, demonstrating empathy and open-mindedness'
7. **Exchange** – academically resilient have the ability of cooperation (collaboration) and exchange of ideas necessary for ongoing problem solving with others.

8. **Network** – Academic resilient were always keen with maintaining relationships with all people in their life.
9. **Transformation** – The pandemic made available the chances to reshape and grow in a new dimension than the present leading to a tremendous transformation. Academic resilient people in specific manifested this transformation.
10. **Skills** – Traditional education made it possible to learn only specific learning outcomes relevant skills where due to the massive utilization of online courses, everyone had the chance to develop multiple skillsets. Academic resilient individuals have shown to benefit from these by learning to utilize time and resources to develop skill sets.

#### 4. COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

According to NIST definition, “Community resilience is the ability to prepare for anticipated hazards, adapt to changing conditions, and withstand and recover rapidly from disruptions. Activities, such as disaster preparedness—which includes prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery—are key steps to resilience.” (Community resilience. NIST. 2024, April 22)

This definition highlights that a community as an entity showcase its ability to be ready, adapt and deal with the crisis it collectively faces. It also gives importance to safeguard itself from future unexpected events. Thus the last line of the definition stresses on

Prevention	–	meant to shield for the community,
Protection	–	teaching ways to being immune to the calamity,
Mitigation	–	to make all possible efforts to eradicate the problem from future reoccurrence) and
Response	–	to make community ready in its reaction to the calamity – e.g- in earth quake prone regions, people were taught how to respond to sudden tremors in earth, starting from school level itself)
Recovery	–	to teach both physical and psychological first aid to the community members)

#### Another definition of Community Resilience is as followed.

*“Community resilience is the capacity to anticipate risk, limit effects, and recover rapidly through survival, adaptability, evolution, and growth in the face of turbulent change and stress”* (Tan, Yvonne et al., 2024).

This definition gives a temporal dimension of preparative work by the community in dealing with crisis. It emphasizes on the abilities of the community in taking past events outcomes into consideration for better preventive measures, for future reference for damage control (limiting effects) and present outlook in living successfully (‘survival, adaptability’) to move forward to the better future (‘evolution, and growth’)





Fig. 7: Community Resilience Frame Work

Source : <https://www.build-resilience.org/community-resilience-framework.php>

@ ICOR international Consortium for Organizational resilience

This Figure takes into consideration the main entities for a community to thrive towards flourishing. These are - “economy, governance, system and quality of life.” These have mutual reaction and influence on the sustainment and development of other domain.

## QUALITY OF LIFE

As per Fig.7 we can observe one of the important aspect of human life is quality of life. It includes parameters that could make one feel safe and secure, ‘housing, employment social freedom, access to education’ for instance.

Now let us look at the definitions to gain a more in depth perception of Quality of Life.

**As per American Psychological Association, Quality of Life is Defined as -**

*“the extent to which a person obtains satisfaction from life. The following are important for a good quality of life: emotional, material, and physical well-being; engagement in interpersonal relations; opportunities for personal (e.g., skill) development; exercising rights and making self-determining lifestyle choices; and participation in society.”*  
 American Psychological Association. (2015)”

The above definition stresses on how far an individual experiences satisfaction with himself(herself) by being able to attain self-awareness, self-efficacy in dealing with interpersonal relationships, domains of life. In simple sense, to be

aware of what one needs, to know about one's own abilities of self-preservation, self-esteem by way of exercising his power in social domains establish sense of satisfaction. This could be thought of as a quality of life parameter to the individual's life. If we consider burnout and job stress, then people would not feel the above said abilities, thus raising to dissatisfaction lowering their concept of quality of life.

#### **According to Cambridge Dictionary of Psychology -**

*"n. The degree to which a person is able to enjoy being alive, which is related to physical and emotional health, economic sufficiency, social engagement, opportunity for self-expression and development, and the capacity to make decisions for oneself. (The Cambridge Dictionary of Psychology 2009)."*

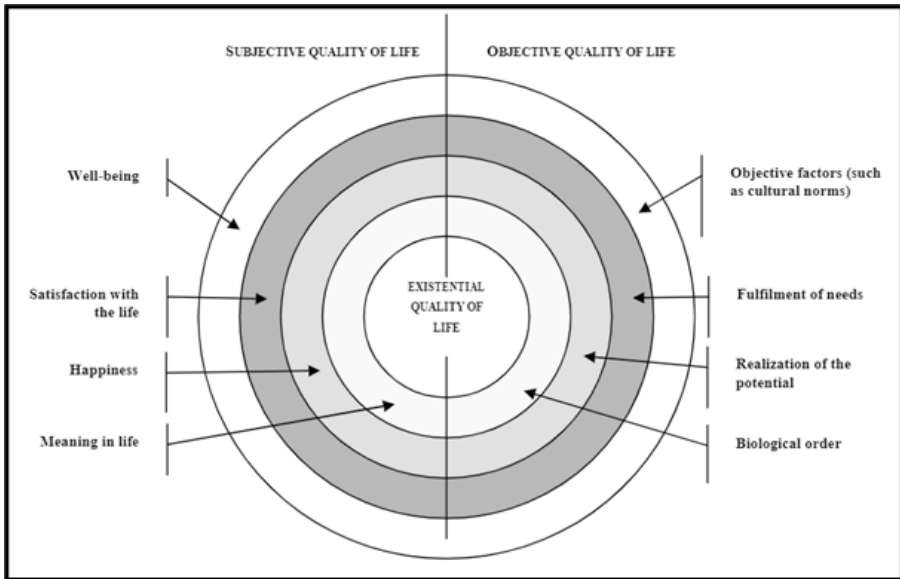
The above definition magnifies mental health of an individual. In specific, it contrasts with depression and suicidal tendencies, where people often experience hopelessness in living life. The above definition shows all the factors, autonomy overcoming which makes one feel happy to be alive or deems self-worth.

#### **WHO definition which follows a global purview of the concept of quality of life.**

*"WHO defines Quality of Life as an individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns." (World Health Organization., n.d.)*

There are 3 components in WHO definition

1. Subjective perception
  2. Subjective Environment ('Culture and Value System')
  3. Subjective Expectations ('goals, expectations, standards and concerns')
1. **Subjective perception** –indicates a varying degrees of intake of information. Here the emphasis is on the point of view of individual about his life satisfaction. If someone feels like have not achieved anything worthwhile in life, then it is his perspective. The position here is insignificant in his eyes while it might not be so from others perspective.
  2. **Subjective environment** –term is used here as culture is dynamic with respect to the ongoing technological, social trends which are rapidly evolving. Once culture means the ways and traditions of a community at a global level. Now many sub cultures erupted, studying which will also impossible due their lucid nature of change by minute. Thus subjective prefix is utilized. As per the culture adopted by the peers, celebrities, Tik Tok and Instagram, Facebook influences, an individual these days had divergent value systems, these if trampled or even disturbed the individual feels disappointed thereby decreases the perception of one facet of their quality of life.
  3. **Subjective Expectations** –involves what the individual expects from oneself, expectations from the significant others. Often depressed individual suffers with these subjective expectations.



**Fig. 8: Existential Quality of Life**

Source: Susniene, Dalia & Jurkauskas, Algirdas. (2009).

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228696715\\_The\\_concepts\\_of\\_quality\\_of\\_life\\_and\\_happiness\\_-\\_Correlation\\_and\\_differences?enrichId=rgreq-2e56e15558eaaabee13b81c34d6c3450-XXX&enrichSource=Y292ZXJQYWdIOzIyODY5NjcxNTtBUzoxMDI1OTM0NDc1OTYwMzJAMTQwMTQ3MTU5MjIwOA%3D%3D&el=1\\_x\\_2&\\_esc=publicationCoverPdf](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228696715_The_concepts_of_quality_of_life_and_happiness_-_Correlation_and_differences?enrichId=rgreq-2e56e15558eaaabee13b81c34d6c3450-XXX&enrichSource=Y292ZXJQYWdIOzIyODY5NjcxNTtBUzoxMDI1OTM0NDc1OTYwMzJAMTQwMTQ3MTU5MjIwOA%3D%3D&el=1_x_2&_esc=publicationCoverPdf)

The above Fig. 8 explains that there two variations when it comes to 'existential quality of life', which is nothing but a deep exploration into the concept of true meaning behind quality of life. These include:

- **Subjective Quality of Life –**

It denotes the feelings, perceptions of an individual about one's happiness. Here, the authors have described each component inclusive of the other. Wellbeing is the outer most or the most inclusive concept that has existential quality of life at its core. Wellbeing in specific, "how people feel and how they function both on a personal and social level, and how they evaluate their lives as a whole" (Jarden, & Roache, 2023)– an indicator of quality of life experienced by the individual. For instance, if a person feels comfortable with social life then it is indicative of his social well-being concept.

In mathematical equation terms,

$$\text{Wellbeing} \subseteq \text{Satisfaction with Life} \subseteq \text{Happiness} \subseteq \text{Meaning in life} \subseteq \text{Existential Quality of life}$$

That it could be understood that if one has acquired meaning of life then he perceived his quality of life well. Thus spirituality is very essential correlate of attaining quality of life.

These researchers further cited the 'Universal Quality of Life Model of Bagdoniene which is proposed in 2000. This model has four levels of experiences leading to the generation of quality of life in the individuals.

### Universal quality of life model (Bagdoniene, 2000)

Sphere	Dimension	Examples
<b>I. Global</b>	<i>1. Macro-environment</i> <i>2. Human rights</i> <i>3. Politics</i>	Clean environment, democratic rights, etc.
<b>II. External</b>	<i>1. Work</i> <i>2. Family standard of living</i> <i>3. Residence, housing</i>	Inheritance, parent background – knowledge provided to a child, influence for child's further education and dependence to social class; family income, nutrition, residence, type of dwelling, etc.
<b>III. Interpersonal</b>	<i>1. Family relationships</i> <i>2. Close relationships</i> <i>3. Interpersonal relationships</i>	Structure and function of social relationships – relationships with parents, other family members, relatives, friends, society, etc.
<b>IV. Personal</b>	<i>1. Physical</i> <i>2. Psychological</i> <i>3. Spiritual</i>	Growth, personality development, activeness, self-respect, meaning of life, etc.

Fig. 9: Universal quality of life model of Bagdoniene, 2000 as cited by Susniene, Dalia & Jurkauskas, Algirdas. (2009)

Source: Susniene, Dalia & Jurkauskas, Algirdas. (2009). [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228696715\\_The\\_concepts\\_of\\_quality\\_of\\_life\\_and\\_happiness\\_-\\_Correlation\\_and\\_differences](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228696715_The_concepts_of_quality_of_life_and_happiness_-_Correlation_and_differences)

Fig. 9 explains 4 spheres. The first sphere 'Global' indicates the collective satisfaction to human race and the concomitants. This means whatever could benefit, make human race feel content with life describes this level best. The second sphere 'External' tackles with all that could stimulate an individual's perception of feeling satisfaction with one's life. Here you can see that these are imposing something that the individual did not initiate or precipitate. Third sphere 'interpersonal' is where the individual either initiates by volition an interaction or becomes recipient of another's volitional action. Two way or multi-channel communication and consequences of which determines one's perception of satisfaction with life. Finally, the fourth sphere 'personal' relates the intrapersonal perception of meaningful achievements meeting the self-standards of an individuals. Unless these self-standards are satisfied, the individual would not feel satisfaction with one's life in true essence.

## LINK BETWEEN RESILIENCE AND QUALITY OF LIFE:

Now coming to the research, it shows that resilience through mediation of certain intervening variables seem to have association with Quality of Life.

Resilience is observed among post disease recovery patients. But the severity of the disease, stigma related to the disorder could be detrimental to the attainment of quality of life though people become resilient to the situation (Mei, Yujin et al., 2023; Zhou, Kaina et al., 2022). In addition to that another detrimental factor, was identified in patients with head and neck cancer. The stage of cancer, '*proton therapy*', female gender with low degree of educational qualifications seemed to lower both resilience and quality of life in this sample (Xiang et al., 2024). Another study indicated that social support and spirituality were found to mediate the link between resilience and quality of life. Further in the sample, the stronger the resilience, the better perception of social support and high spirituality (Chen, Sun, Liu, Jiao, Wei and Hu , 2023).

Among older people, an online survey on quality of life in relation to resilience capabilities is conducted. The researchers using network analysis have identified that two resilience components have strong relation to quality of life among older people. These are '*Self-Management Ability (SMA)*' and '*Positive Self-Appraisal style (PSA)*'. SMA has the strongest association with quality of life in this sample. SMA, seemed to have mutual connection with both Social participation and Behavioral Coping. The paper demonstrated several network analysis models where it showed direction of behavioural coping to connect to SMA and then to Social Participation then to the Past, Present Future orientation (PPF) among these older people. This PPF had strong relation with social participation and autonomy among these older people. This work contributed to the understanding that self-management ability is important for older people to experience quality of life. But this ability could be effected by behavioural coping styles that they adopt. SMA is again interacts with social participation. In older people their PPF influences both their decision to participate an event and to work independently (autonomy) (Brinkhof et al., 2021).

Psychological resilience, with the modulation of quality of sleep one had, proved to be associated with Quality of Life amongst middle aged and old age clinical sample (Xu, Jiashuang et al., 2023). It even seemed to provide 'compassionate assistance to the patients as observed among the nurses and lead them to feel satisfaction with life, as evident in their high Quality of Life scores (Alonazi, Ohoud & Alshowkan, Amira & Shdaifat, Emad, 2023). It even has the ability to prevent future surgeries, better coping styles with the disease and thereby manifesting good quality of life among patients with Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD). Contrast results were observed among those with poor psychological resilience who showed to have anxiety and depression due to the disease and thus poor quality of life (Sehgal, Priya et al., 2020; Mací'a, Barranco, Gorbeña, Iraurgi, 2020). Finally, psychological resilience had long lasting effects (observed during 3-6 months' post-operative period among glioma patients who have shown less neurological complications than those with low psychological resilience) on recovery and quality of life (Yang, Guiping et al., 2022).

## CONCLUSION

We understood that resilience has been useful in fostering growth of all facets of life such as social relationships, academics, community level. Spirituality has a greater significance in the understanding of core values while meaning in life is closest to existential quality of life. Resilience Mechanisms such as psychological immunity, elasticity were discussed. Through resilience components such as Self-Management Ability, for instance, quality of life is maintained among older people. Satisfaction with life thus can be attained with proper use of existing resilience capabilities of individuals.

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## Resilience Research in Oncology Context- Scope in India?

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### ABSTRACT

*The association of resilience with positive health outcomes in adult patients with Cancer has been proven by various empirical studies globally. The chapter begins with briefly reviewing 20 resilience-based clinical trials conducted in the past two decades, with sample consisting of adult patients with Cancer. These trials have been conducted at different phases of the Cancer trajectory. These clinical trials were identified using the database- Clinical Key. These trials show the immense scope for Psycho-Oncological interventions for Cancer patients and their caregivers throughout the Cancer continuum. To develop Resilience-based interventions for Indian patients with Cancer, more research must be undertaken in Indian settings because the findings from Western studies cannot be blindly generalized to Indian patients with Cancer having diverse cultural background. Hence, this chapter also focusses on the studies conducted in India within the past decade, focusing on resilience of adult patients with Cancer. The purposive sample consisted of nine studies found after searching two databases- Google scholar and PubMed. The exclusion criteria included studies conducted with pediatric Oncology patients and their caregivers, and Cancer survivors. The studies in Psycho-Oncology conducted in Western settings have extensively explored Psychological resilience and it's psycho-social correlates with respect to Cancer type, different treatment modalities and health outcomes, as well as resilience-based interventions for Cancer patients and caregivers. This chapter highlights the need for future research to focus on resilience in adult patients with Cancer in Indian settings.*

**Keywords:** Resilience, Oncology, India, Adult Patients With Cancer.

### RESILIENCE RESEARCH IN ONCOLOGY CONTEXT- SCOPE IN INDIA?

In this decade, the need for mental health promotion is evident. In medical settings, there is a dire need for mental health support for patients, caregivers,

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doctors, and staff. Cancer comes with a lot of baggage including stigma, uncertainty, emotional turmoil and existential crisis. As higher resilience can increase one's inner strength to tackle crisis situations, resilience-based interventions are imperative in Oncology context.

## METHODS

Literature search strategy: The clinical trials were identified using the database-Clinical Key. The nine Indian studies were found after searching two databases-Google scholar and PubMed.

Sample: Purposive sampling method was utilized. Only studies published in English were included. The screening processes used are given below.

**Clinical trials (Global) (n=20):** Of 102 clinical trials screened, 20 clinical trials were chosen. The key terms used were "resilience cancer patient, and resiliency oncology." The clinical trials chosen were conducted in the past decade, and focused on resilience in adult Cancer patients and their caregivers. The exclusion criteria included clinical trials conducted with Adolescents/Young Adults (AYAs) with Cancer, parents of AYAs with Cancer, Cancer Survivors, and using non-Psychological interventions to improve physical resilience.

**Research studies (Indian) (n=9):** Of 200 articles screened, 9 empirical studies of Psychological resilience in adult patients with Cancer and/or their caregivers in India were chosen. Only studies published within the past decade were included. The exclusion criteria included reviews, editorials, letters, case reports, studies that did not have the full text available, published in non-English languages, conducted with pediatric Oncology patients and their caregivers, and conducted with Cancer survivors.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS IN PICO FORMAT:

Participants-related questions- In the clinical trials reviewed as well as the Indian studies reviewed, which type of Cancer was more prevalent in the participants? In the clinical trials reviewed as well as the Indian studies reviewed, which Oncological treatment modality has received most attention? Which gender got most representation in the samples chosen in Indian studies? What is the average sample size in the Indian studies?

Intervention-related questions- What are the Psychological interventions undertaken globally to improve psychological resilience in adult patients with Cancer? What was the preferred mode of delivering psychological interventions in clinical trials (personalized or group-based)? What are the variables studied along with resilience in the resilience-based clinical trials? What are the variables studied along with resilience in the Indian studies? Which study design has been applied most frequently in Indian studies? Which study design has been applied least frequently in Indian studies? In Indian studies, which psychometric assessment has been used most frequently to measure resilience in adult patients with Cancer and/or their caregivers?

Comparators- Majority of the reviewed clinical trials have been undertaken in which country? Majority of the reviewed Indian studies have been undertaken in which Indian state/s?

Outcomes- What were the findings of the Indian studies? What were recommendations of the clinical trials and Indian studies?

**RESULTS**

**Table 1: Details of Psychological resilience-focussed clinical trials in Oncology context**

Sr. No.	Trial Identifier (Study duration)	Sample (Location)	Variables with resilience	Intervention details
01	NCT06133348 (Jan, 2024 – Ongoing)	40 Women with Breast Cancer (BC) undergoing treatment (USA)	Patient-reported outcomes, biological measures of stress	Brief, manualized skills-based coaching- stress management, goal-setting, positive reframing and meaning-making.
02	NCT06183164 (Nov, 2023- Ongoing)	30 BC patients receiving chemotherapy (Turkey)	Symptom management, Quality of Life (QoL)	Awareness-based program to reduce stress (2-2.5 hours each session for 8 weeks).
03	NCT06061965 (Oct, 2023- Ongoing)	Patients with advanced cancer and their family caregivers (USA)	Advance care planning	A virtual resilience-building intervention.
04	NCT05836077 (April, 2023 – June, 2023)	BC patients receiving chemotherapy (Turkey)	Post Traumatic Growth (PTG)	Educational training with the pecha kucha method.
05	NCT06204289 (July, 2023 – 2024)	Family caregivers of Patients with Lung Cancer (Turkey)	Caregiver Burden	A supportive care program (nurse-led) (clinical interviews for 8 weeks)
06	NCT04610034 (March, 2021- March, 2023)	Distressed Partner Caregivers of Cancer Patients (Denmark)	Coping	A 7-session group-based program called "Resilient Caregivers"
07	NCT05576545 (Sept, 2020 – August, 2022)	New BC Patients taking Chemotherapy (Taiwan)	Self-efficacy	A self-care smartphone application "The Breast Cancer Self-Care App" intervention
08	NCT06337305 (August, 2020 – August, 2022)	74 Bladder Cancer Patients undergoing Radical Cystectomy (USA)	QoL	Intervention in the perioperative period.
09	NCT04480008 (July, 2020 – December, 2021)	Patients with Advanced Cancer and their Caregivers (USA)	QoL, stress, anxiety, sleep, fatigue	The Resilient Living Program

10	NCT05095675 (Dec, 2018 - Ongoing)	BC patients (Italy)	Biomedical status, Psycho-social status, Functional status	A multi-centric trial focused on resilience trajectory prediction for personalized recommendations
11	Registration Number: <a href="http://www.chictr.org.cn/ChiCTR2100052108">http://www.chictr.org.cn/ChiCTR2100052108</a> (2023 onwards)	80 BC families	Coping style, social support, family disease burden, levels of anxiety and depression	Coping-focused family resilience intervention program (CFFRI) for six weeks
12	NCT03565757 (July, 2018 – Dec, 2020)	Family Caregivers of advanced HNC Patients receiving Chemotherapy (USA)	Stress	A Stress Management and Resilience Training (SMART) small group session (90-minutes) with follow-up online and written resources.
13	NCT03644173 (May, 2018 – June, 2021)	Lung Cancer Patients who will be surgically treated (USA)	QoL	Personal Resilience Empowerment Program (Five sessions with health coaches).
14	NCT03277235 (Sept, 2017 – July 2021)	Newly diagnosed Colorectal Cancer Patients (Taiwan)	Fear of recurrence, QoL, GI symptom distress	A resilience model-based total care plan
15	NCT03276559 (July, 2017)	Surrogate Decision-Makers of ICU Patients (USA)	Psychological wellbeing	A manualized treatment “EMPOWER” with CBT and ACT sessions delivered by a trained mental health professional.
16	NCT02739243 (April, 2016 to Oct, 2017)	Caregivers of Cancer Patients (Germany)	Distress, Coping	A tailor-made group therapy program “PREPARE” (five sessions in eight weeks)
17	NCT03430492 (Feb, 2016- Ongoing)	BC patients (Sweden)	QoL	Evaluated the Bio-molecular parameters coupled with resilience
18	NCT03045003 (January, 2014 – December, 2015)	Cancer Patients (Switzerland)	Supportive care needs	Two interventions- Educational sessions with medical team, and direct, electronic feedback in a monitoring sheet.

19	NCT01629069 (Sept 2012 – May 2014)	Transplant Patients with Cancer (active or in remission) and their caregivers (USA)	QoL, Perceived stress, Medical outcomes	A mindfulness-based intervention for 6 weeks
20	NCT02261558 (Jan 2011- Jan 2017)	167 new patients with lung, breast, or GI cancer (USA)	Anxiety, Depression, Pain	Music therapy interventions with instrumental and vocal elements.

**Table 2: Details of Indian studies of resilience in Oncology context**

Sr. No.	Title	Author (Year)	Sample	Tools	O t h e r Variables	Findings
01	Gynecological Cancer Patients: Examining Depression and Resilience during Chemotherapy in Bagalkot	Patel N. et al. (2024)	Gynecologic Cancer patients (n= 50)	CES-D and Brief Resilience Scale (BRS)	Depression	They found a negative correlation between resilience and depression. They also found varied levels of resilience- mild (32%), and moderate (68%)
02	A Cross-Sectional Study to Assess Resilience and PSS among Cancer Patients	Rani R., et al. (2023)	Cancer patients (n= 405)	Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CDRS), the multi dimensional scale of PSS	Perceived Social Support (PSS)	They highlighted the role of family support in resilience-building as they found a strong positive correlation between resilience and PSS.
03	Stress, anxiety, depression, and resilience in Cancer patients on radiotherapy	Mungase M., et al. (2021)	Cancer patients on Radiotherapy (n=100)	Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS), Abbreviated CDRS	Stress, anxiety, depression	They empirically tested the relationship between resilience and dysphoria. They found reduction in resilience as a significant predictor of depression.
04	Resilience and Psychological Wellbeing among Cancer Patients	Rainson D. & Rema, M.K. (2021)	Cancer patients (n= 16)	Karol Ryff's well-being questionnaire (1989), Heather's resilience questionnaire (1984)	Wellbeing	Positive correlation between resilience and wellbeing

05	A Comparative Study on Perceived Stress, Coping, QoL, and Hopelessness between Cancer Patients and Survivors	Somasundaram et al. (2019)	Cancer patients (n=15), Cancer survivors (n=15) (30–60 years)	Perceived Stress Scale, Coping Checklist, QoL-Cancer, Beck Hopelessness Scale (BHS).	Stress, coping, Quality of Life (QoL), Hopelessness	Patients with Cancer were using maladaptive coping strategies, experiencing psychological distress, hopelessness and poorer QoL than cancer survivors.
06	Resilience amongst Cancer patients	Kumar, S. & Batra, P. (2019)	250 Cancer patients (50 patients per group)	Resilience scale by Wagnild and Young (1993)	Cancer type	Resilience had decreased most in cervix and prostate cancer group and least in the Breast and Lung Cancer group.
07	Resilience among Working and Non-working Breast Cancer Patients	Alias J, Ravindranadan (2017)	61 females with BC (Kerala)	CDRS	Job status	Highlighted the importance of job status as a contributing factor to improve resilience.
08	A Comparative Study on Resilience, PSS and Hopelessness Among Cancer Patients Treated with Curative and Palliative Care	Somasundaram et al. (2016)	Cancer patients (n= 60)	Bharathiar University Resilience Scale (BURS), Multi dimensional Scale of PSS, BHS	PSS and Hopelessness	Increase in resilience was associated with decrease in hopelessness and increase in PSS when they compared Cancer patients undergoing curative treatment and palliative treatment.
09	The Role of Hope and Social Support on Resilience in Cancer patients	Vartak, J. (2015)	Cancer patients (n =115)	Herth Hope Scale, BRS, PSS Scale	PSS and Hope	Both hope and social support had significant positive effect on resilience.

## DISCUSSION

This chapter reviewed 29 resilience-based studies with adult patients with Cancer or their caregivers in Oncology specialty hospitals. This was to highlight the resilience-based research undertaken globally and in India in the past decade. The type of Cancer most prevalent in the sample reviewed is Breast Cancer (40%= 8/20 clinical trials) (44.4 %= 4/9 Indian studies). In the clinical trials reviewed as well as the Indian studies reviewed, the Oncological treatment modality that has received most attention is Chemotherapy. Majority of the studies focused on patients undergoing curative treatment.

**Clinical trials:** Majority of the reviewed clinical trials were undertaken in the United States of America. The trials have shown different interventional approaches that may improve resilience, QoL and medical outcomes. Eleven trials (55%) chose personalized interventions whereas nine trials (45%) preferred group-based interventions. Two trials have used mindfulness-based interventions. Two trials were in virtual mode and one trial adopted hybrid mode of delivering the interventions. Having elaborate clinical interviewing and sessions with clinical professionals was emphasized in three trials. Only one trial (CFFRI) used a family-oriented approach to resilience-building and it was not surprising that the trial was undertaken in an Asian country (China). One of the trials has also shown the benefits of music therapy to improve resilience, reduce depression and pain in patients with Cancer. Table-1 shows the Psychological interventions undertaken globally to improve psychological resilience in adult patients with Cancer. Table-1 also provides details of the interventions, sample, location (country where trial was conducted) and the variables studied alongside resilience in clinical trials.

**Indian studies:** Majority of the reviewed Indian studies were undertaken in the Indian states of Kerala and Maharashtra. Female gender got most representation. Most participants in the Indian studies were 40 – 60 years old, married women with diagnosis of Breast Cancer. Table-2 shows the Indian studies that have focused on resilience in Oncology context. Table-2 also highlights the variables studied along with resilience and findings in the Indian studies. In Indian studies, the psychometric assessment that has been used most frequently to measure resilience in adult patients with Cancer is Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CDRS). The reviewed Indian studies preferred the cross-sectional research design. Lack of longitudinal resilience-based studies needs to be addressed in the future. One study used the experimental design and the rest preferred the ex-post facto design. In clinical settings, there could be constraints that may not permit full control for randomization or manipulation, and minimizing drop-out rates can be hard. Overcoming these challenges, use of experimental design will make sure that causal inferences can be achieved with more generalizability. Out of the nine Indian studies chosen, eight (88.89%) were quantitative, and one study (11.11%) used mixed methods. In future studies, qualitative method can be used to throw light on the least explored areas of resilience-based research and develop interventions that are relevant, feasible, and easily accessible in the Indian context. Average sample size is 119 (SD = 128.6; range= 15-405). The high value of standard deviation and large difference in range values show that the sample was not normally distributed (reason- high variation in sample sizes and small sample size). In this sample, it is better to consider the median value which is 61 to make inferences about the variations from the middle value.

## CONCLUSION

The increase in awareness of mental health needs in the medical community and the society as a whole, is spearheading a new wave of salutogenic interventions for patients and their caregivers. Adopting a strength-based approach is more beneficial than adopting a deficit-focused approach when it comes to development of Psychological interventions. This chapter highlights the need for future research to develop indigenous resilience-based interventions focusing on improving resilience in patients with Cancer in Indian settings.

## CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS

1. Studying variations specific to age, gender, type of Cancer, personality type, education level, marginalized status, social-cultural background and socio-economic status.
2. Focusing on the strengths and challenges unique to patients with Cancer in Indian settings taking a multi-stakeholders approach.
3. Paying attention to changes in resilience resources in Indian population before, during and after Cancer diagnosis.
4. Developing indigenous interventions to enhance resilience for patients with Cancer undergoing different medical treatments (surgery, chemotherapy, radiotherapy, transplant).

## LIMITATIONS

1. Only articles published in English language were considered.
2. Reviewed studies were chosen from selective databases that were easily accessible.
3. Majority of the clinical trials were from western countries such as the USA.

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## Unbreakable: Harnessing Resilience for Personal Growth

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### ABSTRACT

*The change and the adversities can disrupt, break, or traumatize. Resiliency, as a process or an outcome, as described in its construct has the power to challenge, mend, make people thrive, look for the positive side, seek meaning and grow. Resilience is considered as a positive adaptation despite adversity. The article focuses on the concept of survival, recovery and thriving in the case studies of 'Japan', as a nation and 'Sindhutai Sapkal' as an individual. A multi-case study method is applied to test the process and outcome theories of resilience. The analysis reveals that by drawing upon cultural values, coping mechanisms, and a strong sense of purpose, Japanese people exemplify resilience in the face of adversity and inspire others to cultivate resilience in their own lives. Sindhutai Sapkal's life story demonstrates resilience as a virtue of positive psychology. Her ability to overcome adversity, adapt to challenging circumstances, and find meaning and purpose in her experiences reflects the transformative power of resilience in promoting psychological well-being. The case studies give insight into how people in high-risk natural or man-made environments manage to sustain, break cognitive traps, and grow out of adversities and uncertainties. A coherent set of resilience factors motivates people to look beyond the obstacles and move towards growth. Resilience skill-building intervention plans tailored to the needs of at-risk countries and individuals can be designed based on the discussed case studies.*

**Keywords:** Case Study, Japan, Personal Growth, Resilience, Sindhutai Sapkal.

*It has it all- a purpose in life (ikegai), an acceptance of the inevitable (shikata ga nai), admiration and embrace of imperfection and impermanence (wabi-sabi), continuous improvement (kaizen) and so on. Neither the natural disasters nor the financial turndowns can crush or tear it down. With every blow, with every setback it gets*

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*sparklingly stronger and amazingly better. Magical Japan- A nation known for its creation is able to every time find meaning, purpose and happiness post- adversity.*

*From being called chindhi (worthless in the local dialect) to being called Maai (mother) by over 2100 orphans, this lady was conferred with the fourth highest civilian award of India, Padma Shree in 2021. The differences with parents, husband and community, early marriage, abandonment by husband, constant threats, begging on the streets, selling vegetables to opening organizations for the orphaned and destitute, Sindhutai Sapkal was a lady of determination, thriving and survival (of the fittest). An example of undeterred and unwavering strength and courage.*

*Despite the odds, the quality that makes Japan and Sindhutai stand apart is called- Resilience.*

## DEFINITION AND THE CONCEPT

Higgins (1994) defines resilient individuals as people who have positive relationships, are skilled in solving problems, have the motivation to improve themselves, are faithful and can extract meaning and benefits from troubles, traumas and worries. Neenan (2018) has defined resilience as,

*“Marshalling your resources (e.g. psychological, spiritual, social) to cope adaptively with tough times and emerging from them sometimes a better, stronger, wiser person”.*

Resilience is the process and outcome of successfully adapting to challenging life experiences, especially through mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility and adjustment to external and internal demands (adapted from the APA Dictionary of Psychology). Resilience is a concept commonly associated with traumatic and challenging life events and is referred to as the ability to bounce back or overcome a challenging life event. It is a broad concept that encompasses a wide range of phenomena, including the capacity of a system to withstand or recover from significant challenges. In human development, resilience research has focused on three distinct situations:

- a) functioning well during a time of significant adversity (“stress resistance”);
- b) returning to a previous level of good functioning following a traumatic or severely disturbing experience (“bouncing back”); or
- c) achieving new levels of positive or normal adaptation when severely adverse conditions improve (“normalization”).

In all these cases, resilience refers to patterns of doing well after exposure to a serious adversity or threat. People have probably been intrigued with resilience as long as stories have been told of heroes, heroines, and underdogs who overcome great obstacles on the road to success. The science of resilience, however, began only a few decades ago.

Resilience research grew out of research on people at risk of developing problems, including children at risk because of their family background (such as having a parent with a severe mental disorder), life experiences (such as premature birth or divorce), or hazardous rearing conditions (such as poverty or neighborhood violence). Investigators seeking to understand the etiology of mental illness began to notice that some individuals “at risk” were doing quite well, even flourishing. Pioneering investigators in the 1970s and 1980s,

including Norman Garmezy, Lois Murphy, Michael Rutter, and Emmy Werner, recognized the importance of unexpectedly positive development and began to search for explanations of resilience. From the outset, these pioneers had the goal of gaining knowledge for promoting better outcomes among individuals at risk for problems.

### **TRAIT APPROACH TO RESILIENCE**

The trait approach to resilience considers resilience as an intrinsic and stable attribute that includes characteristics such as self-acceptance, hardiness, independence, autonomy, empathy, a sense of purpose or meaning in life, a sense of humour and a high tolerance of uncertainty. These attributes act as protective factors and help in maintaining and regaining mental health. If resilience is considered as an attribute, then those who possess it will be described as invulnerable and invincible and those not having it will not be able to overcome the adversities.

### **PROCESS APPROACH TO RESILIENCE**

The process approach to resilience emphasizes on it being a process rather than just a list of traits. Resilience is viewed as a process of coping with adversities or challenges in such a manner that the adaptation is positive and the person acquires the desired qualities. In developmental systems theory, all complex patterns of behaviour arise from the interaction of many influences acting across multiple levels of analysis. This principle certainly applies to resilience, which emerges from dynamic processes over time. Resilience involves many systems from cells to individuals to families to societies. An individual may be said to have more or less capacity for resilience, but the actual pattern of an individual's behaviour will result from many interactions, both within the person and between the person and the environment. Because of the many interactions involved, resilience cannot be viewed as a single trait. In any person's life, resilience arises from many resources and processes that shape a positive life trajectory. Many attributes of a person, their relationships, and other resources are involved in these processes.

### **THEORIES ON RESILIENCE**

Out of the trait, process and meta theories of resilience, Glenn Richardson's resiliency model and Froma Walsh's Dynamic Systemic Framework model are discussed to analyze the case histories of Sindhutai Sapakal and Japan respectively.

### **RESILIENCY MODEL BY RICHARDSON**

The theory of biopsychospiritual balance and resilience suggests that individuals have a natural tendency towards homeostasis or a balanced state of being that involves the integration of body, mind, and spirit. This homeostasis is constantly being challenged by various life events, which can be categorized as "life prompts." These life prompts can have a positive or negative impact on the individual, and the outcome of the interaction between the life prompt and the individual's protective factors will determine whether the individual is able to maintain homeostasis or experience a disruption (Richardson, Neiger, Jensen, & Kumfer, 1990).

If the individual has strong resilient qualities and is able to effectively cope with the life prompt, they will be able to maintain homeostasis or even adapt to a higher level of homeostasis. This is known as resilient reintegration. On the other hand, if the individual is unable to effectively cope with the life prompt, they may experience a disruption that leads to a lower level of homeostasis, known as recovery with loss. In the worst-case scenario, the individual may resort to maladaptive coping strategies, such as self-destructive behaviors, leading to a dysfunctional state.

The reintegration process is an important aspect of this theory, as it determines the outcome of the individual's interaction with the life prompt. The reintegration process can lead to one of four outcomes: resilient reintegration, return to baseline homeostasis, recovery with loss, or a dysfunctional state. The outcome of the reintegration process is influenced by the individual's resilient qualities and protective factors, as well as the severity and type of life prompt.

Thus, the theory of biopsychospiritual balance and resilience suggests that individuals have a natural tendency towards homeostasis, which is constantly being challenged by life events. The ability to maintain homeostasis or adapt to a higher level of homeostasis is influenced by resilient qualities and protective factors, and the reintegration process determines the outcome of the interaction between the individual and the life prompt.

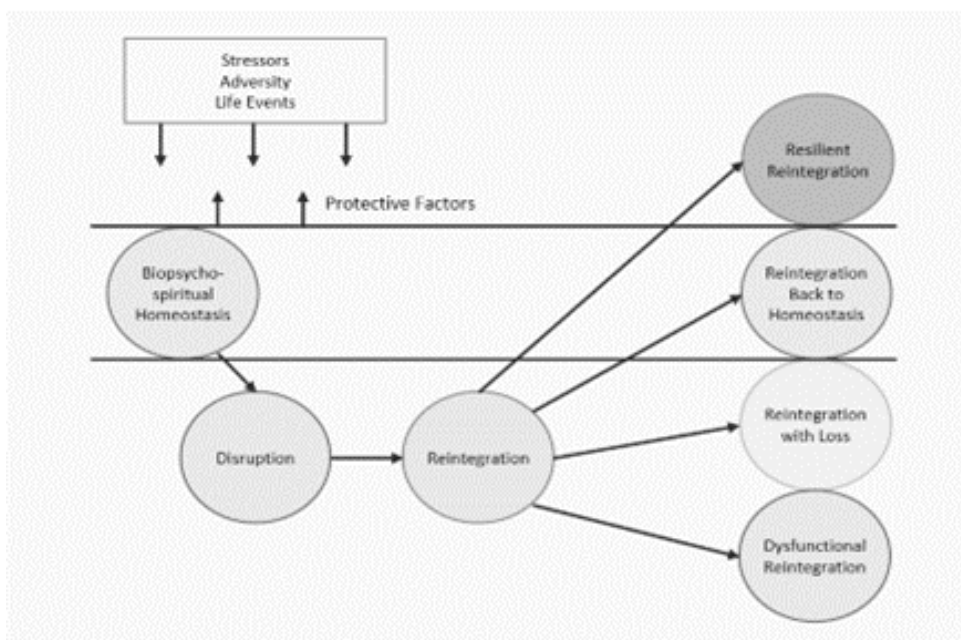


Fig 1: Resiliency model by Richardson (2002)

Let us discuss personified resilience considering the Phoenix of Maharashtra – Sindhutai Sapkal's Resilience with respect to Richardson's theory.

Components of Richardson's model	Corresponding characteristics in the case study of Sindhutai Sapkal
<b>Stressors, Adversity, and Life Events</b>	Faced a multitude of stressors, adversities, and significant life events throughout her life, born into extreme poverty and faced abandonment by her husband and family, at a very young age she begged door to door carrying her infant daughter. Sindhutai persevered these experiences of neglect and deprivation which were quite overwhelming. Coming unstruck, she chose to channel her experiences into a source of strength rather than succumbing to despair.
<b>Biopsychospiritual Homeostasis</b>	Facing disruptions and challenges to her physical, psychological, and spiritual well-being all the way, Sindhutai found ways to restore her balance and equilibrium. Through her work with orphaned and abandoned children, she found purpose and fulfillment, contributing to her sense of inner harmony.
<b>Resilient Reintegration</b>	Sindhutai's life exemplifies resilient reintegration. Howbeit experiencing profound disruptions, she found ways to reintegrate into society in a positive and constructive manner. Through her tireless advocacy and social work, she not only rebuilt her own life but also uplifted others who faced similar struggles.
<b>Reintegration Back to Homeostasis:</b>	Sindhutai's journey can also be seen as a process of reintegration back to homeostasis. Notwithstanding the initial shock and trauma of her early experiences, she gradually found stability and balance in her life by embracing her role as a mother figure to countless orphaned children, she established a sense of belonging and purpose that contributed to her overall well-being.
<b>Reintegration with Loss</b>	Throughout her life, Sindhutai experienced numerous losses, including the loss of her biological family, the children she cared for who passed away or moved on. However, she demonstrated resilience by finding ways to integrate these losses into her life's narrative without being consumed by grief. In lieu of dwelling on the pain of loss, she focused on the impact she could make in the lives of those she encountered.
<b>Dysfunctional Reintegration:</b>	While facing immense challenges, Sindhutai's resilience prevented her from succumbing to dysfunctional reintegration. In defiance of the odds stacked against her, she refused to let her circumstances define her or dictate her future. Instead, she actively sought opportunities for growth, healing, and positive change, ultimately transcending the limitations imposed by her past.

## FAMILY RESILIENCE MODEL

Professor Froma Walsh, cofounder of the Chicago Center for Family Health, has written extensively on family resilience and the positive adaptation of family units. In *Family Resilience: A Developmental Systems Framework*, Walsh (2016) considers the key processes in family resilience and gives a great overview of the concept from a family systems perspective.

According to her, the concept of family resilience refers to the capacity of the family, as a functional system, to withstand and rebound from adversity. A basic premise in family systems theory is that serious crises and persistent life challenges have an impact on the whole family, and in turn, key family processes mediate adaptation (or maladaptation) for individual members, their relationships, and the family unit.

Walsh discussed the transactional processes in well-functioning families and the building of the family in her research considering the resilience-oriented lens, focusing on family capacities in dealing with situations of adversity.

Walsh proposed that the concept involves nine dynamic processes that interact with one another and help families strengthen their ties while developing more resources and competencies. The key processes in family resilience include **Belief Systems**

- Making meaning of adversity
- Positive outlook
- Transcendence and spirituality

### **Organizational processes**

- Flexibility
- Connectedness
- Mobilize social and economic resources

### **Communication/problem-solving processes**

- Clarity
- Open emotional sharing
- Collaborative problem solving

These transactional processes enable the family to rally in highly stressful times: to take proactive steps, to buffer disruptions, to reduce the risk of dysfunction, and to support positive adaptation and resourcefulness in meeting challenges.

Resilience entails more than coping, managing stressful conditions, shouldering a burden, or surviving an ordeal. It involves the potential for personal and relational transformation and positive growth that can be forged out of adversity.

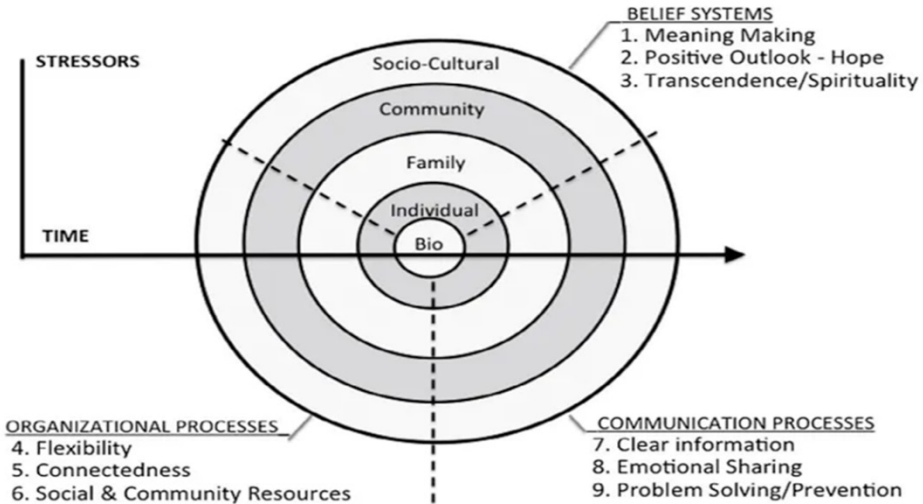


Fig 2: Representation of Family Resiliency Model by Walsh.

Let us discuss, the nation rising from the ashes: Japan's Resilience in the Face of Adversity

Components of the Family Resilience Model	Corresponding Characteristics in the Case Study of Japan
<p><b>Making Sense of Adversity</b></p>	<p>Japan has a long history of facing natural disasters, such as earthquakes, tsunamis, and typhoons. In contempt of the devastation caused by these events, the Japanese people have developed a resilience rooted in their cultural values of perseverance, adaptation, and harmony with nature. They see adversity as an opportunity for growth and renewal, finding meaning in rebuilding and strengthening community bonds in the aftermath of disaster.</p>
<p><b>Having a positive outlook</b></p>	<p>Regardless of the recurring challenges posed by natural disasters and economic downturns, the Japanese people have always maintained a resilient spirit and a positive outlook on the future. This optimism is evident in their collective efforts to rebuild and innovate, turning adversity into opportunities for progress and advancement.</p>
<p><b>Spirituality and transcendence</b></p>	<p>Traditional Japanese spirituality, influenced by Shintoism and Buddhism, emphasizes harmony with nature, acceptance of impermanence, and finding beauty in the midst of adversity. This spiritual foundation provides the Japanese people with solace and strength during difficult times, enabling them to transcend suffering and find resilience in the face of adversity.</p>

<b>Flexibility</b>	Japanese society exhibits remarkable flexibility in adapting to changing circumstances and overcoming challenges. Whether it's implementing earthquake-resistant building codes, developing advanced technology for disaster preparedness, or embracing innovation to revitalize the economy, Japan demonstrates a capacity to adjust and thrive in the face of adversity.
<b>Connectedness</b>	Japanese culture places a strong emphasis on community and social cohesion. In times of crisis, this sense of connectedness becomes especially pronounced as individuals come together to support one another and rebuild their communities. Bonds of solidarity and mutual assistance contribute to the resilience of Japanese society in the face of adversity.
<b>Mobilizing Economic and Social Resources</b>	Japan has a robust infrastructure for mobilizing both economic and social resources in response to crises. Government agencies, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and volunteers work collaboratively to provide disaster relief, rebuild infrastructure, and support affected communities. This coordinated effort helps mitigate the impact of disasters and facilitates recovery efforts.
<b>Clarity</b>	Undeterred by the complexity of challenges facing Japan, there is often a sense of clarity in the national response to crises. Clear protocols and procedures for disaster preparedness and response, as well as long-term planning for economic recovery, help maintain stability and confidence in the face of uncertainty.
<b>Sharing of Emotions Openly</b>	While Japanese society is often associated with stoicism and reserve, there is also a culture of empathy and emotional expression, especially in times of crisis. Sharing emotions openly fosters a sense of solidarity and mutual support, allowing individuals to connect on a deeper level and navigate challenges together.
<b>Solving Problems Collaboratively</b>	Japan's resilience is also evident in its ability to solve problems collaboratively, both at the community level and through national initiatives. Public-private partnerships, community-based organizations, and government-led initiatives facilitate cooperation and innovation in addressing social, economic, and environmental challenges.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the journey through the intricate landscape of resilience reveals a tapestry woven from the threads of meaning, concept, trait, and process. Delving into the depths of human experience, we find resilience not merely as a static quality but as a dynamic force, shaped by stressors, life events, and adversities. Drawing inspiration from the indomitable spirit of *Sindhutai Sapkal*, we witness



resilience as a testament to the human capacity for adaptation and growth in the face of profound challenges. Through her story, we glean insights into the resilience that emerges from making sense of adversity, fostering a positive outlook, and transcending limitations through spirituality. Exploring the case of Japan, a nation marked by resilience in the wake of natural disasters and societal upheavals, we uncover the importance of flexibility, connectedness, and the mobilization of economic and social resources. In the midst of crisis, clarity and collaborative problem-solving emerge as essential tools for resilient reintegration, guiding individuals and communities towards a path of renewal and reconstruction.

At its core, resilience embodies a biopsychospiritual homeostasis, a delicate balance between physical, psychological, and spiritual well-being. It is a journey of transformation, where the human spirit rises above adversity, not merely surviving, but thriving amidst the challenges of life. As we navigate the complexities of resilience, let us remember that within every setback lies the seed of opportunity, and within every trial, the potential for growth.

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## Pathways Facilitating Resilience in Adolescents Residing in Institutional Homes in Goa, India

**Leanne Rebelo\* & Ridhima Shukla\***

In the human life span, children and adolescents are the most vulnerable group and need the greatest care. While the family can be the best facilitator for the development of good mental health, some families are not capable to do so. This may arise from chronic social vulnerability such as early separation from parents, homelessness, being orphaned and, abandoned, missing or runaway, street children, children of sex workers, abused, tortured and exploited children, those affected by HIV/AIDS, affected by natural calamities, and man-made disasters, those with disabilities and those suffering from terminal diseases (National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child development, n.d.). A large number of these children end up in institutional care as an alternative home.

A study by Mamen and Dias found that these adolescents who experience traumatic events may have difficulty in normal socio-emotional development which leads to maladaptive behaviour, deterioration in mental health and problems with social relationships due to their social vulnerability (2016). Mainstream research conducted has quantitatively investigated the effects of institutionalization on the mental health and developmental outcomes of resident children by comparing children within institutes and non- institute residents (Bhat, 2014; Naqashbandi, Sehgal, & Fahim-ul-Hassan, 2012). The results have indicated that institutionalization has been associated with negative developmental outcomes for the residents. Contrarily, qualitative research has focused on the opportunities in some institutes that lead to positive outcome in these individuals. However, these studies are limited. A study by Singh and Jha (2016) through study of a group of institutionalized orphans in Kashmir found that children viewed the orphanage in positive light. Another study, conducted in New Delhi, India by Saraswat and Unisa (2017) found that residents were confident that the education received within their institutions would help

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them pass through future difficulties and this confidence was enhanced by the institutional in-house peer-support. From a review done in 2019 to understand children's experiences of living in institutional care in the global South, Roche found that resident children had supportive in-house peer relationships, access to education, and, broadly, regarded the institution as an advantage over their biological families' limited care. A recent study by Mishra and Sondhi (2021) focused on theorizing pathways to resilience among orphaned adolescents in institutional care in India and found that a desire to break through adversity was found to be at the core.

In the above literature, we notice that despite the adversity, some protective factors exist within the homes that gave pathway towards resilience. Ungar explained that "Resilience is the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to health-enhancing resources and the capacity of individuals' physical and social ecologies to provide those resources in meaningful ways" (2006). Here, the emphasis is not only on the individual beating the odds, but also in changing the odds stacked against vulnerable populations (Seccombe, 2002). Therefore, as much as personal agency to navigate towards resources is important, the individual's community must also be available to locate and provide these resources in meaningful ways. Learner et al. (2013) and Masten (2018) indicated that resilience is a dynamic construct that responds well to ecological factors and in essence, over time and context, a combination of protective mechanisms can result in extra-ordinary adaptive quality. Thus, signifying that the potential of negative outcomes with the at-risk population can be avoided through the changed environmental aspects influencing resilience at institutionalised homes.

Further, research by Unger et al. explains, there is ambiguity in the definition of positive outcome that is culturally and contextually relevant, they also argue that there exists cultural insensitivity in studies or measures that claim universality of definition (2008). As supported by Tweed and Conway in 2006, "The very idea of what makes a good 'outcome' is itself subject to cultural variability, and researchers should be wary of over-applying particular measures of psychological coping success in cultures where these measures have less meaning for that purpose". In regard to the perception of 'positive outcomes' by care-givers of orphaned adolescents, Mishra and Sondhi (2021) in Delhi, India found 2 over-arching themes for 'doing well': (1) presence of a drive (desire to achieve in life) and (2) positive behavioural attributes (set of culturally sanctioned behavioural attributes). Highlighting this, it is crucial to explore how these residential institutions define and build resilience in culturally meaningful ways.

Overall, countless research has established that young people in contexts of social vulnerability are susceptible to negative outcomes and decreased well-being and there is a growing body of evidence for 'what works' in developing resilience. However, this is typically understood from within the western discourse and hence there exists an ambiguity in the definition of positive outcomes (Unger, 2008). Further, there is lack of qualitative focus on the residential institutional care in the Indian at-risk context and unlike most western countries who have shifted

to a foster-care system, with no alternative socially vulnerable children are still residing in these institutions in India. Understanding the factors contributing to the trajectories of perceived positive development despite social vulnerability among adolescents in these institutes through an emic perspective will provide the opportunity for altering future trajectories for that same population in cultural and contextual relevance. The objective of the current study is to identify the mechanisms fostered by the institute to build perceived resilience and to find out Care-givers perception of Resilient Children in contextual and cultural relevance in the at-risk Indian population.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### Resilience Framework

Existing literature in the 4th wave of resilience research understands resilience as a dynamic and multi-level process. Hart, Blincow & Thomas (2007) have built on a theoretical discourse and synthesized existing measurement tools to produce the Resilience Framework. It provides a Framework that can be used to emphasize 'what works' when supporting children and young people's resilience according to the Resilience Research base. The resilience framework integrates research on resilience in social systems, and ecological contexts, it also highlighting the importance of individual agency and skills and addresses the relation between resilience and social justice. As such, it shares some similarities with the fourth wave of resilience research.

The framework is primarily divided into 5 compartments. Basics as the most important aspect that emphasizes on meeting basic needs. Belonging focuses on having healthy relationships and good influences. Learning emphasises on discovering new things, to indulge in formal and non-formal ways of explorations; to develop interests, talents and life skills, to have a vision for a life plan. Coping, strategies and techniques used to face everyday adversities and the Core Self which focuses on the individuals inner worlds. The framework also consists a group of four 'noble truths' that underpin these 5 components. These truths are fundamental starting places that encapsulate the underlying beliefs, values and attitudes needed to make a good resilience support work: acceptance, conservation, commitment and enlisting.

## METHODS

This study followed a qualitative research design. Data was collected from 1 care-giver each of 5 residential child care institutions in Goa, India through semi-structured interviews. We chose this qualitative methodology as it investigates the real world lived experiences of the participants.

## SAMPLING DESIGN

Purposive sampling was used to collect data. Participants were recruited through the support of a list of child care institutes provided by The Directorate of Women & Child Development provided by the Government of Goa. Participants were then shortlisted based on the fulfilment of study criteria and consent of institute. The sample size was determined as per data saturation.

## **PARTICIPANTS**

Child Care Institutional homes that provide care throughout the year were selected. Only those Care-givers who worked at the institute for more than 5 years were interviewed and had fluency of English were recruited. All those institutes that cared for children only during academic seasons, were day-cars, cared for children who were only 10 years and below and those which cared for children with mental or physical disabilities were excluded. Care-givers who could not speak English and did not experience the institute for 3 years or more were excluded.

## **MEASURES**

A semi-structured interview schedule was designed and validated by 2 experts who were experienced in the field of qualitative studies. In-depth interviews were conducted using the schedule and field notes were taken to note the researcher's observations.

## **DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS**

Through the List of child care institutes created by the Government of Goa, 61 institutes were contacted. From those that were shortlisted through the fulfilment of study criteria and gave consent to being interviewed, 8 institutes showed interest in participation out of which 2 dropped out after giving consent and the other care-giver did not meet inclusion criteria. After research objectives, methodological procedures, and ethical issues, were explained to the participants and consent was taken, interviews were audio recorded, were conducted in real time on a one-to-one based and spanned for approximately 60 to 130 minutes.

Data was interpreted by using a hybrid process of inductive and deductive thematic analysis (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2016). This helped gaining insight into additional relevant themes which were not identified by the deductive approach. In addition to following the general structure by Braun and Clark (2006), in relevance to Fereday and Muir-Cochrane's model, we also did the following:

- Developed code book based on frame work (codes and definition of codes)
- Applying code book to some raw data to test reliability of code (reviewed by supervisor)
- Familiarizing and Summarise data (excel sheet)
- Apply code book to the text and also identify new inductive codes (codes from code book was italicised)
- Connect code by colour segregation, identify sub-themes and themes
- Corroborate and legitimise coded themes

The previous stages were closely scrutinized to ensure that the clustered themes were representative of the initial data analysis and assigned codes. Data was audited by supervisors.

## ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical approval was taken from the Institutional Review Board as a measure of approval for data collection. The care-givers of the Child Care Institutes provided with written informed consent and consent for audio-recording was taken. All data were kept confidential and securely held for the required period. The identity of the participants and institutes was protected by the use of a code. No incentives of any kind were provided for participation.

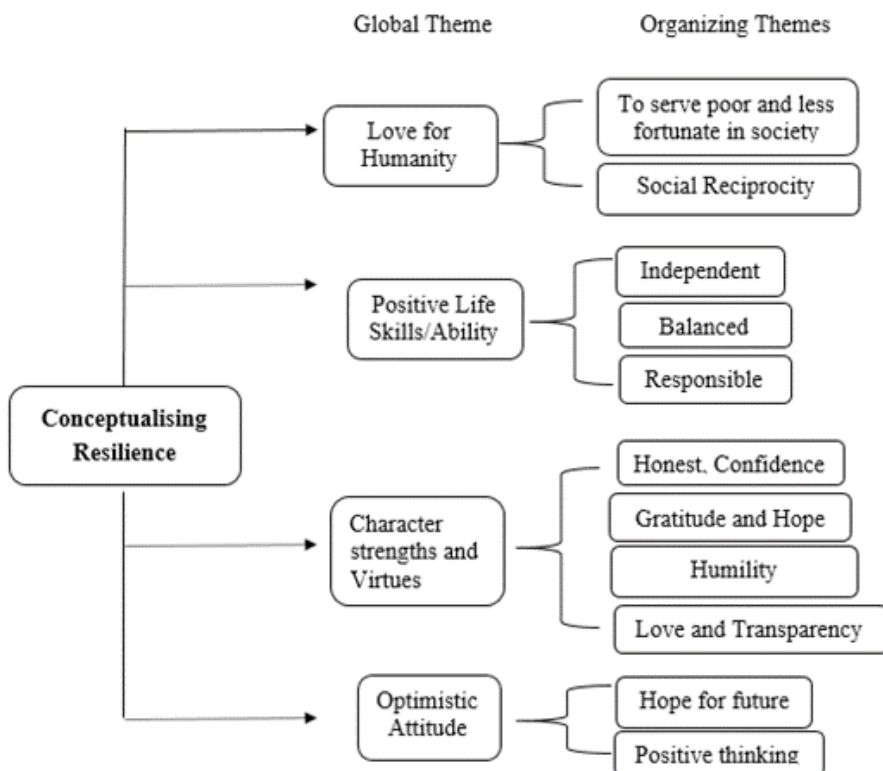
## RESULTS

### Conceptualization of ‘Resilience’

To derive the cultural and contextual relevant definition of ‘positive out-comes’ the care-givers were asked, “What are the ‘good outcomes’ that young people show ‘despite serious threats to their well-being’ that they have experienced?” Through inductive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006), results found 4 global themes; Love of humanity, Positive Life Skills/Ability, Character Strengths and an Optimistic Attitude.

FIGURE 1

*Thematic Representation of Cultural and Contextually Relevant Conceptualization of ‘Resilience’*



**Note.** This figure illustrates the findings of objective 1 which highlights the contextually and culturally relevant aspects of resilience in the at-risk population residing in child care institutes.

Positive change that occurs during institute stay is the core focus. Care-givers claim that 'positive outcome' was initially limited or lacking, "they are a hopeless when they come here". For them, the primary 'positive outcome' was expecting a child to realize their problem behaviours which arose from their pre-admission life. After which, the focus ultimately changes to having positive outcomes as revealed in the themes. The below excerpt intricately explains that while at pre-admission they may lack hope, good character and effective living skills, the children are expected to have these positive outcomes by the end of their stay.

"First of all, we want to make them a good person. Another thing they should be independent... Somebody helped me to be a good citizen, a good person, and I'm independent, so I should help others who need help in society... See in the beginning, all they have no hope, all negative thinking, nothing will happen, I see when they're getting out now, they're also becoming good person..."

### **Love for humanity**

This theme was described to be one of the most salient positive outcomes by all care-givers. One of the care-givers describes this as: "Life value as in even if you have bitter experience, always give positive for others. Even if they're down, if they don't have hope, put hope and value in their life..." Otherwise defined as pro-social behaviour, the care-givers emphasize that the children must have the desire to serve people in need and to give back to the community as they have received through the institute. Most care-givers have emphasized on 'love for humanity' through religious lessons.

### **Positive Life Skill**

Learning and possessing positive life skills such as, the ability to effectively care for self and to be financially secure was perceived as important. A participant states, "We want them to learn, and, later on once they leave these institutions, we want them to stand on their own feet. So we teach them in all aspects of their life, to be balanced." In this context, 'standing on their own feet' symbolizes independence. The care-givers stress that they focus on providing love, exposure to the real world, academics, physical and mental wellbeing as they desire children to be balanced in all these areas of their lives.

### **Character strengths and Virtues**

The 3rd highlighted global theme is Character strengths and Virtues. While these were not elaborately expressed, each care-giver briefly says that they are either pre-existing or needed to be harnessed as they eventually help tackle challenges in the real world. "Should be humble and should be able to reach out to the rest of them." In another interview: "These children, I also found and I experienced that they have that love, that concern and thoughtfulness." Gratitude was one of the character strengths that was predominantly expressed. "...they're telling me sister because of you, I am having a new life." A care-giver believes that an adolescent will mature in character along with age and with appreciation of care-giver efforts. 3/5 Care-givers expressed gratitude as a catalyst to help

the individual realize that they should help the underprivileged just as they have received ‘an opportunity for a new life’ (As similarly noted in ‘love for humanity’).

### Optimistic Attitude

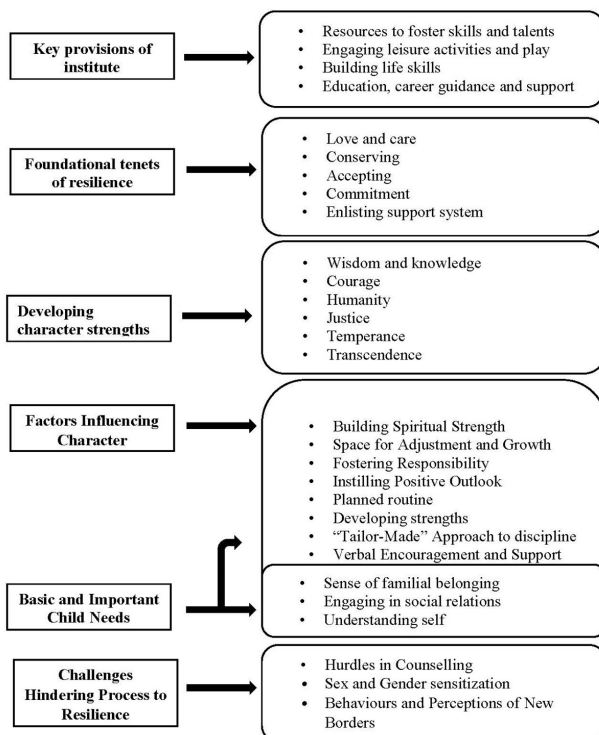
Hope for future is seen as looking past adversity, the presence of a drive to achieve something in life and possess positive thinking about themselves and others. Hailing from adverse socio-economic and/or unsafe environments, care-givers stated that Hope for the future was often missing in these children/adolescents. However, when emotional and academic support is provided and positive thinking about self and the future is inculcated, individuals develop hope for themselves. “[When admitted] all they have no hope, but if you give them that positivity, [they] look at the other side.” They state that most of these individuals develop career plans and goals for the future during their stay at the institute.

## INSTITUTIONAL INFLUENCES ON ADOLESCENT PATHWAYS TOWARDS RESILIENCE

Data from objective 2 focused on pathways facilitated by the institute towards building or enhancing resilience in adolescents. Through the analysis we found 6 global themes. Please note that all themes italicised are deductive codes.

FIGURE 2

### *Institutional Influences on Adolescent Pathways towards Resilience*





**Note.** This figure illustrates the findings of the study which includes the 5 global themes fostered by the institutes to influence adolescent pathways towards resilience.

### **Key Provisions of the institute**

All care-givers expressed 4 salient components which they believed helped in achieving positive outcomes. Resources to foster Individuals skills and talents based on interests was emphasised on. This included highlighting and displaying individual achievements, fostering talents through opportunity to perform, opportunity for exposure, and for skill development. A care-giver expressed that skill learning and talent showcasing was an integral part of "...We have programs all over, their talents are tapped and, given opportunities to play even the school."

Opportunity to engage in leisure activity was another sub-theme. Here, each day borders were encouraged to showcase their talents during common free time, to engage in sports, watch television, participate and host festive activities and, also have picnics.

Building Life Skills was also a significant finding as the adolescent's daily schedule revolved around this sub-theme. For example, encouraging them to develop Independence and Responsibility through duty assigned; house clean, cooking, discussions on being responsible for influencing younger borders, for own future and family. Some had life skill discussions which emphasised interpersonal skills, self-awareness, money management, time management and coping with academic challenges.

Education and Career Guidance and Support was also provided based on strength, capability and interest of the individual. Further, Vocational skills are taught. Career guidance and support was surprisingly evident post 18 years. Some care-givers explained having consistent discussions about general life expectations, and this helps giving sense of purpose.

### **Foundational Tenets of Resilience**

Consistent Love and care was one of the most prominent needs according to the care-givers. The care-givers explained that this instils a sense of familial belonging, safety and hope of dependence for future. It was expressed that absence of belongingness leads to rejection of institute and persistence of bad behaviour. "...it is important to be physically presence and they shouldn't feel any emotional distance..." Children often seek familial bonds with them and may even refer to them as Mama/dada. To foster a sense of belonging and care, caregivers continuously attend to younger children which would have been ideally provided by mother and strive to create a home-like atmosphere rather than a 'boarding'. They believe that love and care can transform an individual's character, and they informally engage with children to build this sense of care. Caregivers stress the need for patience, kindness, and consistency, even when dealing with improper behaviours.

In deficit based approach, we concentrate on bad behaviours, however 'Conserving' is when the care-giver is able to focus and appreciate the little positive there is and build on it. Care-givers have explained the need to appreciate slightest positive behaviours and skill, to identify strengths and interests of the child; capability, activities and habits and help cultivate them further. "No matter how bad child is, need to appreciate slightest positive thing and thank-god." 'Acceptance' was also identified. This signifies the need to show unconditional positive regard to the child regardless of their behaviour. Care-givers express this as acceptance of child's weakness, mistakes life problems and, behavioural issues stemming from previous environment. 'Commitment' was largely defined as not giving up on the adolescent because as care-givers, patience, direct continuous engagement, persistence in follow-up about any issues is a must. Change, according to the care-givers is also due to time/maturity of the adolescent. A child must perceive commitment from the care-giver for behavioural change. "Cannot leave the child behind due to bad behaviour..." 'Enlisting' is used to describe the Support System available for the individual when in need. Psychologist/ psychiatrist, tutors, care-givers, available family members and friends were viewed as a part of the system.

### **Factors Influencing Character Change**

The care-takers explained that as new/young boarder have certain fears when transitioning to an institute, they provide 'Space for Adjustment and Growth'. This includes need of special attention, care and encouragement to new borders, continuous attention to younger kids and allocation of time for inter-personal conversations and entertainment. Rules and regulations must be introduced gradually. In addition to this, 'Understanding self' is an important factor to feel belonged into the institute i.e., understanding reason for being in the institute, position of child in the world/family, reality of their life. According to care-givers, this helps adolescents acknowledge, accept and bear responsibility of own action in institute life and make best use of provided resources. "I told them, you take home, speak to them, why are you putting in the home? You are not telling anything and getting in the boys home. So today he doesn't know what to do here."

As mentioned in the previous global theme, there is a 'Sense of familial belonging' to facilitate behavioural change. This includes the need for care-takers understanding, love, and care, presence of engaging and supportive friendships and acknowledgment of the institute as the second home. Behaviour change is explained to be seen when adolescent identifies self as member of institute family. 'Engaging Social Relations' that includes Spending quality time together with friends, being part of entertaining activities and being able to share experiences and good/bad times with others. This, along with understanding self is perceived to be Basic Child Needs by every care-giver.

'Planned routine' of daily activities helps individual organise self and perceive control over self/situation. This is done through presence of daily routine time table, systematic daily routine schedule, joint planning on daily schedule, daily

prayer, daily study session and extra tuitions. "Well, I asked them how you feel about it now... So I answer, this is what I'm going to organize with you. They said, okay." 'Fostering Responsibility' was seen as another facilitator towards developing life skills such as daily house duty assigned, owning responsibility of material provided by care-takers, inter-personal relations and caring for brothers/sisters in need.

Positive adaptation was also brought about by inculcating 'Positive Outlook' in the individuals by encouraging decrease in negative thinking with encouraging present/future view through positive lens, emphasises on not giving up, acceptance of mistakes, encouraging the ability to view negative happenings as positive as well as encouragement to endure. 'Developing Strengths' helps individuals focus on what they are good at. This was done by identifying individual strengths, highlighting and displaying achievements, inculcating new strengths and providing opportunity to explore and apply strengths.

Building Spiritual Strength was a focus of most institutes as 3 out of the 5 institutes were run by the religious clergy. They express that dependency of pray instils hope, acts as a moral compass, increases pro-social behaviour, helps teach core lessons such as gratitude and as many care-givers mentioned, "common pray we give some common message. So, the main purpose is the life value." Engaging big feelings during pray sessions is explained to bring change in behaviour or approach to life. This is done through common pray and each adolescent is encouraged to follow their own religion.

Likewise, focus was also given on care-givers need to provide with 'Verbal Encouragement and Support'. Care-givers believe that change in thinking and behaviour is brought about by emotional verbal persuasion, informing of behaviour consequence in society, verbal persuasion of capability, verbal praises and encouragement to do well, emotional support, reinforcement through social incentives, rewards and, encouraging to view self as a role model. All of these components, in addition to joint discussion in planning routine, leads to perceived confidence in self and ability and control over self which is often lost when living in vulnerable societies which determine their life pathway.

It is worthy to note that "Tailor-Made Approach to Discipline" is used by all institutes where the importance of dealing with each child individually due to past problems is emphasised. They state that reform methods dependent on individual past background and root cause of maladaptive behaviour. "some children need rough phase [reprimand], others mild...if I know that her father is drinking or beating the child, I cannot be shouting at her or hit her if she does mistake, I should be able to, "okay. Come just talking. And what happened? Why did you do it? The next time don't do that?" Few care-givers warned against using 'Condition Based Learning' such as deprivation to remind of future consequences of behaviour and negative punishment which is often used in residential homes. Observed consequence/outcome of behaviour, Positive reinforcement and Positive punishment is also used.

'Care-Givers Belief' speaks about what the care-givers believe must be done for every child. 1 care-giver emphasised on, "refrain from insults or punishment, rather one must condemn the act and not the adolescent". Further, 3 care-givers expressed the need to show trust and give the individual freedom to explore within their given choices this will encourage adolescent's sense of free will and will enhance interest. Findings also suggested that care-givers believed in 'Time based self-development' where individual's positive adaptation is dependent on the maturity of the individual which is often seen through age (understanding self and future) as well as determination to change.

### Developing Character Strengths

A distinct theme derived is the presence of character strengths. The institutes unconsciously used various strategies to develop these strengths. Character strengths such as temperance, transcendence, knowledge and wisdom, courage, humanity and justice were evidently being inculcated.

**TABLE 1**

*Strategies used to develop character strength within institutional homes*

Character Strengths	Strategies Used
Temperance	Humility- Discussing child's position in the world, weaknesses, strengths and family issue. Self-regulation- Implementing rules and regulations, instilling sense of responsibility. Forgiveness- Using counsel, spirituality and familial love. Prudence- Awareness of future consequence, discussions and positive and negative punishment.
Transcendence	Gratitude- Maintaining gratitude journal, self-reflection Hope- Inculcating positive thinking, encouraging positive lens to view world, prayer Appreciation- Verbal appreciation, foster and showcase skills/interest Humour and playfulness- Play, leisure activities and sports, encouraging positive engagement and attitude with playmates Spirituality- Daily prayer time, scripture reading and optional church attendance
Justice	Fairness, leadership and citizenship- Encouraged altruistic behaviour, group activities, responsibility taking, respect for others and leadership through organised events.
Humanity	Kindness - Respecting others, motivational talks and bible reading about altruistic behaviour, social reciprocity Love- Encouraging interpersonal engagement, instilling sense of belonging and familial love Social intelligence- Counsel about Perspective taking during conflicts
Knowledge and Wisdom	Creativity - Opportunity for creative learnings through organising events, participating in competitions Curiosity- Opportunity for love for learning, identifying strengths, interest and wide range of activities

**Note.** This table demonstrates factors perceived to be contributing towards building character virtues and strengths within child care institutes.

### Challenges Hindering Process to Resilience

According to the care-givers, 'Gender sensitization and Safety Measures' which regards preventing sexual contact/assault between borders, guard against sexual content in phone, challenge to deal with topics of sexual attraction, prevent female borders from running away or having early sexual relations are stated to be a difficult issue to tackle. Another issue faced is 'Hurdles in Counselling' the adolescents. This issue arises as the care-givers believe that it is difficult to use counselling with those adolescents who come directly from adverse backgrounds. Also, a large proportion of the adolescents do not trust the counsellor due to explained breach of privacy, their need for consistency and familiarity with counsellors as part of institute family. 'Communication Gap' is another issue that may also occur in institutes due to language barriers arising from its diversity. Care-givers explained to have a hard time 'Managing Behaviours of New Borders' as they desire previous freedom without rules, regulations and restrictions while living in an enclosed institute. They show lack of discipline and are usually engulfed with desire to seek revenge, aggressive behaviour, lack of cooperation and crying. These individual also have to 'Dealing with Perceptions of New Borders' such as fear of being alone, fear of abandonment, lack of sense of belonging and security and absence of hope.

### DISCUSSION

This qualitative study was carried out with the objective to primarily find out Caregivers perception of resilient children in contextual and cultural relevance. Secondly, to identify how the institutes have helped to enhance/build perceived resilience or 'positive outcome.' Data was collected from 1 care-giver each from 5 institutes. The data were analysed through hybrid-thematic analysis. This study is conducted in a state of India, Goa to help develop a coherent body of resilience research.

#### Cultural and Contextually Relevant Conceptualization of 'Resilience'

Assessing resilience through an etic perspective assumes a specific population's benchmark, which may make another counterpart appear less resilient. Consequently, this approach may also lead to the undermining of the population's resources and alternate pathways taken to ensure psychosocial development based on their own perspective of "positive adaptation". Hence, our aim is to define resilience through an emic perspective. Thematic analysis found 4 themes. The first theme, Love for humanity, highlights pro-social behaviour. Study in a collectivistic society in northern Uganda indicated a positive relationship between resilience and pro-social behaviour among adolescents (Okotoni & Olley, 2018).

Another identified theme, "Positive Life Skills", explains caregivers' expectations of individuals to learn how to be independent, balanced in all areas of life, and responsible for themselves. Considering children's life skills at pre-admission, past adversities, and limited or lack of social support, this theme, which stresses the importance of promoting independence, balanced and responsible living, is highly contextually relevant. The provision of certain services in the institute

can help develop these life skills. As mentioned in objective 2, services such as educational/vocational support and tutoring, time and money management coaching, and skills development are being carried out to attain independent, balanced, and responsible living. Research by Nixon & Jones (2000), and Nollan (2000) has shown similar findings.

The importance of having character strength are another important theme. Gratitude, hope and humility were 3 predominantly expressed character virtues. According to Brdar et al. (2018), character strengths played a significant role in the ability to bounce back from adversity and maintain psychological well-being. Another significant theme is, optimistic attitude about the future and the ability to develop positive thinking. Niemiec et al. in the meta-analysis conducted states that hope and gratitude, were particularly strong predictors of resilience (2019).

Further, a worthy note arises from the assumed educational determinant of resilience. Although education is provided as a resource, 2 care-givers stressed that education isn't the main focus, rather "...they get education. That is not the main goal. More so they learn discipline, they have the development of skills, and they learn how to behave. That is very important."

Due to the above perceptions of resilience or 'positive outcomes' held, the institutes concerned with child development is seen to focus on building these aspect more. In such, conforming to a bench-mark definition of good outcome for positive child development from, for example, western Euro-centric research would not be contextually or culturally relevant in the Indian at risk adolescent population. Hence, it can be concluded that alternative pathways to success across cultures and contexts must be acknowledged.

### **Institutional Influences on Adolescent Pathways towards Resilience**

Data from objective 2 focused on pathways facilitated by the institute towards building or enhancing resilience in adolescents. People living in challenging contexts change when their natural supports, interventions, and policies help them, hence, as resilience research centre says 'we need to help children find and efficiently navigate and negotiate resources that are culturally and contextually meaningful' (Ungar, 2008).

Provision of education, applicative life skills, and providing opportunities for exposure and highlighting achievements is reported to harness confidence in young people and develop hope for the future. Altshuler & Poertner express that identifying strengths and helping young people to develop further strengths creates internalized protective factors that are long-lasting and increase resilience (2003). According to Waid & Knight, Education and career planning were critical factors in future success, and support here was an important part of helping them achieve self-sufficiency and independence (2008). Based on interest and, capability young people were offered different routes towards preparation for future, while some were encouraged and provided support towards higher education, others were given vocational training for future employment. Similar

results were found in a qualitative study conducted by Mishra & Sondhi, they said this could enhance confidence for the future (2018).

Similarly, in addition to the aforementioned factors, the perception of power over oneself and one's situation arises when adolescents are encouraged to make choices and participate in decision-making regarding their daily activities. This highlights that their dedication, determination in education, and approach to life can bring about changes in their future and that of their families. Essentially, the individual must acknowledge that they too hold the power to change their lives. A study finds that the adolescents who perceived higher levels of control over their lives were more likely to have higher self-esteem, which in turn was associated with greater resilience Ben-Eliyahu, A. (2019). Hence, interventions focusing on enhancing perceived control in young people in this context would be beneficial.

The findings about the care-givers attitude towards child with-in and beyond obligations leads the child to find a sense of secure belonging within the institute. As reported this ultimately, is a great factor towards positive character change. Knowing that the institute will be a support when in need even post 18 years, creates the perception of a secure base within the young person. A similar finding was mentioned by Mishra & Sondhi (2018).

In addition to acknowledging and promoting familial care-giver attitude, focusing on the care-givers approach as mentioned in Foundational tenets of Resilience helps bring awareness into a more adaptable and positive outlook, in comparison to focusing on problematic behaviour of individual is said to obtain significant results of positive outcome. When talking about conserving, accepting, committing and enlisting support, care-givers must realise that these act as fundamental starting places to build resilience with young people. They encapsulate the underlying beliefs, values and attitudes needed to put the resilience into action (Hart, Blincow & Thomas (2007).

Numerous resilience studies have consistently found that having a supportive and caring adult in the lives of young people who have experienced adversity is crucial for their success (Masten & Garmezy, 1985). This can be done by providing a supportive and trusting relationship, serving as a role model, and helping them acquire independent living skills (Rhodes, 2002). Hence, it is important that they are recognized so that the care-takers, supportive and caring adults can have a significant and lasting impact. Other common themes which have been found in the current study included social and emotional support and, mentorship with children in foster care to make them feel more secure and supported (Bell & Romano, 2015; Mitchell, 2017; Mota & Matos, 2015; Riebschleger et al., 2015). Besides the institutional measures, care-givers should also participate in workshops that help build skills necessary for working with young adults.

Another important aspect that is linked to increasing sense of belonging to institute and improved behaviour is encouraging the child to understand their place in the world (Lothe, & Heggen, 2003). Explaining this aspect, Boingboing

writes, "Pupils who have a strong sense of themselves often have more confidence and higher self-esteem (2012). They can manage situations more successfully because things are less overwhelming when they have some idea of the way they feel."

In addition to familial belonging and understanding self, perceived basic child needs emphasises on engaging in social relations. Many studies showed that peer support was positively associated with resilience in youth in foster care (Thompson, & Briggs, 2017; Kim and Kim, 2019). This highlights the potential benefits of incorporating peer support into interventions for youth in foster care.

Character strengths are seen to be fostered in the institute, but doing this in a more conscious and systematic way i.e., using evidence based programmes would help the institutes get better results. Developing character strength in institutionalised young people is particularly important to negate the negative outcomes brought on by childhood adversity. Research has found that character strength like, gratitude and hope, were strong predictors of well-being (Niemic et al, 2019; Proctor et al. 2019). Since these individuals are usually on a continuous higher risk of facing adversity post admission, developing character strengths will help them be resilient and maintain psychological well-being (Brdar et al. 2018). Current literature demonstrates that character strengths are strongly correlated with fewer externalizing problems, fewer symptoms of depression and anxiety (Park and Peterson 2008; Gillham et al. 2011; Waters 2012 ) and greater life satisfaction (Antaramian et al. 2008). Hence, it can be claimed that acknowledging and working on the character strengths of these adolescents can help boost resilience.

As evident in this paper, spirituality acts as an enforcer to develop hope, to cope, to derive strength from, increasing pro-social behaviour and facilitate character change. Spirituality development is seen to be linked to resilience research, this suggests that a stronger emphasis must be given to acknowledging and building spirituality in these adolescents (Zimmerman, & So-Kum Tang, 2017; Wallace & Raczynski, 2016; Kenney & Holton, 2018). Care-givers reported that they often encourage present/future view of the child through positive lens. Instilling positive outlook has been stated to impact resilience and act as a predictor of future expectations (Strolin-Goltzman, Kulkarni, & Trice-Black, 2016; Ma, et al.,2020).

Discipline was seen to be brought with the use of spirituality, planned routine, verbal encouragement and support, condition based learning and use of institutional resources such as shared life experiences, counselling, videos etc. Within condition based learning, we found that to correct maladaptive behaviour some care-givers engaged in deprivation to remind of future consequences of behaviour and negative punishment. This is regarded as a deficit based approach where the care-givers are concerned with avoid risks associated with negative outcomes. These risk-based interventions do not sustain change (Skodol, 2010). Care-givers expressed challenges regarding sensitisation of gender and precautionary measures related to sexual behaviour. This can be dealt appropriately by having open free discussions with care-giver, counsellor or sex



education. Further, the narrators explain that hurdles in counselling was present largely due to the lack of familiarity with counsellor and presence of break of confidentiality. This finding requests counsellors to build appropriate rapport and maintain professional ethics with this population.

It is worthy to point that Table 2 focuses on developing resilience right from the time of enrolment in the institute. Studies indicate that intervening early after exposure to negative childhood experiences (ACEs) can significantly enhance resilience. As highlighted in the Foundational tenets of resilience and perceived basic child needs, Masten (2008) emphasizes the significance of providing supportive relationships and positive experiences to children who have undergone adversity as early as possible to counteract the harmful effects of stress and promote positive adjustment.

### **LIMITATIONS**

This research was not free of hurdles during the process of sample selection. 3 Institutes that agreed to participate in the study were run by religious clergy, this limited sight to the population run by some government or private run NGO's. This was a small sampled study and a larger sample size would be beneficial. Future research should focus on the user-centric understanding on how adolescents navigate resources when within the child care institutes.

### **CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION**

To define and measure more accurately resilience growth in young people living in child care institutes, we must be aware of the trajectories of care experienced. This then could inform intervention design and evaluation for this specific context.

Further, Few of the major findings among 'what works' based on relevance to cultural and, contextual applicability, were the use of spirituality, character strengths, creating a familial environment in the institute, and importance of care-giver active involvement in building resilience. In addition to the above, understanding that they also use deficit based approach i.e., reform methods, encourages to help pave way towards awareness of evidence based alternatives because although they cover many aspects that lead to positive outcome, their lack of knowledge and resources of resilience building prevents them from achieving an increased efficiency of resiliency outcome.

Understanding the possible resources and their capacity in these institutes, care—givers, teachers and counsellors should collaborate and work towards a Positive youth development- strength based approach where they develop the adolescents profile of strengths, weaknesses, preferred way of learning and ensures that each child has a skill, talent or activity that they can depend on, harness and show-case. This single profile could help in developing strategies for coping, learning, enhance/build character strengths, self- efficacy and even motivation for academic/vocational success.

This research paper makes aware of the existing availability, and use of resources of the institutions in Goa. Hence, providing direction to finding suitable contextually and culturally appropriate enhancing interventions and to devise policies e.g., mandatory care-giver workshops.

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## Empowering Transformation: Strategies for Resilience in Suicidal Youth

**Nithila S Ranjan\***

**Case 1.** Navya was feeling low once again as Arjun did not answer her calls or call back. This was the nth time he was doing this. Since they got into a relationship two years back, he was always so caring, attentive and loving to her. This sudden change in his behaviour since a month was bothering her. She sent him many messages asking if he was upset with her or if there is something on his mind. But he was just not replying to her or answering her calls. She was so upset that she took an overdose of pills two weeks back but somehow nothing happened other than her sleeping for 18 hours. Her mother asked her why she was sleeping so much and she couldn't answer her.

**Case 2.** Rahul hated his parents' decision to come to India. His father lost his job in the US in 2023, so they were forced to return. He never liked the people he met in India when they came earlier for holidays. Now he was having to face them regularly! On top of that, he could see his parents fighting frequently over little things and he was being bullied at school. His classmates kept taunting him, asking why he's come back to India and teasing him about his US accented English. Even his teachers didn't seem to understand what he was facing. His sister was having her own problems settling down. He felt cut off from all ends and it seemed like he was running out of air to breathe. Things were falling apart.

Suicide remains a pressing global health issue, ranking as the second leading cause of death worldwide, yet it often receives unequal attention when compared to other health conditions. Defined as self-inflicted harm resulting in death, suicide arises from a complex interplay of factors, defying simple explanations. While it affects individuals of all ages, its impact is particularly profound on younger generations, robbing them of years of potential life. This underscores

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the urgency of addressing the challenges faced by young people, especially when navigating unfamiliar difficulties.

Official statistics in India reveal that approximately one-third of suicides occur among young individuals aged 18 to 29 years. In 2022, India witnessed a surge in suicide rates, with 1.71 lakh individuals taking their own lives, resulting in a rate of 12.4 per 1,00,000 people. However, these statistics are likely an underestimation due to systemic issues such as insufficient registration systems and societal stigma.

Young individuals, particularly those under 30, constitute a significant proportion of suicide victims, with 41% of all suicides occurring in this age group. Alarming, suicide stands as the primary cause of mortality among young women in India, emphasizing a critical societal concern. Every eight minutes, a young life is lost to suicide in India, posing a substantial loss to families, the economy, and the nation's future.

A recent examination of adolescent suicides in India reveals prevalent risk factors, including mental health issues (54%), negative family dynamics or trauma (36%), academic pressure (23%), social and lifestyle factors (20%), violence exposure (22%), economic hardship (9.1%), and relationship challenges (9%). Additionally, youth suicide is linked to experiences of physical and sexual abuse, academic failures, intergenerational conflicts, parental expectations, and caste-based discrimination.

While suicide is commonly perceived as a preventable cause of death, there is limited evidence to suggest that our translational capabilities are adequate for effective prevention. To systematically prevent such a fatal behavior, it becomes imperative to comprehend an individual's susceptibility to engaging in it.

Despite significant strides in technology and science, research into suicide has progressed slowly in terms of clinical application, largely due to the intricate neural mechanisms and subjective experiences that underlie this complex human behavior.

Research led by Dr. Vikram Patel of Harvard Medical School and Dr. Soumitra Pathare from the Centre for Mental Health Law and Policy in Pune reveals alarming statistics: suicide rates among 15-29-year-old Indian men are twice the global average, while rates among young Indian women are nearly six times as high! An article published in the May 2023 edition of 'SSM-Mental Health,' a reputable medical journal, sheds light on the experiences of suicide attempt survivors. It underscores that "interpersonal stressors," particularly involving partners or family members (especially parents), are significant contributors to suicide risk.

Dr. Shetty, another researcher, highlights that "complex psychopathology" drives youth suicides. Teenagers facing multiple challenges, such as a breakup, financial issues, and parental divorce, are at heightened risk. These overlapping stressors compound psychological distress, increasing the likelihood of suicidal behavior.

### **Warning signs are cause for concern:**

Physical changes in appearance / poor hygiene

Social withdrawal and self-isolation

Sudden drop in grades/losing interest in going to work

Preoccupation with death or talking about suicide

Talking about having nothing to live for or feeling hopeless

Self-harm behaviors such as cutting, burning

Increase in alcohol or drug use

Risky or reckless behaviors (unsafe sex /reckless driving)

Researching suicide methods and/or acquiring weapons/pills/rope/poison.

Suicidal experiences encompass a spectrum ranging from suicidal thoughts, tendencies, urges, compulsions, and plans to behaviors, attempts, and ultimately death by suicide. This global concern has prompted substantial efforts in suicide prevention measures worldwide. Epidemiological, public health, and psychological endeavors have been dedicated to identifying factors associated with an increased risk of suicide. For instance, being male, unemployed, experiencing relationship problems, and facing financial difficulties are all factors that can contribute to suicidal thoughts and behaviors, often accumulating in their impact.

Psychologically, experiencing social isolation, a lack of control over mental and physical health issues, perceiving a bleak future, and feeling trapped can serve as precursors to various suicidal experiences. Additionally, childhood trauma has been identified as a significant predictor of suicide attempts in individuals with a schizophrenia spectrum disorder, as indicated by a study.

**Other risk factors:**

Mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, and other mood disorders

Alcohol and substance use

Impulsive behaviors

History of trauma or abuse

Family history of suicide

Previous suicide attempt(s).

In 2022, examination failure led 2,095 individuals to resort to suicide in India. The prevailing education system, which prioritizes scoring marks and relies on a single-point examination system, combined with parental pressure and high personal expectations, contributes significantly to these tragedies. The intense competition to secure college admissions, amplified by media attention on results and the stigma associated with failure, compounds the emotional burden. Months of accumulated pressure and emotions culminate in a highly distressing state for many individuals. Furthermore, the demands of competitive examinations have pushed numerous students to their breaking point. Sadly, even after securing seats in prestigious professional colleges, academic pressures continue to drive individuals to suicide.

Alcohol and substance use are recognized as significant risk factors for youth suicides. Over the past two decades, there has been a notable rise in internet usage among young individuals. A meta-analysis conducted across 19 states in India

revealed that approximately 20% of college students are addicted to the internet. Furthermore, one-third of young people report being cyber-bullied, with one-third of this subset expressing suicidal tendencies. Research also suggests that teens who spend more than two hours a day on social media platforms are at increased risk of suicidal thoughts and behaviors.

The media exerts a powerful influence on vulnerable young individuals, with sensational reporting of suicide, especially involving celebrities, often leading to a surge in suicidal behavior. For instance, following the tragic death of a well-known young male actor in India, there was a notable spike in Google searches for "how to commit suicide." Such incidents underscore the need for responsible and sensitive reporting on suicide to mitigate its harmful effects on susceptible populations.

Sociocultural factors contribute to suicide among young girls and women, including arranged and early marriages, early motherhood, low social status, domestic violence, gender discrimination, and economic dependence. Rigid gender roles and discrimination further amplify the risk. These factors emphasize the importance of addressing societal norms and promoting gender equality to prevent suicides in this demographic.

Cognitive states such as 'rumination', 'entrapment', 'burdensomeness', 'defeat', and 'hopelessness' were identified in a study, with rumination being the most prevalent and often accompanied by feelings of anxiety and sadness. Participants commonly reported experiencing multiple emotions and thoughts simultaneously.

A recent study revealed that high peer victimization significantly increased the likelihood of suicidality, regardless of resilience levels, including among youth with high resilience scores. This underlines the critical role of peer victimization as a risk factor and its impact on the developmental journey of children and adolescents. The findings highlight the necessity for effective interventions aimed at preventing peer victimization.

Emotion dysregulation is strongly linked to an increased likelihood of engaging in risky behaviors, including deliberate self-harm and alcohol use. Individuals with poor emotion regulation often struggle to tolerate distress, and their behavior is frequently driven by a desire to escape from painful experiences. Paradoxically, emotion dysregulation may diminish an individual's acquired capability for suicide. Inconsistent research findings may stem from variations in aspects of emotion regulation, such as the adoption of maladaptive strategies like self-harm, the ability to flexibly switch between regulation strategies, and confidence in coping with diverse stressors.

Over time, there has been a notable rise in Non-Suicidal Self-Injury (NSSI) and suicidal behaviors among the youth. Logistic regression analysis demonstrated that the risk of Non-Suicidal Self-Injury was significantly linked to factors like higher income, living alone, family-related stress, and psychological distress. Among individuals with a history of NSSI, the likelihood of suicidal ideation was significantly heightened by female gender, economic stress, and psychological distress, while NSSI severity did not show a significant association.



While the methods utilized in NSSI may occasionally resemble those seen in suicide attempts—such as wrist cutting with a razor blade—it's important to note that NSSI is fundamentally different as it lacks the intent to cause death. Patients often affirm this lack of intent, or it can be inferred from their consistent use of methods not intended to be lethal. However, despite the absence of immediate lethality, engaging in NSSI is associated with an increased risk of both future suicide attempts and completed suicide.

The most prevalent forms of NSSI encompass cutting or puncturing the skin using sharp objects such as knives, razor blades, or needles. Additionally, burning the skin, often with a cigarette, scratching, and self-hitting are commonly observed behaviors.

Non-suicidal self-injury typically begins during early adolescence and affects both genders equally. Its trajectory beyond young adulthood remains uncertain, although there tends to be a decline in frequency over time. Individuals may engage in self-injury as a coping mechanism to alleviate distress, resolve interpersonal conflicts, self-punish for perceived shortcomings, or signal a need for support or assistance.

### **WHAT FACTORS CAN REDUCE SUICIDE RISK?**

Resilience, a concept gaining traction in recent times, focuses on how individuals cope with unexpected challenges. It embodies the ability to withstand stress, bounce back to normalcy, and thrive amidst adversity. Davidson and Connor emphasize resilience as the capacity to maintain both biological and psychological balance in perilous situations, highlighting active engagement with one's environment over mere endurance.

Resilience encompasses multiple facets: firstly, it denotes the individuals' ability to confront and cope with challenges effectively. Secondly, it fosters a sense of lightness and comfort amidst adversity. Moreover, resilience manifests as the capacity to repair and overcome adversity, drawing upon diverse levels of functioning. Ultimately, it stands as a remarkable strength enabling individuals to surmount difficulties. In today's landscape, resilience holds a prominent position in both mental health and evolutionary psychology disciplines.

Those with high resilience can effectively navigate adversity, while those with lower resilience may resort to less adaptive coping strategies, such as withdrawal or passivity. As a protective factor, resilience helps buffer the impact of stressful events.

Research studies by Karami et al. found that extroversion and resilience traits are negatively associated with attitudes toward suicide. Esfandiari et al. showed that resilience training reduces stress symptoms and self-harm among soldiers. Sher suggests focusing on enhancing stress resilience through psychosocial and pharmacological interventions to reduce suicidal risk in psychiatric patients. Izadinia et al. demonstrated a negative relationship between suicidal thoughts and resilience, with depression being the strongest predictor of suicidal thoughts, followed by anxiety, mental health, resilience, and daily stress.

In another study, Heisel and Flett described resilience as part of Meaning in Life. Their research found that initially, Meaning in Life had a negative connection

with the onset or worsening of suicidal thoughts over time, even after considering risk factors. They also discovered that Meaning in Life plays a crucial role in promoting mental well-being and potentially builds resilience against suicidal thoughts in the future.

Similarly, Kleiman and Beaver's study explored life meaning as a factor in resisting suicide. They concluded that actively seeking meaning in life, rather than just having it, mediated the relationship between certain psychological factors and suicidal thoughts. These findings suggest that interventions focusing on finding meaning in life could potentially reduce the risk of suicide.

## CONCLUSION

Research findings affirm the importance of fostering resilience to alleviate mental health challenges. Analysis of individual resilience factors reveals that young individuals with strong support in close relationships often display lower suicidal risk. Family and parental support, frequently studied in bullying and suicide research, emerge as critical protective factors. Victims lacking family support are more vulnerable to suicidal ideation, whereas those with strong family bonds and adequate social support are less likely to contemplate suicide, even when victimized.

Preliminary evidence suggests that Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Behavioral Psychotherapy may lower the occurrence of suicide attempts among depressed outpatients. In addition to medical interventions for those with chronic symptoms, therapeutic approaches such as Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Interpersonal Therapy (IPT), and Psychodynamic Therapy have shown efficacy in addressing suicidal ideation and providing coping strategies. Emerging techniques like Mindfulness and Meditation have also demonstrated effectiveness in enhancing coping skills.

These therapies promote self-awareness, challenge negative beliefs and thought patterns, regulate emotions, and improve distress tolerance. Clients like Navya and Rahul report that acceptance without distress reduced their suffering, while hope and support motivated them to navigate significant life changes and develop healthier relationships with themselves, ultimately reducing suicidal feelings.

Emotion regulation, the process shaping emotional experience and expression, is intricately linked to resilience, given the emotional nature of adversity. Extensive evidence highlights a positive connection between effective emotion regulation and psychological resilience, evident across diverse populations, including individuals facing mental health challenges, traumas, and physical ailments.

Emotion regulation and self-reliance, key intra-personal resilience factors, are linked to reduced suicidality risk, enriching our understanding of individual-level resilience in suicide research.

Young people can benefit from learning problem-solving, impulse control, and emotional regulation skills while fostering help-seeking behavior. Early identification of mental distress and providing care in a youth-friendly environment are crucial.

Research suggests that resilience encompasses various psychological traits such as stoicism, the ability to bounce back from adversity, coping skills, perseverance, emotional stability, defence mechanisms, and personal resources that help mitigate the impact of internal and external stressors on severe mental health issues. Taking risks, supported by friends, family, and mental health professionals, is viewed as an essential aspect of resilience.

Improving family dynamics through the reduction of domestic violence and alcohol consumption, along with providing economic support to those in need, has been demonstrated to decrease suicidal behavior. Educational reforms, including alternative assessment methods and opportunities to explore individual potential, are imperative. Addressing societal stigma and discrimination based on caste, religion, and sexuality is essential. Achieving these goals requires political will, intersectoral collaboration, commitment, and active community involvement.

The Indian Ministry of Health's 2022-launched National Suicide Prevention Strategy aims to reduce suicides by 10% by 2030, emphasizing inter-sectoral collaboration among health, education, information, and social welfare sectors. Successful implementation relies on nationwide dissemination, adequate budgeting, and concerted efforts at all levels. Suicide prevention requires a holistic approach addressing mental health, social support, and societal factors.

Equipping young individuals with problem-solving, impulse control, and emotional regulation skills, alongside promoting help-seeking behavior, is essential. Early identification of mental distress and youth-friendly mental health care can prevent suicidal behavior.

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**Theme - 7**  
**Gratitude Practice and Forgiveness**  
**for Subjective Well-being /**  
**Self Esteem**

## Gratitude Cultivation : Nurturing Self Esteem in Adolescence

Jahnabi Sharma\*

### ABSTRACT

*In recent times, the issue of self-esteem among adolescents has garnered increasing concern. The interplay of social and environmental influences has contributed to the development of feelings of hopelessness and unworthiness among teenagers. However, emerging evidence suggests that positive psychology practices, such as gratitude, can play a pivotal role in mitigating these negative effects. This opinion paper seeks to delve into the version of self being incorporated by young individuals and its profound influence on shaping their belief systems. By examining the role of social and environmental factors in shaping adolescent self-esteem, as well as the efficacy of positive psychology interventions, its aim is to shed light on potential pathways for fostering a healthier sense of self-worth among teenagers.*

**Keywords** – Gratitude, Self Esteem, Positive Psychology, Adolescence, Psychological Wellbeing.

*“The self has a lot to reveal. When the mind starts to think it has run out of all potentials and change is inevitable, the self makes its own discovery “*

We as human beings encompass the concept of “self”. For many of us the self-constitutes our identity, achievement, employment, and all other external institutions and achievements we are part of. The answer to the question “what makes us human?” could have a diverse range of responses. And each response reflects the kind of experiences we have come across, lived, and interactions we had in our life. Some may say it is our social environment, livelihood, gatherings that gives us the sense of being human. Others can think of the high functioning capacities that allows us to perform the executive functions like – decision making, problem solving, analysing etc.

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It is almost very unusual that someone would define self through the lens of emotional consciousness or individual awareness and acceptance. Self-concept is a relevant key term in this regard. Knowing how one defines oneself, how one is aware of their potential and then what value they put to themselves based on the awareness. It is all about perspectives and the lens we view ourselves from.

We all have heard the term gratitude or being grateful about certain things. We use it very often in our day-to-day life. Expressing gratitude or being thankful is much more than just merely acknowledging something or someone in life. However, from people across the world, gratitude may mean different things originating from different context.

Gratitude has been defined as a state and a trait in the literature, Chen and Kee (2008); Emmons et al. (2003); Watkins et al. (2003). As a state, gratitude can be conceptualized as a subjective feeling of wonder, thankfulness, and appreciation for life (Emmons and Shelton 2002). Gratitude has been defined as a state and a trait in the literature (e.g. Chen and Kee 2008; Emmons et al. (2003); Watkins et al. (2003). As a state, gratitude can be conceptualized as a subjective feeling of wonder, thankfulness, and appreciation for life (Emmons and Shelton 2002). Gratitude has been defined as a state and a trait in literature (Chen and Kee 2008; Emmons et al. 2003; Watkins et al. 2003). As a state gratitude can be conceptualized as a subjective feeling of wonder, thankfulness and appreciation for life (Emmons and Shelton 2002). While there has been a lot of discussions about gratitude being a trait or a learned behavior, here we will talk about how gratitude is an emotion like every other human emotions and as essential for interpersonal communication. Expression of gratitude is more likely to be associated with positive outcome and also contributing to a person's wellbeing. Wellbeing here refers to overall psychological and physical state of optimum health. Psychological Wellbeing, in this context is of certain relevance. It refers to the psychological and emotional state, encompassing good mental health and positive states such as happiness and satisfaction and prosocial behaviours including – helping, co-operating, sharing, etc.

To support this view, there have been many researchers conducted worldwide that eventually associates gratitude in the realm of positive psychology. Positive psychology a branch of psychology that works on the thoughts, ideas and behaviour of individuals highlighting their strengths, abilities that are specific to each individual. In discussing gratitude, it is often overlooked that expressing gratitude towards oneself and others can lead to feelings of worthiness and significantly enhance personal growth and confidence. Several studies have underscored the connection and correlation between gratitude expression and these positive psychological outcomes.

- In a study named “Effect of self-esteem and Gratitude on Personal Growth among Indian students” conducted in 2021, gratitude was found to be significantly and positively correlated with personal growth. In another study conducted in 2015 stated that, there was specific indirect effect of gratitude on life satisfaction via social support among emerging adults.
- A study named “Self-esteem mediates the relationship between dispositional gratitude and wellbeing”, found that higher levels of dispositional gratitude

were associated with higher levels of flourishing, lower levels of depression, and less suicidal ideation. These results are consistent with previous research on the relationship between gratitude and well-being (Emmons and McCullough, 2003, Wood et al., 2010).

- In a recent study named – “Distinct associations between gratitude, self-esteem, optimism with subjective and psychological wellbeing among Japanese individuals (March 2024) showed that gratitude promotes prosocial behaviours such as helping impact meaning in life and improve self-acceptance. In addition, it examined how gratitude, self-esteem, and optimism shape the link between everyday life momentary affective states and day satisfaction evaluations.

Positive psychology, as a concept fosters the worthiness within us or resent in our life. It builds awareness or shifts our focus. The practice of gratitude holds significant benefits for both adolescents and adults, fostering life satisfaction and contentment. Recognized as a key to a better life, gratitude is intertwined with our self-image, a determinant in our success and failure. Understanding our true selves necessitates aligning our abilities with this self-image consistently.

Here, the focus is to throw some light on the events and circumstances that adolescence from the age group of ( 15-19) experience . Most of their concerns are seen revolving around similar themes, as seen during interaction with school and college students.

**Case Studies** - These are few instances in which the entire concept of gratitude was applied into practice.

In Counselling practice, it was noted that adolescents aged 17-19 exhibited notable self-esteem issues and lacked self-confidence. These challenges were attributed to internal cognitions and belief systems, having self-doubts and self-disregard. an average age group of 15-19, adolescence go through a period of transformation both physically, psychologically and socially. During this period of alterations, there are various etiologies that contributes to the stress and strain significant in them. It has been observed that the essence of self-concept and self-esteem explained above , are crucial matter that needs to be highlighted here. Adolescence psycho -social development are mostly influenced by external factors rather than something that can be within an individual. This is because most adolescence are preoccupied with a belief system about their own selves. They develop notions about themselves on the basis of their “ ideal self”. An ideal self is something that an individual wants to become and envisions oneself as becoming or trying to possess those attributes in them .

In most cases it is observed that teenagers usually socialize with the intention of being included by their peers in their groups . This inturn has a lot to do with their self image . A view of “ how we think people expects us to behave, act or think of us “ , is embedded in their conviction. As an outcome it ends up affecting their self image and psychological wellbeing raising self doubts ,remaining dissatisfied and finding no purpose in life .

Gratitude as an aspect and principle of positive psychology , was observed to be closely related and directly proportional to ones own self image , as obtained



from the previous studies.

**Methodology** - Before implementing gratitude principles into practice, an assessment (pre-test) was conducted using Gratitude Questionnaire, Psychological Wellbeing Scale and Rosenberg self esteem scale to understand where their self esteem and gratitude level stands, and track their psychological health. This indicated their level of gratitude towards oneself and others, reflecting the individual's assessment of their self worth and self esteem. Around 15 adolescence participated in this while during the session ranging from age group of - 15-17. It was however observed that adolescence exhibited below average self esteem and a poor gratitude practice which did not maintain their optimal level of psychological wellbeing as discussed in the article. Subsequent counselling sessions incorporated positive psychology principles, specifically gratitude practices such as –

- Gratitude journaling
- Daily reflections on what they were thankful for
- Gratitude jar
- Gratitude prompts
- Gratitude letter/ email.

Additionally, positive affirmations, self care vision boards and expression of self appreciation were integrated to foster an environment of improved self esteem and confidence.

Following the post-test, it became evident that individuals began to acknowledge their social support and themselves to a certain extent, expressing gratitude and elevating their self confidence to a slightly higher level. This is because they became more self and emotionally aware of themselves, their strengths and weaknesses and focused more on the growth mindset rather than being comfortable and hanging within the comfort zone.

If we take from the Morality as Cooperation model where gratitude is viewed in terms of exchange or reciprocity category. The exchange is defined as reciprocating cooperation and so as to benefit both the sides and those participating in this model ensures trust, patience, forgiveness towards each other by expressing gratefulness. This applies to acknowledging efforts or things so as to build a mutual faith and expressing and receiving thankfulness enhancing self esteem and gathering social support. Again, viewing it from the Moral Sentiments approach, it is believed that gratitude itself is a quality in people that makes them kind. People tend to express gratitude to those who are genuine with their intentions and are more altruistic in nature, while taking it further to the Cognitive Emotion Theory, gratitude is viewed intrinsic and something that is internal within all human beings and is nothing that requires and force or pressure. If pressure is needed, it is not gratitude. This aligns with what people in their life follow at times. Coming to the counselling experience, gratitude practice was more fruitful with adolescence who were kind enough to themselves and thus acknowledged and expressed gratitude to the "self", than those who just merely forced this concept on themselves.

**Implications** - In conclusion, understanding the dynamics of adolescent self-esteem and the factors that influence it is crucial for promoting mental well-being among young individuals. This opinion paper throws light on the significance of positive psychology practices, particularly gratitude, that can empower adolescents to cultivate a more resilient and positive sense of self, ultimately leading to improved overall psychological functioning.

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## Effect of App based Gratitude Intervention on Connectedness with Nature and Self Esteem among College Goers

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** The present study explores the effect of app-based gratitude journaling on Connectedness with Nature (CwN) and Self Esteem (SE). Journaling and practising gratitude are evident based positive psychological practises responsible for shaping one's self concept and lifestyle orientation like spending time in nature, adopting healthy diet, regular exercise, etc. Journaling, through the medium of diverse and user-friendly mobile phone apps, has become a prominent form of self-care practice amongst urban college goers as it helps them to keep track of their emotions and thoughts which are pivotal in augmenting their daily wellbeing. **Objectives:** The present study aims to examine the effect of app-based gratitude journaling on SE and CwN amongst college going individuals. **Methodology:** A voluntary sample of 20 college goers aged between 19 to 25 years of age, participated in the study for 15 days during which they daily practised gratitude by journaling about it using the mobile phone app named Presently. The participants' responded to standardized SE and CwN measures twice- before and after the duration of gratitude practice. A non-parametric pre-test post-test design was utilized to compare the effect of gratitude journaling on the SE and CwN scores. **Findings:** Wilcoxon Signed Rank Tests revealed that regular journaling about gratitude had a statistically significant improvement in CwN scores. The study emphasizes on encouraging technology aided gratitude practice amongst the vulnerable college goers for better health related outcomes.

**Keywords:** Connectedness to Nature, Gratitude, Self-Esteem, College Students, App-based Journaling.

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The contemporary lifestyle, especially among college students, is often associated with high levels of stress and disconnection from nature. However, emerging positive psychological practices such as gratitude journaling offer promising avenues for enhancing overall well-being. Gratitude, defined as a positive emotion directed towards someone or something outside oneself, has been linked with various psychological benefits including increased self-esteem and connectedness with nature (Wood et al., 2010; Emmons & Mishra, 2011).

Studies have shown that individuals who exhibit higher levels of gratitude tend to report greater connectedness with nature (Howell et al., 2011). This connection is not surprising given that gratitude often involves an appreciation for the beauty and abundance of the natural world, fostering a sense of interconnectedness with the environment (Howell et al., 2011). Furthermore, gratitude interventions have been found to increase feelings of connectedness with nature, suggesting a bidirectional relationship between gratitude and nature-relatedness (Emmons & Mishra, 2011). For instance, individuals who participated in a gratitude intervention reported greater feelings of awe and reverence towards nature, leading to enhanced connectedness with the natural world (Emmons & Mishra, 2011). These findings highlight the potential synergistic effects of gratitude practices on both psychological well-being and environmental attitudes.

Moreover, recent advancements in technology have facilitated the integration of gratitude practices into everyday life through mobile applications, making it more accessible and convenient for individuals, particularly college students, to engage in such practices (Bono et al., 2013).

The contemporary landscape of positive psychology has witnessed a surge in interventions aimed at cultivating gratitude, a powerful emotion associated with numerous psychological benefits (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Emmons & Stern, 2013). Gratitude exercises, such as journaling and letter writing, have garnered attention for their potential to enhance mental well-being (Davis et al., 2016; Dickens, 2017). Meta-analytic evidence suggests that while these interventions yield modest improvements in mental health outcomes, their effects are variable and may depend on factors such as intervention duration and participant distress levels (Bohlmeijer et al., 2022).

In response to the limitations of traditional gratitude interventions, researchers have explored the feasibility of delivering gratitude interventions through digital platforms, particularly mobile applications (mHealth) (Bidargaddi et al., 2018; Mohr et al., 2010; Olf, 2015; Wei et al., 2020). These platforms offer unique advantages, including accessibility, scalability, and the incorporation of persuasive elements to enhance user engagement (Olf, 2015). Several studies have investigated the efficacy of app-based gratitude interventions in diverse populations, ranging from women to younger children and high school students (Fuller-Tyszkiewicz et al., 2019; Lau et al., 2020; Bono et al., 2020). For instance, Lau et al. (2020) found that a gratitude app improved mental health outcomes in younger children, highlighting its potential as a preventive tool for promoting well-being from an early age.

Despite the promising findings, the literature on app-based gratitude interventions remains sparse, particularly concerning their effectiveness in the

general public without additional guidance (Heckendorf et al., 2019). Further research is warranted to elucidate the mechanisms underlying the therapeutic effects of these interventions and to identify strategies for optimizing their impact on diverse populations.

Despite the growing popularity of gratitude journaling apps among college students, empirical evidence regarding their effectiveness in promoting connectedness with nature and self-esteem remains limited. Therefore, the present study aims to address this gap by investigating the impact of an app-based gratitude intervention on connectedness with nature and self-esteem among college goers.

## METHODS

**Participants:** A voluntary sample of 20 college students aged between 19 to 25 years ( $M = 21.4$ ,  $SD = 1.92$ ) from Amity University, Haryana, participated in the study.

**Procedure:** Participants engaged in a 15-day gratitude journaling intervention using the mobile app named "Presently". Each day, participants recorded three things they were grateful for using the app. Before and after the intervention period, participants completed standardized measures of self-esteem and connectedness with nature.

**Measures:** Self-esteem was assessed using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), and connectedness with nature was measured using the Nature Relatedness Scale (Nisbet et al., 2009).

**Data Analysis:** A non-parametric Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test was conducted to compare pre-test and post-test scores of self-esteem and connectedness with nature.

## RESULTS

**Table 1: Mean difference in Self Esteem before and after Gratitude intervention**

Self-Esteem Scores	N	Mean	SD	W
Pre-Test	20	15.65	1.92	0.08
Post-Test		15.65	2.20	

*W value not significant at 0.05 level of significance.*

**Table 2 Mean difference in Connectedness with Nature before and after Gratitude intervention**

Connectedness with Nature Scores	N	Mean	SD	W
Pre-Test	20	35.40	4.53	4.00**
Post-Test		46.85	3.73	

The Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test revealed a statistically significant improvement in connectedness with nature scores after the 15-day gratitude journaling intervention ( $Z = -2.36$ ,  $p < .05$ ). However, no significant change was observed in self-esteem scores ( $Z = -1.21$ ,  $p > .05$ ).

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study support the effectiveness of app-based gratitude journaling in enhancing connectedness with nature among college students. This aligns with previous research suggesting that gratitude practices promote a greater appreciation for the natural environment (Howell et al., 2011). Consistent with previous research (Howell et al., 2011), the results demonstrate that app-based gratitude interventions can effectively enhance connectedness with nature among college students. By encouraging participants to reflect on and express gratitude for the natural world, these interventions foster a deeper appreciation for the environment, thereby promoting feelings of connectedness and stewardship. Additionally, the effectiveness of app-based gratitude interventions may be enhanced by incorporating elements that promote both connectedness with nature and self-esteem. For example, interventions could include guided mindfulness exercises in natural settings or activities that encourage participants to reflect on their personal strengths and achievements. By addressing multiple facets of well-being simultaneously, these integrated interventions may yield more robust and lasting effects.

However, the non-significant change in self-esteem scores contradicts some prior findings (Kleiman et al., 2013). This inconsistency may be attributed to the relatively short duration of the intervention or the specific sample characteristics. The non-significant change in self-esteem scores raises questions about the mechanisms through which app-based gratitude interventions operate. Future research should explore potential moderators and mediators of the relationship between gratitude practices and self-esteem to provide a more comprehensive understanding of their effects.

Moreover, the effectiveness of app-based gratitude interventions may vary depending on individual differences and contextual factors. For example, Heckendorf et al. (2019) found that the combination of a gratitude app with online training and human support was particularly beneficial for adults with elevated levels of repetitive negative thinking. This underscores the importance of tailoring interventions to meet the unique needs of diverse populations and integrating multiple components to enhance their efficacy.

Despite the promising findings, several limitations should be acknowledged. The small sample size and short duration of the intervention limit the generalizability of the results. Additionally, the use of self-report measures may introduce response biases, warranting caution in interpreting the findings. Future research should address these limitations by employing larger samples, longer intervention periods, and objective outcome measures to validate the observed effects.

In conclusion, app-based gratitude interventions hold promise as a convenient and accessible tool for promoting connectedness with nature and potentially enhancing overall well-being among college students. However, further research is needed to elucidate the underlying mechanisms, optimize intervention strategies, and evaluate their effectiveness in diverse populations.

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## Different Paradigms of Forgiveness

**Dr. Vandana Singh\* & Dr. Kriti Vyas\*\***

Forgiveness is the process of responding in a particular way to someone who has done something terrible or hurt you in some way. Forgiving someone is a critical step in self-healing, self-empowerment, and self-liberation. In the literature, forgiveness has been understood as an emotional process, but currently, in the field of positive psychology, the concept of forgiveness has been widely researched, and many intervention programs have been designed to make forgiveness more of a cognitive concept. Few researchers also talk about forgiveness as a learned behavior, and it can be cultivated in children through practice.

Forgiveness is a choice to deal with the emotions one experiences after the hurt to attain eternal peace. Self-forgiveness is also given importance in the literature, as one needs to be kind to oneself before forgiving others. Concepts like self-forgiveness generate and help us understand concepts like compassion, gratitude, self-love, etc.

In this chapter, forgiveness will be understood as a concept with the help of various theories. Paradigm shifts related to forgiveness will be discussed in detail. Along with benefits of forgiveness, Intervention programs dealing with stress emerging from or due to forgiveness would be included in the chapter.

*To Err is human, to forgive divine - Alexander Pope.*

It is always a choice for human beings to choose between resentments, old triggers, and anger or forgiveness, which can act as a balm to your heart, full of complaints against others. Forgiveness can be seen as a gift to yourself or others through which you can invest in your peaceful future.

Each year, the first Sunday of August is celebrated as World Forgiveness Day. There is a worldwide forgiveness alliance that starts one initiative each year. Desmond tutu has sponsored one of the initiatives of this alliance in which

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anyone can participate by choosing one person or any incident and can try to forgive.

## WHAT IS FORGIVENESS AND ITS TYPES

**“With each act of forgiveness, whether small or great, we move toward wholeness.”** Desmond & Mpho Tutu, *The Book of Forgiving*

A voluntary capacity of human beings to release feelings of indignation, bitterness, anger, and let go the desire for vengeance and retribution towards another person can be called as forgiveness. According to evolutionary science, revenge and forgiveness are two social instincts given to us in equal capacities in natural selection to promote forgiveness and reduce the vengefulness in the world (McCullough, 2008).

Psychologists try to study Forgiveness as a psychological construct in detail by emphasizing various aspects of it. Most psychologists call it a situational response. Some call it a skill that anyone can acquire. Few of them emphasize it being part of personality and call it a trait of forgiveness. Many factors can initiate forgiveness, like a change in the cognition or behavior of another party. It can be a willful decision or a spiritual aspect of a person. There is a need to look at the different paradigms emphasizing different aspects of forgiveness to understand this concept as a whole.

According to Hall and Fincham (2005), forgiveness can be of three different types - forgiving others, forgiving self, and asking/seeking forgiveness.

### Forgiving others

Forgiving others means letting go of the feelings of hurt, bitterness, indignation, and disappointment toward the offenders. It is a process of releasing negative emotions, reframing one's outlook toward the transgressor, and moving toward healing (LMFT, 2023; Web et al., 2013). Forgiving others can be seen as a critical step in self-healing, empowerment, and liberation, as forgiving someone who has done us harm can keep us happy and healthy. However, forgiving others is not absolving, exculpating, or clearing the wrong action, or forgetting about it. Moreover, it is also not reconciliation or rapprochement.

### Forgiving self

Forgiving oneself also requires acknowledging and releasing negative, hurtful feelings, reframing thoughts, and developing feelings of empathy, compassion, and care. However, self-forgiveness moves one step forward, focusing on self-responsibility, self-awareness, and self-compassion (Krentzman, 2018). It is more complex than forgiving others (Wilson et al., 2008).

We all know that feeling we experience when we have done something wrong to someone, and we feel churning in our stomach; it could be related to hurting someone's feelings, copying in an exam, or cheating to our partner. We are never easy with ourselves when it comes to self-forgiveness. If we talk about self-forgiveness, it is an -ongoing process that requires a lot of self-reflection and emotional work (Woodyatt, Worthington, Wenzel, & Griffin, 2017) and requires a lot of balance between taking responsibility for what you have done and maintaining a positive sense of self. The first to offer a concrete psychological

definition of self-forgiveness as “a willingness to abandon self-resentment in the face of one’s acknowledged objective wrong, while fostering compassion, generosity, and love toward oneself” was offered by Enright and the Human Development Study Group (1996) where they have also highlighted three essential pillars of self - forgiveness -

- a. **Releasing self-directed negative emotion:** Painful and negative emotions always overwhelm us whenever we do anything wrong or against the accepted norms, and we start tormenting ourselves over this. Self-forgiveness does not mean that we will stop feeling bad about ourselves together because these negative emotions are part of the process as they motivate us to make things right (Woodyatt et al., 2017)
- b. **Cultivating self-directed positive emotions:** In the next step of the process of self - forgiveness, we need to start practicing self - compassion i.e., fostering positive views about ourselves where we can acknowledge that we are humans and can make mistakes.
- c. **Acknowledging and accepting responsibility:** for true self-forgiveness, we must recognize the “wrongness” in our actions with a promise of not repeating it. Cornish and Wade (2015) have discussed 4 Rs i.e., Responsibility, remorse, restoration, and renewal. So, after taking responsibility and feeling bad about what we have done, we have to take action to repair what we have harmed, like relationships, and then we can achieve renewed self-respect and self-compassion.

There are many cases where Self - forgiveness cannot be the focus while counseling if you are dealing with a victim of sexual assault, trying for self - forgiveness can induce more feelings of self-blame or the, in the cases of domestic violence, even after taking responsibility for their action, a person can continue to hurt their partner and for such cases self - forgiveness is not the answer.

Griffin, Worthington, Bell, and Davis (2017) have given two fundamental aims of the self - the forgiveness process, first taking ownership of your action and secondly affirming your value and worth. These two aims were further broken down into eight steps -

1. Identify the event for which you think you need to forgive yourself.
2. In the second step, you have to take into account your responsibility
3. Accept and allow the negative emotions
4. Notice thoughts and feelings and try to introspect your feelings and behaviors.
5. Make amends and try to repair things and relationships
6. Recommit to your values with the promise of not repeating the harm again
7. Nurture compassion for yourself
8. Let go of the negative feelings and resentments which is no longer useful

### Seeking forgiveness

Forgiveness is a complex and beneficial process that requires sustained effort and commitment. Most of the time, we find ourselves in a situation where we have

done something wrong, and we need to be forgiven, and it becomes difficult for us to ask for forgiveness and accept our mistake.

- a. One forgiveness-seeking model, known as CONFESSing and proposed by Worthington in 2003, outlines seven elements for effectively communicating when one has made a mistake.
- b. C: Confession without an excuse in which the client confesses about what they did wrong and name the wrongdoing specifically.
- c. O: Offer a sincere apology by acknowledging responsibility and expressing genuine remorse and repentance.
- d. N: Note the pain of the other person. This client tries to understand the pain of another person and tries to name it along with feeling empathy for the person.
- e. F: Forever value the relationship. Prioritizing conflict resolution over winning or being right is crucial, and being willing to make necessary sacrifices to resolve relationship difficulties.
- f. E: Equalize through restitution. The individual is encouraged to take actions to make amends for their wrongdoing, without explicitly suggesting specific forms of restitution. Recognizing that love is subjective and people value different expressions of it, the person must be open to negotiating a comparable resolution
- g. S: Say we will never do it again. And then of course the person has to promise not to repeat the same mistake again.
- h. S: Seek forgiveness by actually asking for it from another person.
- i. Another method of seeking forgiveness is to recall a time when we were forgiven and being grateful for the same.

## **DIFFERENT PARADIGMS OF FORGIVENESS BASED ON THEORIES AND RESEARCH**

Forgiveness is an old concept in the religious and spiritual realm, but it's a relatively new concept for psychology. There have been several attempts to understand it through different models.

The intra- and inter-personal forgiveness models suggest that forgiveness exists along a spectrum, ranging from silent and superficial forgiveness on one end to complete and genuine forgiveness on the other (Baumeister, Exline, and Sommer, 1998). Then we have interpersonal models which emphasize forgiveness being within the process in human beings. Reconciliation rituals of repairing relationships are the main focus of reconciliation models (Sapolsky & Share, 2004) and de Waal (de Waal & Pokorny, 2005), which is essential from the evolutionary perspective.

When the reconciliation model was extended by McCullough (2001), forgiveness was studied as an attachment-empathy system, which is the exact opposite of the justice-revenge system. Then, in 1997, Hargrave and Sells divided forgiveness into stages not necessarily sequential but driven by exoneration and entitlement. In the interdependence theory model of Rusbult (2005), He described forgiveness

as an instinctive reaction to wrongdoing, often accompanied by feelings of anger and a desire for revenge. On the other hand, the stress-coping model of forgiveness talks about forgiveness of emotional pain.

### **Forgiveness in Strength Psychology**

When we consider an older version of forgiveness, it was more passive by only talking about letting bygones be bygones to allow some to pass and the injury heals on its own, whereas strength psychology gave new meaning to forgiveness by clearly stating that forgiveness is not forgetting or condoning. Instead it is more about letting go of the need for revenge and releasing negative emotions like resentment and anger (Sanjay, Singh, & Hooda, 2019). This forgiveness is radical and involves taking concrete actions of forgiving the offender and giving importance to the suffering experienced along with surrendering to the flow of life. Therefore, forgiveness in strength psychology is more about the freedom of the injured person.

### **Decision-based forgiveness**

DiBlasio (1998) has given a decision-based model in which he emphasized willful forgiveness, which is purely based on your willpower, and does not account for the hurt feelings which can persist after making a choice. This model involves cognitive letting go of resentment.

### **A cognitive approach to forgiveness**

The cognitive dimension of forgiveness centers around viewing transgressions as breaches of cognitive constructs, such as beliefs. It also incorporates therapeutic approaches rooted in cognitive therapy and psychodynamics. Thompson, Snyder, Hoffman, and Rasmussen et al. (2005) have given a definition of forgiveness based on their cognitive model-

“the framing of a perceived transgression such that one’s responses to the transgressor, transgression, and sequelae of the transgression are transformed from negative to neutral or positive. The source of the transgression, therefore the object of forgiveness, maybe oneself, another person or persons, or a situation that one views as being beyond anybody’s control like illness, fate, or a natural disaster.”

### **Emotional approach to forgiveness**

Whenever a psychologist talks about true forgiveness, it's always from the perspective of emotions as an emotional replacement from negative to positive is vital in the process of forgiveness.

### **Forgiveness as a process**

Enright and Fitzgibbons (2015) believed that if forgiveness has to happen, it should bring change in all three levels i.e., cognitive, affective, and behavioral. They argued that a person needs to be emotionally ready if they want to forgive, and then they can cultivate acceptance, and empathy and find benefits out of forgiveness.

## Forgiveness in Positive Psychology

Forgiveness is an essential construct in the field of positive psychology. It is studied as a character strength and virtue which is a pursuit that holds value for everyone, who has a desire for a greater sense of well-being. Forgiveness is seen as one of the strengths that helps humans to live satisfying and fulfilling lives (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Martin Seligman noted that it becomes tough to be kind to someone who has hurt us or challenging to forgive as it feels unjust.

### BENEFITS OF FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness is a transformative practice that profoundly benefits our personal and professional lives. When people hold onto anger and resentment, it can lead to higher levels of stress, depression, and anxiety. However, practicing forgiveness can alleviate these negative emotions and improve mental health (Long et al., 2020; Raj et al., 2016). Moreover, forgiving can reduce stress levels, positively affect physical health, lower blood pressure, and create a more robust immune system (Worthington Jr, 2007).

Forgiveness is a powerful tool that can repair damaged relationships and foster more potent, more positive connections with others. It can reduce the tension and conflict caused by grudges and promote understanding and empathy. By letting go of negative feelings and moving past conflicts, we can experience increased happiness, peace, and contentment, leading to a more fulfilling life. Research demonstrated that forgetting reduces the effect of negative conflicting situations and helps couples to reconcile, ultimately promoting relationship satisfaction (Braithwaite et al., 2011; Takada & Ohbuchi, 2013). Forgiveness helps develop relationship resilience, i.e., strengthening the relationship (Thompson et al., 2019).

Your ability to forgive or seek forgiveness is one of the critical factors for predicting the longevity of your relationship. When we talk about forgiveness in a social context, it also involves reconciliation, related to restoring trust. Unlike forgiveness, reconciliation requires cooperation from both parties. Interpersonal offenses may impact close relationships and can considerably affect your mental and physical well-being. Forgiveness can be very different as a process when we talk about close relationships. Research has found that forgiveness is a good predictor of successful marriages. (e.g., Worthington, 1994). In a long-term study, researchers tracked conflicts and forgiveness occurrences in couples over nine weeks. They discovered that despite inevitable conflicts in close relationships, those who chose to forgive after disagreements reported greater happiness nine weeks later compared to those who did not forgive (Tsang, McCullough, & Finchum, 2006).

Forgiveness is not always easy; it does not mean forgetting or condoning the harm done. However, the benefits of forgiveness can significantly improve one's quality of life, both personally and professionally. Moreover, forgiving requires high emotional intelligence and maturity, which can encourage emotional growth and healthy coping mechanisms. Ysseldyk et al. (2008) found a link between forgetting and coping styles. It was reported that people high on trait

forgiveness tend to use more problem-solving coping and avoid emotional coping styles. However, people high on state-based forgiveness will reject the emotional coping styles and use a wide variety of coping styles. Akhtar et al. (2017) found that forgiveness promotes spiritual growth. The researchers pointed out that when participants engaged in the act of forgiveness, it made them aware of their spiritual self, which promoted welfare and compassion for others.

Forgiveness is more important than ever in today's fast-paced, high-stress world. By embracing forgiveness, we can create a more positive, supportive, and productive environment in our personal and professional lives. It is a practice that can benefit individuals at all levels and is worthy of our time and attention.

As we know, the inability to forgive can be emotional and cognitive in nature, accompanied by feelings of anger and hostility, and can have negative health consequences, whereas forgiveness is linked to positive emotions like empathy and compassion, which can help people experience more life satisfaction and less depression (Worthington & Scherer, 2004). In a book, "Forgive for Good," Dr. Fredric Luskin (2003) confirmed in his findings that forgiveness training helps people feel less hurt and let go of resentment. It also improves psychological and physiological wellness and makes people emotionally stronger and increasingly optimistic.

## IS FORGIVENESS A CHOICE

*"Forgiveness is a gift you give to yourself."*

**Richard Moore**

Forgiveness is a choice or option where the victim thinks about forgiving the transgressor. It is a decision taken up by the victim. This decision to forgive occurs in different stages. Tucker et al. (2015) suggested five stages of forgiveness. 1) Recognising that offense has occurred, leading to feelings of anger and hurt. 2) People continue to have the same disturbing and overwhelming thoughts and feelings. 3) Recognising that strategies used till now to overcome the feeling of hurt could be more helpful. 4) Deciding to forgive the transgressor. 5) Change in the victim's thoughts, feelings, and actions towards the transgressor.

Forgiveness as a choice is termed decisional forgiveness by Baumeister (1998), who defined it as an intentional behavior toward a transgressor. According to DiBlasio, decisional forgiveness can trigger emotional forgiveness when one decides to release the transgressor from the debt (1998). Researchers suggest that people might engage in decisional forgiveness, wherein an individual may intellectually choose to forgive, but they might still find themselves grappling with feelings of anger, anxiety, or depression alongside motivations that veer towards revenge or avoidance (Worthington, 2001; Worthington Jr, 2001). On the other hand, emotional forgiveness involves replacing the negative feelings of hurt, anger, and anxiety with empathy, compassion, and love (Worthington, 2007). It is also dependent on the evaluation of the injustice received. The higher the sense of injustice, the lesser the chance that an individual will forgive.

Whether someone will forgive or not also depends on the situation, like forgiving others or forgiving oneself. Self-forgiveness involves acknowledging and accepting one's own mistakes and stopping blaming oneself. Research suggests

that self-forgiveness is more complex than forgiving others, as individuals tend to judge themselves harshly and cannot judge fairly (Wedemalm, 2011). Thus, forgiveness is not a linear process; it comprises multiple factors and pathways.

## FORGIVENESS THERAPY

*“Forgiveness is the fragrance that the violet sheds on the heel that has crushed it.”*

**Mark Twain**

Forgiveness therapy has existed since the mid-1980s and is mainly rooted in Cognitive-Behaviour Therapy (CBT) interventions. In the 1990s & 2000s, forgiveness therapy was boosted, and researchers and mental health professionals started using and applying it to various mental health challenges (Lamb, 2005). Forgiveness therapy has been used to treat issues like depression, anxiety, personality disorders, and substance abuse. It has been applied to college students, elderly women, and incest survivors (Legaree et al., 2007; Reed & Enright, 2006). Forgiveness Therapy can address deep hurts, like disloyalty, brutality, etc., and shallow hurts, like annoyance and disappointments. However, the effectiveness of therapy varies according to the type of offense and the victim's relation to the offender (Freedman & Zarifkar, 2016). Critics of forgiveness therapy are skeptical about its application to women survivors of rape, incest, and domestic violence (Arenofsky, 2011; Lamb, 2006).

Research suggests that there are two fundamental models of intervention: Process-based model and decision-based intervention. The difference between the two is that the first one includes a more cognitive approach, and the second has both cognitive and affective components (Baskin & Enright, 2004).

### Decision-based Interventions

This intervention model follows techniques from cognitive behavior therapy (CBT). It believes in “cognitive letting go of resentment and bitterness and need of vengeance” (DiBlasio, 1998). Therapists help the client gain control and develop a differentiating form of self from others so that the client won't be the victim of one's emotional state. DiBlasio (1998) states this therapy is short-term and offers practical ways to empower clients.

Another form of decision-based intervention was developed by McCullough and Worthington (1995), known as the Forgiveness letter. It is a brief intervention strategy consisting of one session in which the client forgives. Here, the client writes a letter of forgiveness to the offender. This letter helps the client start the process of forgiveness, leaving them to continue on their own.

### Process-based Interventions

Two types of process-based models exist: the Enright Model Intervention (1991) and the REACH Model by Worthington (2001).

#### Enright model Intervention

This model is structured in four phases. Each phase consists of different steps. It believes that forgiveness is a process that happens in stages and requires time for the person to forgive the offender completely.

Phases	Description
Uncovering Phase	The individual acknowledges the hurt and explores the emotional impact of hurt/injury. Then, gain insight into one response related to the injury.
Decision Phase	Here, an individual learns about forgiveness and starts considering forgiveness as a decision toward healing
Work Phase	Individuals begin to show compassion for the offender by understanding the factors that led them to engage in hurtful acts. He also accepts that pain and realizes forgiveness is a gift to oneself.
Deepening Phase	This phase helps the victim to find a deeper purpose of forgiveness. The person experiences freedom from pain & resentment, a sense of peace, and a deeper level of compassion for others.

This model has been used with various groups like children, adolescents, the elderly, and women, and with multiple conditions like cancer, emotional abuse, substance abuse, incest survivors, etc. (Freedman & Enright, 2019).

### REACH Model

This model was proposed by Worthington (2001) after extensively studying the phenomenon of forgiveness. It offers ways for the victim to overcome the injury/hurt and forgive the offender.

Steps	Description
Recall the hurt	This step requires the victim to objectively acknowledge the pain induced by the hurtful event.
Empathy	Here, the victim is encouraged to understand the situation from the offender's perspective. What were the factors that led the offender to hurt the person?
Altruistic gift	This step involves seeing forgiveness as a gift given to the offender. The person is asked to recognize and accept that people are imperfect and tend to make mistakes.
Commitment	It requires taking steps to confirm the decision to forgive, such as writing a forgiving letter or using verbal statements.
Hold on	Forgiveness is a challenging process. There will be time that makes you recall back the pain and hurt. This step helps the individual develop strategies to maintain forgiveness,, such as reading the forgiveness letter.

REACH model of forgiveness has been used in cultural and religious contexts like Australia, Indonesia, Ghana, India, and the United States (Kurniati et al., 2020; Osei-Tutu, 2020; Toussaint et al., 2020). This model has shown efficacy in improving physical, mental, and spiritual health conditions (Worthington Jr, 2020).

### Other Therapeutic Intervention

#### Naikan Therapy

This concept, rooted in Japanese spirituality, involves mindfully recognizing acts of kindness toward others. It follows a structured process of self-reflection



cantered around forgiveness. Naikan reflections are based on three questions relating to the person the client is struggling to forgive:

*“What have I received?”*

*What have I given?*

*What troubles and difficulties have I caused?”*

This philosophy asserts that the past is malleable, enabling a rebalancing of good and evil. It fosters stability within the individual.

## TEACHING FORGIVENESS TO CHILDREN

Teaching children forgiveness is essential to their emotional and social development and can contribute significantly to raising compassionate and understanding individuals. Forgiveness is an abstract concept; earlier researchers believed adolescents would be better able to display such behavior (Christensen et al., 2011; Rizkalla et al., 2008). However, Research suggests that very young children can also understand the concept of forgiveness. They can apologize and forgive others for maintaining their relationship (Oostenbroek & Vaish, 2019; Rungduin, 2010).

The first step towards teaching forgiveness is developing emotional literacy among the children. Emotional literacy (EL) means awareness of emotions and feelings. Waterhouse (2019) defined emotional literacy as acknowledging, identifying, managing, and expressing emotions. EL can be developed by conversing with children about emotions and feelings. Parents and educators can use the feeling wheel or emojis to teach children about emotions and feelings. This will help them better understand their emotions and feelings and lead them to the second step, i.e., empathy.

Empathy helps children to understand the other person’s perspective. Research demonstrates that developing empathy among the victims for the offender is essential to obtaining forgiveness (de Pinho et al., 2015). Empathy helps the victim to analyze the offense from the offender’s perspective and judge it fairly (Toussaint & Webb, 2005). Educators within the classroom can present children with situations or case studies on conflict between friends. They may ask students to think about the characters and try to infer their thoughts, feelings, and behavior. This activity may push them to analyze the situation from different perspectives.

Once children learn and can develop empathy, the third step is to take them towards understanding compassion. Empathy comes before compassion. It is a feeling of understanding other’s suffering, believing that suffering is a universal phenomenon, and motivation to help others come out of it (Strauss et al., 2016). When children learn to be compassionate, they will be better able to forgive others because they can let go of their anger and hurt (Zhang et al., 2015). They will be able to accept the imperfections in other persons and believe that we all are dealing with the suffering (Roxas et al., 2014, 2019). Parents and educators can help children foster compassion by narrating stories about people’s struggles and how they have overcome those experiences. Then, parents/educators may ask children to ponder upon the story and find ways to help them. Educators can celebrate Kindness Day at school, encouraging students to engage in kind

activities like helping classmates or school staff, donating or volunteering for a cause, and using kind words in their everyday lives.

Finally, parents and educators need to model the appropriate forgiving behaviors. It's a proven fact that children learn from their parents and educators. When they see adults performing acts of forgiveness, they naturally imbibe the same behavior. Research suggests that early educators help children learn to socialize. When they welcome and listen to the children with warmth and open hearts, it helps them to learn and demonstrate similar behaviors (Haslip et al., 2019). Similarly, at home, parents can indicate acceptance of their mistakes and apologize. They can reinforce similar behavior in their children by appreciating them for displaying forgiveness.

Jamie Perillo, LPC, (2018) has given several suggestions to help kids learn forgiving, and the first is to help them distinguish between forgetting and forgiving. Ask the child to identify the feelings they are experiencing because of the offense and then name it to own the forgiveness they are giving to someone.

## **RESEARCH GAPS IN FORGIVENESS/ FUTURE JOURNEY OF FORGIVENESS**

Research has shown that forgiveness is good for your soul and benefits our mental and even physical well-being (Luskin, 2003). Forgiveness is crucial for a well-functioning society, offering personal benefits such as fostering connections with others and promoting a positive, happier perspective on life. But when we look at the direction of research on forgiveness, it is always in the direction of attribution affecting forgiveness, but hardly any model is found which can show forgiveness's effect on victim's attribution. The next critical gap in the literature on forgiveness is that it is still researched as a global construct; there are no specific types of forgiveness, and not much empirical explanation is found in different paradigms of forgiveness. There is also a dearth of literature in the field of psychology. Even if it is an essential construct in positive psychology, most of its information comes from spirituality. Earlier studies have talked about forgiveness being an emotional process, but it's not discussed in detail, like the transition of emotions needs to be elaborated more.

Most of the researchers talk about the benefits of forgiveness, but no one questions the repeat of transgression or the responsibility of the transgressor. Most of the research uses hypothetical scenarios while collecting data, which hampers the ecological validity of the findings. There is only one paradigm i.e., atrocity paradigm, where the severity of the cause is discussed about forgiveness, but in other psychological paradigms, causes are not paid any attention. Research doubt the benefits of forgiveness therapy in the case of heinous crime. Another critical area is the dearth of psychological tools to measure forgiveness and its related aspects, as well tools for broader coverage of mental and physical health outcomes.

## **CONCLUSION**

There are a lot of imbalances and pain in our lives which hamper our physical and psychological well-being, but forgiveness can free us from this immeasurable pain and enhance happiness.

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## Gratitude and Forgiveness for Subjective Well Being

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### ABSTRACT

*Two high-quality psychological traits that are linked to good mental health and well being are gratitude and forgiveness. Gratitude is when you feel thankful for the good things of your life. These are the things in your life that bring you joy, hope, or encouragement will primarily determine how grateful you are and how you choose to express your gratitude. While on the other hand, the word 'forgive' means not to become angry or resentful with the person who has done wrong to you. It allows a person to make a fresh start. It offers strength and courage in a world dominated by 'eye for an eye' philosophy. This article looks at how life satisfaction and subjective well being are flourished through gratitude and forgiveness. These two concepts of positive psychology hasen't get appropriate place in researches yet. Although researches already done in the feild shows direct association between these two with the subjective well-being. It turns out that due to variations in the brains, genes, and personalities, some people are actually more likely gratefull than to be others. Those with higher levels of gratitude have been found to have greater gray matter in the right inferior temporal cortex. Serotonin and dopamine, two neurotransmitters that contribute to mood regulation and happiness, are elevated in the brain when these regions are activated. Thus, you started feeling better the more you express gratitude and forgive others.*

**Keywords-** *Gratitude, forgiveness, and subjective well-being.*

### INTRODUCTION

Two high-quality psychological traits that are linked to good mental health and well being are gratitude and forgiveness. Gratitude is when you feel thankful for the good things of your life. These are the things in your life that bring you joy, hope, or encouragement will primarily determine how grateful you are

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and how you choose to express your gratitude. While on the other hand, the word 'forgive' means not to become angry or resentful with the person who has done wrong to you. It allows a person to make a fresh start. It offers strength and courage in a world dominated by 'eye for an eye' philosophy. To value these two beautiful concepts of positive psychology firstly we should be aware of the terms and their basic understandings. The word "gratitude" comes from the Latin word "gratia," which can indicate "gratitude," "gregariousness," or any combination of these (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). This Latin root gives rise to concepts of "kindness, generosity, gifts, and the beauty of giving and receiving (Pruyser, 1976). Perhaps the most widespread view defines gratitude as "the recognition and appreciation of an altruistic gift". On the other hand the core of the concept of forgiveness "is the idea of a freely chosen, prosocial, motivation in which the desire to seek revenge and avoid contact with a transgressor is overcome and an increase in positive thoughts, feelings and behavior occurs" (Worthington et al, 2000). Both definitions emphasize the social or interpersonal nature of gratitude and forgiveness and suggest an initial conceptual link between these quality and strengths.

The well-known scientist Robert Emmons contends on thankfulness, in his essay -"Why Gratitude Is Good?" he wrote that there are two main components to gratitude, i.e., "It's an affirmation of goodness first". We declare that there are blessings, gifts, and advantages in the world. Further he added, "we acknowledge that the sources of this goodness are outside of ourselves," while in the second section of thankfulness he wrote, "We accept that we have received several gifts, both large and small, from other people—or, if you have a spiritual attitude, from higher powers—to help us accomplish the goodness in our life". Basically, Gratitude is a positive attitude or sentiment that entails having appreciation for different things and people in our life. One being grateful promotes sentiments of thankful, friendliness, warmth, hope, and optimism (Baruch & Holtom, 2008).

### **How does Gratitude Work?**

Gratitude is a mindset and a character attribute. The things in your life that bring you joy, hope, or encouragement will primarily determine how grateful you are and how you choose to express your gratitude. Putting it differently, individuals can feel thankful for something or someone at a specific time, but they can also feel thankfulness as a state of mind. Being grateful is regarded as a quality when it is incorporated into your daily life. When you live a life of thankfulness, it transforms into a mindset. It turns out due to variations in their brains, genes, and personalities, some people are actually more likely than others to be grateful. For example, those who show much gratitude have been found to have more gray matter in the right inferior temporal cortex. It is believed that the capacity to decipher the intents of others is connected to this region of the brain. In the meantime, another study discovered that those who are generally more appreciative and gratitude's have higher levels of brain activity and may be more altruistic or selfless. It's interesting to note that, whether expressed in the present or across time, gratefulness activates specific brain regions, including reward circuits. Other side of this concept states that serotonin and dopamine, two neurotransmitters that contribute to mood regulation and happiness, are

elevated in the brain when these regions are activated. Thus, you start to feel better the more you express gratitude or thanks in your life.

### **Benefits of cultivating gratitude**

Though some people are expressive in appreciation than others, but everyone can learn to be thankful for everything in their life, no matter how small or large. A human being may gain a number of advantages by doing this, such as enhanced relationships, a higher level of life satisfaction, even better heart health along with mental health and well-being. People with neuromuscular problems were randomly assigned to either the thankfulness condition or the control condition in Emmons and McCullough's (2003) study. They found that people with higher thankfulness have shown following outcomes- i. Greater optimism, ii. More vivacious, iii. Stronger interpersonal ties, iv. More peaceful night's sleep. Apart from these there are various benefits which are helpful for subjective well-being i.e.-

- Improves relationship: Giving thanks and showing gratitude towards the person who helps you whether it is your family, friends or neighbor makes stronger relationships.
- Boosts patience: Gratitude reduces impatience and brings positive state of happiness (DeSteno et al., 2014).
- Builds resiliency: Showing gratitude can improve a person's resiliency, it will also help in dealing with life difficulties, post-traumatic stress and challenges (J. et al., 2017).
- Reduce stress: It help people to reframe negative experiences and find meaning in them. People who expressed gratitude had more positive coping strategies like seeking social support and fewer negative coping strategies such as denial, self-blame, or substance use. Overall, people who expressed gratitude felt more in control of their livelihood and better able to cope with the stress and uncertainty of difficult situations (Fekete & Deichert, 2022).
- Increase sense of well-being: Recent research shows that practicing gratitude can encourage more positive emotions and moods, greater appreciation for life, higher levels of optimism, and less anxiety. These all factors contribute to balanced mental health and a healthy sense of well-being (Diniz et al., 2023).
- Leads to greater life satisfaction: Practicing gratitude may also improve overall life satisfaction. For instance, studies show that person who regularly gives thanks is happier and more content with the situation in his/her lives. Along with high happier emotions and fewer symptoms of depression and other mental health conditions (Unanue et al., 2019).
- Encourage forgiveness: Gratitude is a key factor in forgiving others. In fact, when it attached with emotional intelligence and hope people are more likely to forgive others for their mistakes and harm compared to those who don't practice gratitude. While it can be difficult to forgive people who hurt you, but giving forgiveness builds emotional strength and let go of resentment and anger (Rey & Extremera, 2014).



Forgiveness has direct connection with gratitude, so it is important to make clear understanding of it also.

### **Forgiveness**

The word 'forgive' means not to become angry or resentful with the person who has done wrong to you. It is an act of pardoning for an error or offence the other person has committed. It is one of the higher levels of virtues human beings can adopt and expand to make their life healthy, harmonious and happy. According to positive psychologists like Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000), virtues such as hope, optimizing, courage, honesty, integrated compassion and forgiveness prevent the human being from suffering due to psychological distress, addiction and maladjusted behavior.

Forgiveness allows the person to make a fresh start. It offers strength and courage in the world dominated by 'eye for an eye' philosophy. World known great persons like Mahatma Gandhi and Mother Teresa emphasized the strength of forgiveness. Mother Teresa stated about forgiveness as, "To forgive is the most beautiful form of love. If we want to love we must learn to forgive. It is a key to human happiness"- 'To love' and 'to forgive' are the two sides of the same coin because we can't love unless we accept forgiveness. We generally forgive those whom we love. Evolutionary science also suggests that our inclination for vengeance and our ability to forgive are two aspects of human nature that have evolved through natural selection. Experts believe that while true forgiveness necessitates having positive thoughts toward the offender, it also demands letting go of deeply held negative feelings. In this sense, it gives you the ability to acknowledge the suffering you experienced without allowing it to define who you are, allowing you to get better and move on with your life.

"Forgiveness is defined as the release from a negative attachment to the source that has transgressed against a person". "Forgiveness is defined as fostering the undeserved qualities of compassion, generosity, and even love toward one who has unjustly hurt us, while at and on one's right to resentment, negative judgment, and indifferent behavior toward them"- Enright (2000).

### **The Process of Forgiveness-**

Enright and Fitzgibbons (2015) contend that in order for someone to truly forgive, changes must be made to all three of the dimensions of forgiveness i.e., cognitive, affective, and behavioral. They contend that before someone is likely to be open to forgiveness, they need to be emotionally prepared to forgive. Forgiveness can be shown in a variety of ways, and some of them include developing empathy and acceptance, changing one's perspective, and identifying benefits. To reduce anger and facilitate emotional healing, an individual could choose to use one or more of the techniques to overcome.

### **The neurology of forgiveness:**

Forgiveness is a multifaceted process that occurs in the brain. Brain's different parts are utilized when a person makes a moral judgment, emphasizes with others, and thinks as to how forgivable the person may be. Brain imaging technology has shown that unhealthy anterior cingulate gyrus and basal ganglia can cause problems in shifting attention and rumination. These morbid sectors

of the brain engender the inability to forget grudges, cognitive inflexibility and conflict avoidance.

### **Benefits of Forgiveness-**

- Reduce negative affect, anxiety and depressive symptoms.
- Restoration of positive thinking.
- Restoration of relationships.
- Strengthened spirituality.
- Raised self-esteem along with a greater sense of hope.
- Greater capacity for conflict management and, to cope up with stressors of life and can findout relief.
- Life satisfaction: people who practices forgiveness, have more life satisfaction and less depression than others who don't choose it.

### **Gratitude, forgiveness and religion –**

All religions are for the welfare of the human beings. From ancient religious scriptures through modern social science researches, gratitude and forgiveness are advanced as a desirable human quality with the ability for making life better for ourselves and for others. Each religion has developed its own system of faith, worship and conduct but forgiveness is a common factor adopted by all of them whether it is eastern or western region. Self-forgiveness is considered essential in the Western culture for individualistic, whereas it is considered irrational in the Eastern collectivist culture, which pays more attention to the forgiveness of others thus, religious factors in culture are essential to understanding forgiveness. For understanding it more clearly let us first preach the eastern religions. Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Islam are the four main religions in the eastern world and each of them has postulated its view and methods on forgiveness. Let's have a look on it-

### **EASTERN RELIGIONS:**

Hinduism: most of the scriptures in Hinduism advocates the value of a witness it is considered as one of the divine tendencies lord Krishna incarnation of God Vishnu stated as under-

तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता ।

भवन्ति संपदं दैवीमभीजातस्य भारत ॥ 3 ॥ (अ. 16, श्लोक 3)

It means "a man who is born with divine tendencies is known for his vigor, forgiveness, fortitude as well as freedom from hatred and pride" (Bhagwan Gita, Chapter 16 verse 3). Thus, it is the divine characteristic as against the demoniac one. In Vedic literature and epics the word Kshama is often combined with Kripa (tenderness), Daya (kindness) and Karuna (compassion). The theological basis for forgiveness is that, a person who does not forgive carries a baggage of memories of the wrong, of negative feelings, of anger and of unresolved emotions that affect his/her present as well as future. One should forget others; nevertheless, one must also seek forgiveness if one has wronged someone else. It is to be obtained not

only from the individual wronged, but also from the society at large, by acts of charity, sanitization, fasting, rituals and meditative introspection.

**Jainism:** Jains observe 'Kshama Devi Divas', the day devoted to seeking and granting forgiveness. In Jainism, 'Kshamapana' or highest forgiveness types the part of one of the ten character of Dharma. No private quarrel or dispute may be carried beyond Samvatsari, the last day of Jain festival Paryusana. Letter and telephone calls are made to the outstation relatives and friends in this day for asking their forgiveness. By practicing Prayascitta (repentance), a person can win the award of good conduct, and can obtain happiness in mind.

**Buddhism:** According to Buddhism forgiveness is a practice to prevent harmful thoughts from causing havoc to one's own wellbeing. Buddhism places much emphasis on the concepts of Metta (loving kindness), Kama (compassion), Mudita (sympathetic joy), and Uppekkha (equanimity), as means to avoid bitterness and anger. King Ashoka acclaimed forgiveness after his conversion to Buddhism.

**Islam:** Islam preaches that Allah is 'the oft-forgiving' and is the novel source of forgiveness. It considers seeking forgiveness from Allah with repentance as a virtue. Depending upon the type of wrong committed, forgiveness can come directly from Allah or from the one to whom the wrong has been done. It pointed out that the wisdom of forgiveness increases honour and prestige of the one who forgives.

### Western religions

Here we shall consider only two Western religions i.e. Judaism and Christianity and their vision on forgiveness.

**Judaism:** In Judaism, if a person causes harm, but then apologizes to the offended, sincerely and honestly, the offended person is religiously required to grant forgiveness. Sir Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew worshippers of the Commonwealth, summarized it as 'it is not that God forgives, while human beings do not. To the contrary, we believe that just as only God can forget sins against God, so only human beings can forgive sins against human beings.

### Christianity:

In Christianity, Jesus is the personification of forgiveness because after crucifixion he said, "Father, forgive them, for they knew not what they do" (Luke 23: 34 Esv cited in). There is a general proposition accepted by all religions, as reported by McCullough and Worthington (1999) that "people have been forgiven by God and hence, they should forgive their own transgression". Both Catholic and Protestant sects of Christianity accept that God's forgiveness is received through own repentance. Thus repentance has an enormous value for forgiveness.

### Gratitude, forgiveness and subjective well-being-

Gratitude and forgiveness are interpersonal power that produces well-being through an amalgamation of reflection, positive emotions, adaptive social behaviors and relationships that assist well-being. It is believed that men do

not easily give or receive forgiveness, while, women are more likely to prefer to forgive than men. It may be because women are more emotional and empathic toward the problems, whereas men are more logical, and their attitudes are not as calm as those of women. Although, contradictions reported in studies for this as, there is no dissimilarity in the degree of forgiveness between man and women. Therefore, how gender plays an important role in the relationship between gratitude, forgiveness and subjective well-being still required to get appropriate place in researches.

## CONCLUSION

Healthy love relationships are not possible without gratitude and forgiveness. A person can make peace with a friend, parent, child, boss, neighbor or anyone else who so ever has done wrong with him. If anyone hurts the person they develop the feeling of bitterness, hatred, hostility, resentment and retaliation. Forgiveness breaks the cycle and releases the person from being imprisoned by these negative judgements. It takes the poison out of the body and makes the person feel fresh. By embracing forgiveness one can develop hope, gratitude and joy. It enables the person to forget the past and live happily in the present which is worth of subjective well-being.

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## Forgiveness and Psychological Well-being

Dr. Bani Narula\*

### ABSTRACT

*Psychological well-being is a multifaceted concept in which people perform their psychological activities in a positive manner. Forgiveness is one of the variables that influence psychological well-being. People's assessments of their own life are used to determine psychological well-being. It is a broad notion that encompasses many areas of daily life. The present study intends to examine the correlation between forgiveness and psychological well-being. A total of 100 undergraduate college students; (aged 17-20 years) were taken as sample (45 males and 55 females). The Heartland Forgiveness Scale and Ryff's Psychological Wellbeing Scale were administered and correlation was performed on the obtained data along with mean, standard deviation and t-test. According to the findings, all three categories of forgiveness i.e. (forgiveness of self, forgiveness of others, and forgiveness of situations) exhibited a positive link with all six dimensions of Psychological Wellbeing i.e. (autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance). Furthermore, the dimensions of forgiveness predicted Psychological Wellbeing significantly. Forgiveness has been shown to improve contentment, spiritual well-being, and subjective well-being in undergraduate college students.*

**Keywords:** *Forgiveness, Wellbeing, Happiness, Satisfaction with Life.*

### INTRODUCTION

The concept of forgiveness has existed for millennia. It is upheld as a virtue in nearly every major world religion and has been discussed and written about in literary works from the Bible to Greek philosophy to classic Western literature (Macaskill, 2005; McCullough & Worthington, 1999). The term 'forgive' derives from 'give' or to 'grant', as in 'to give up,' or 'cease to harbor (resentment,

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wrath).’ Human beings appear to have an innate proclivity to reciprocate negative interpersonal behaviour with more negative behaviour (as stated by Narula, 2016). One mechanism that can interrupt the cyclic nature of avoidance and vengeance is ‘forgiveness’, an approach whereby people can move beyond a desire for revenge and reinstitute social ties (Fincham, 2000). Forgiveness is the most important single process through which people seek to overcome social conflict and aggression in more positive ways as the disastrous consequences of lack of forgiveness can wreak on individual lives as anger and desire for revenge go unchecked and may contribute to the path of violence and crime. However, forgiveness is usually the most productive choice and helps to heal a broken relationship and contribute to overall happiness and well-being (Karremans, Van Lange, Ouwerkerk & Kluwer, 2003). It is a proven prescription for happiness (Luskin, 2006). Hence, it is in both individual interest and the interest of society as a whole to practice forgiveness as it is an important and desired transaction for psychological, physical and relational health (Lawler-Row et al 2008).

## **CONCEPTUALIZATION OF FORGIVENESS**

According to Reid (2014) forgiveness is a deliberate and conscious decision to release feelings of resentment or anger towards a person or group of people who have caused harm. Worthington (1998; 2001) developed a pyramid model which appears to take its name from an intervention described by the acronym REACH where each letter corresponds to succeeding layers of a pyramid. A key feature of the forgiveness process is empathy. At the base of the pyramid is recalling the hurt (R). The forgiver recalls the offense in a supportive environment. The next layer is empathy through various exercises (E) or seeing things from the other’s perspective, followed by the altruistic gift of forgiveness to the offender, recognizing that, in the past, one has hurt others (A). The next layer concerns committing publicly to forgive (C) and finally, at the apex, hold on to forgiveness (H).

### **Conceptualization of Well-being**

Wellbeing is defined by Oxford English dictionary as "the state of being comfortable, healthy or happy". The positive psychology of wellbeing generally includes six general characteristics i.e. Balance attributes, Positive affect, Life satisfaction, Pro-social behaviour., Multiple dimension and Personal optimisation. Thus, wellbeing may be a dynamic or multidimensional concept that not only includes subjective, social and psychological dimensions but also includes health related behaviours. The researchers classify wellbeing into two approaches;

- a) Hedonistic approach focuses on happiness and defines wellbeing in terms of delight attainment and pain avoidance.
- b) Eudaimonic approach focuses on meaning and self realization and defines wellbeing in terms of the degree to which an individual is fully functioning.

### Psychological well-being

The term psychological wellbeing is defined as positive relation with others, feeling of purpose and meaning in life, self acceptance and is attained by achieving a state of balance suffering from both rewarding and challenging life events. In other words, it is always conceptualized as a combination of positive effect states like joy, happy and functioning with optimal effectiveness in individual and social life and individuals strive to function fully (Ryff, 1995).

Therefore, psychological well-being refers to the overall mental health of an individual including both the absence of internalizing and externalizing symptoms as well as the presence of high life satisfaction. According to Ryff (1995), Six factor model of psychological well being is also known as multidimensional model of psychological well-being. The six key elements of psychological well-being are: Toleration; It deals with positive evaluation of oneself and one's past, Personal Growth; it is the capacity to manage life and therefore the surrounding world effectively referred to as capacity for private growth, Purpose in Life; it reflects the individual belief that his life is purposeful and meaningful which is labelled as personal life, Environmental Mastery; an individual who has weaker control over the environment has difficulty managing everyday affairs, Autonomy; the fifth component is a person's sense of self-determination coined as autonomy, Positive Relations with others; it is characterised by feelings of warmth, care and has satisfactory and trusting relationships with others. Thus, consistent with Ryff's psychological well-being refers to the extent to which individuals feel that they need meaningful control over their life and their activities.

### OBJECTIVES

- To know the differences between high forgiveness and low forgiveness among different dimensions of psychological wellbeing.
- To explore the relationship between forgiveness and psychological wellbeing.
- To examine the contribution of forgiveness in psychological wellbeing.

### HYPOTHESES

- It is expected that forgiveness will be positively correlated with autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, and purpose in life, while no relation with self-acceptance.
- It is expected that different type of forgiveness that is self, situational and others will significantly play a role in predicting different type of psychological wellbeing such as autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance.

### METHODOLOGY

Sample A sample of 100 students (males=45 and females=55) of undergraduate and post graduate, studying in different colleges in Chandigarh took part in this study.



## Tests & Tools

- Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS) developed by Thompson, Snyder, Hoffman, Michael, Rasmussen and Billings (2005) consists of 18-items with three subscales. The three subscales are: forgiveness of self, forgiveness of others, and forgiveness of situations.
- Psychological Wellbeing Scale developed by Ryff & Keyes (1995) was used measuring six areas of psychological well-being i.e. Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations with Others, Purpose in Life, and Self-Acceptance.

## RESULTS

To know the inter-relationships among various variables, correlation analysis was computed.

**Table 1- Coefficient of Correlation between Forgiveness and Psychological Wellbeing**

Forgiveness	Psychological Well-being Dimensions						
	Autonomy	Environmental Mastery	Personal growth	Positive relation with others	Purpose in life	Self-Acceptance	Total Psychological Wellbeing
Self	301**	122	280**	251**	222**	103	568**
Others	246**	207*	201*	247**	250**	055	543**
Situation	203*	210*	199*	209*	218*	013	572**
Total Forgiveness	231**	212*	201*	282**	275**	014	590**

Note:  $p < 0.01^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.05^{*}$

The results in Table-1 shows that the first dimension of forgiveness i.e. Self is positively and significantly correlated with total Psychological Wellbeing at  $p < 0.01$  ( $r = 568$ ) and its dimensions i.e. Autonomy ( $r = 301$ ), Personal Growth ( $r = 280$ ), Positive Relation with others ( $r = 251$ ), and Purpose in Life ( $r = 222$ ). The second dimension of forgiveness i.e. Others is positively and highly correlated with Total Psychological Well-being at  $p < 0.01$  ( $r = 543$ ) and its different dimensions i.e. Autonomy ( $r = 246$ ), Positive Relations with others ( $r = 247$ ), and Purpose in Life ( $r = 250$ ); while positively correlated with Environmental Mastery ( $r = 207$ ) and Personal Growth ( $r = 201$ ) at  $p < 0.05$ . Similarly, the third dimension of forgiveness i.e. Situational is also positively and significantly correlated with total Psychological Wellbeing ( $r = 572$ ) at  $p < 0.01$ ; while, it is positively correlated with Autonomy ( $r = 203$ ), Environmental Mastery ( $r = 210$ ), Positive Relations with others ( $r = 209$ ), Purpose in Life ( $r = 218$ ) and Personal Growth ( $r = 199$ ) at  $p < 0.05$  level. Lastly, Total Forgiveness is also positively and highly correlated with Total Psychological wellbeing ( $r = 590$ ) and its different dimensions i.e.

Autonomy ( $r = 231$ ), Positive Relation with others ( $r = 282$ ), and Purpose in Life ( $r = 275$ ) at  $p < 0.01$ ; while positively correlated with Environmental Mastery ( $r = 212$ ), and Personal Growth ( $r = 201$ ) at  $p < 0.05$  level.

In the ensuing section below, table-2 depicts mean, standard deviation and t-values of high forgiveness and low forgiveness for various dimensions of psychological well-being.

**Table 2- Mean, S. D., t value of dimensions of Psychological Wellbeing**

Psychological Well-being	Forgiveness	N	Mean	SD	t
Autonomy	High	100	39.31	78.62	3.452**
	Low	100	12.67	9.06	
Environmental Mastery	High	100	23.79	9.21	2.062*
	Low	100	18.21	8.75	
Personal growth	High	100	16.83	7.98	4.067**
	Low	100	13.78	6.12	
Positive relation with others	High	100	15.45	8.87	3.651**
	Low	100	9.71	10.91	
Purpose in life	High	100	8.33	7.32	4.021**
	Low	100	3.21	6.89	
Self acceptance	High	100	8.64	9.21	1.321
	Low	100	7.37	7.32	
PSW total	High	100	87.43	15.56	11.342**
	Low	100	39.67	23.89	

Note:  $p < 0.01^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.05^{*}$

The t- test was found to be significant at  $p < 0.01$  and mean shows that students who scored high on forgiveness also scored high on autonomy, personal growth, positive relation with others and purpose in life dimension in comparison to students who scored low on the forgiveness. Similarly, students who scored high on forgiveness were found to score more on positive environmental mastery ( $p < 0.05$ ). Also, students with high forgiveness tend to show high score on total psychological well-being in comparison to student's who scored low on forgiveness. However, the difference was not found to be significant between forgiveness and self acceptance.

## DISCUSSION

The present study findings revealed that those who forgive often have higher sense of well-being than someone who forgive infrequently. According to Worthington (2006), forgiving has four possible benefits: physical, emotional, relational, and religious well-being. All these four aspects of life relate to the lives of entities in every way. Maintaining physical and psychological fitness, as well as being happy with interpersonal relationships, are closely linked to wellbeing. To put it another way, according to our observations, forgiving oneself, others,

or circumstances improves adolescents' well-being. Furthermore, forgiveness is described as a pro-social shift in an individual's feelings, opinions, or actions toward others (McCullough & Witvliet, 2002). These modifications may include being conscious of and accepting powerful feelings such as frustration, letting go of previously unsatisfied desires, changing thoughts about others, gaining empathy for others, and creating a new narrative about the situation (Malcolm and Greenberg 2000). These positive shifts can lead to an increase in happiness.

## CONCLUSION

To summarize, the current study's results would be useful to parents, mental health practitioners and educators as the findings can be helpful in creating a supportive atmosphere, especially for teenagers and even college students during their perilous phase of personality formation. The mediating impact of forgiveness in the relationship between purpose of life and well-being should not be overlooked by university counselling programs. As a result, psycho-educational classes will be offered to students as part of the therapy options available.

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**Theme - 8**  
**Positive Affirmation Affects,  
Memory and Neuroplasticity**

## Positive Affirmation Effects: Memory, Neuroplasticity, and Well-being

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to explore the impact of positive affirmations on memory, neuroplasticity, and overall well-being. It is grounded in the idea that positive affirmations function as cognitive nutrients, feeding the brain and facilitating the creation of new pathways to success. Regular repetition of affirmations can assist individuals in reprogramming their minds, fostering a positive outlook, and leveraging the principles of neuroplasticity. Previous research has suggested that positive affirmations play a crucial role in improving memory function by reinforcing positive beliefs and attitudes while also enhancing memory capacity and recall. In this study qualitative approach was utilised and semi-structured interviews were conducted to delve into the subjective experiences of participants, aiming to bridge the gap between theory and real-life experiences. A diverse group of 20 participants, including 11 males and 9 females who are regular practitioners of positive affirmations, were selected using purposive sampling. The hypothesis posits that positive affirmations improve memory function, enhance cognitive abilities and neuroplasticity, and positively influence overall well-being. Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring patterns and themes within participants' narratives, resulting in the discovery of six themes which include: cognitive clarity, adaptability, a positive mindset, stress reduction, resilience, and self-perception. By analyzing people's verbatim and final feedback, this research has provided valuable insights into the existing literature on the role of positive affirmations in promoting cognitive and psychological well-being, contributing to our understanding of how affirming positive affirmations shape mental processes and enhance overall quality of life.*

**Keywords:** Positive Affirmation, Memory, Neuroplasticity, Thematic Analysis.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the study

In this paper, we'll begin by exploring the power of positive affirmations. Then, we'll see how they connect with memory and neuroplasticity, contributing to our overall health and well-being.

Imagine waking up in the morning, stretching out your arms, and before planning your day, standing in front of the mirror and reciting affirmations to yourself. You say things like "I am unique" and "I am fully capable of reaching my goals." with a smile on your face. Although it may seem like a simple ritual, the benefits of positive affirmations go far beyond just improving your mood and thoughts with regular practice.

Positive affirmations serve as mental vitamins for your brain, providing the necessary nutrients to help your brain form new pathways that lead to success. By repeating affirmations regularly, you can reprogram your mind and establish a positive mindset. The human brain consists of approximately 86 billion neurons, which means 86 billion plus pathways that are all interconnected (Are There Really as Many Neurons in the Human Brain as Stars in the Milky Way? | Brain Metrics | Learn Science at Scitable, n.d.).

Donald O. Hebb states that "neurons that fire together stay together," which means they can regenerate or plasticize their connections with neighboring neurons, allowing for the storage of strongly wired information over time. This explains why the brain is so effective at forming new memories and mastering new skills. All the wired information is given a structure, and it is stored in an organized manner to retrieve it when required.

Memory is one of the brain's most remarkable functions, and it relies heavily on neuroplasticity (Shaffer, 2016). At every stage of the memory process, neuroplasticity plays a crucial role, from the initial encoding of new information to its storage and retrieval. When we encounter new experiences or learn new skills, our brains undergo structural and functional changes that strengthen the connections between neurons involved in encoding and storing that information (Introduction to Neurons and Neuronal Networks | Section 1, Intro Chapter | Neuroscience Online: An Electronic Textbook for the Neurosciences | Department of Neurobiology and Anatomy - the University of Texas Medical School at Houston, n.d.-b). This process is known as synaptic plasticity, and it is essential for the formation of long-term memories. When information is rehearsed and coded in a specific order, neurons act accordingly. Similarly, the brain will accept and produce the desired outcome from affirmations that are coded correctly.

Research suggests that positive affirmations can have a significant impact on memory and neuroplasticity, influencing the structure and function of our brains. This makes it easier for your brain to think positively in the future, like paving a smooth road for happy thoughts to travel on (Cascio et al., 2015).

### What is positive affirmation?

Affirmations are powerful tools that can help you cultivate positive thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes in your mind. They work like seeds that you plant in your

mind and nurture with repetition. The more you repeat a positive statement to yourself, the stronger it becomes, and the more it can positively impact your life. In essence, affirmations are a way to help you think more positively and develop a more optimistic outlook on life (Fredrickson, 2001 & Allianz Partners, n.d.).

Statement of the problem: Positive affirmations have a significant impact on neuroplasticity, memory, and overall well-being.

Purpose of the study: The purpose of this qualitative study is to investigate the experiences of individuals who regularly practice positive affirmations. The study will explore the perceived effects of positive affirmations on memory, neuroplasticity, and well-being. The research will involve collecting and analysing narratives from participants to uncover the various ways in which positive affirmations impact cognitive processes and psychological outcomes.

### **Research question**

1. What is the subjective experience of individuals who engage in positive affirmations?
2. How do positive affirmations influence memory, neuroplasticity, and well-being from the perspective of the individual practicing them?

### **Review of Literature**

The concept of self-affirmation in psychological well-being has been gaining attention in empirical research. In their study published in the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, Sherman et al. (2016) investigated the effects of self-affirmation on post-traumatic growth (PTG) following exposure to traumatic events. They discovered that self-affirmation interventions resulted in greater PTG, indicating a potential mechanism for resilience and positive adaptation to adversity. Despite the existing research on self-affirmation, the specific mechanisms responsible for its effects on PTG are still not well understood. This study aimed to bridge this gap by exploring the role of self-affirmation in promoting PTG and identifying the psychological processes involved. Through a series of experiments, the researchers demonstrated that engaging in self-affirmation tasks led to increased openness to experience and facilitated cognitive reappraisal, which, in turn, fostered greater PTG. These findings shed light on the psychological mechanisms through which self-affirmation contributes to resilience and post-traumatic growth, offering valuable insights for interventions aimed at promoting psychological well-being in individuals exposed to trauma.

The paper delves into the neural basis of self-affirmation and its impact on behaviour. Using neuroimaging, specific brain regions like the ventral striatum (VS), ventromedial prefrontal cortex (VMPFC), medial prefrontal cortex (MPFC), and posterior cingulate cortex (PCC) are identified as crucial in self-affirmation. It establishes links between neural activations during self-affirmation tasks and subsequent behavioural changes. However, limitations like sample size and focus on neural activity suggest the need for further exploration into behavioural mechanisms. While highlighting potential applications, it acknowledges the need for a deeper understanding of the interplay between neural processes and behaviour.



The article provides a scholarly exploration of affirmations, challenging their dismissal as superficial. It delves into neuroplasticity, explaining how affirmations can reshape the brain by establishing new connections. Neurochemical dynamics are elucidated, highlighting the role of neurotransmitters in translating cognitive signals into affective responses. The discourse underscores the bidirectional relationship between cognition and emotion, emphasizing the potential of affirmations to modulate affective states. Practical guidance is offered for formulating and integrating affirmations into daily practice, empowering individuals to cultivate positive cognitive habits. Overall, the review contributes to a nuanced understanding of affirmations' role in cognitive restructuring and behavioural adaptation within the framework of neuroscience and psychology.

## METHODOLOGY

**Research Approach:** This study employed a qualitative approach to explore the subjective experiences of individuals practicing positive affirmations and their perceived impact on memory and neuroplasticity.

**Research Design:** Thematic analysis is done and Cross-sectional research design was used because this research was done in short period of time.

**The Researcher's Role and Reflexivity:** As part of qualitative research on positive affirmations, the researcher plays an important role in collecting, analysing, and interpreting data. The researcher's responsibilities include:

1. Conducting interviews with participants to gather their experiences and stories about positive affirmations and ensures that the interview process is conducted in a supportive and non-judgmental manner, creating a safe space for participants to share their stories.
2. Analysing data: which involves transcribing interviews, identifying recurring themes, and interpreting the narratives within the context of the research questions. Thematic analysis techniques are employed by the researcher to uncover patterns and insights embedded within the participants' stories.
3. Interpreting findings: The researcher interprets the findings in light of existing literature and theoretical frameworks, synthesizing the subjective experiences of participants with broader concepts related to memory, neuroplasticity, and well-being. The researcher critically examines the data to derive meaningful conclusions and implications for theory and practice.
4. Reflecting critically: Throughout the research process, the researcher engages in reflexivity by critically reflecting on their own biases, assumptions, and preconceptions that may influence the study's design, data collection, and analysis.

**Participants and Data Recording Procedures:** Participants were recruited through purposive sampling, targeting individuals who engage in regular positive affirmation practices. A total of 20 participants (9 females, 11 males) were included in the study.

## INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA

### Inclusion:

1. Individuals age 15 years and above.
2. Individuals practicing affirmations minimum 3 weeks and currently practising.
3. Individuals willing to share their experiences with positive affirmations and participate in semi-structured interviews.

### Exclusion:

1. Individuals under age of 15 years.
2. Individuals who practising affirmations irregularly.

**Data Capturing method:** Participants were selected using Purposive sampling method and Semi structured Interview was conducted. Interview structure and protocol are attached in the appendixes.

**Data Analysis:** Thematic Analysis, deductive method is applied to identify the major themes.

## RESULTS

Table- 1 Details of the participants

S.no	Age	Gender	Duration of Practice (weeks)	Currently practicing
1	26yrs	M	12	Relaxation techniques Positive Affirmations
2	18yrs	M	10	RT& P.A
3	48yrs	F	12	RT& P.A
4	16yrs	M	8	RT& P.A
5	17yrs	M	10	RT& P.A
6	34yrs	F	8	RT& P.A
7	35yrs	M	6	P.A
8	24yrs	F	14	RT& P.A
9	23yrs	F	12	RT& P.A
10	34yrs	F	12	P.A
11	45yrs	M	20	RT& P.A
12	52yrs	M	12	RT& P.A
13	22yrs	M	12	RT& P.A
14	36yrs	F	18	RT& P.A
15	55yrs	F	16	RT& P.A
16	27yrs	M	9	P.A
17	18yrs	M	14	RT& P.A
18	20yrs	M	12	RT& P.A
19	18yrs	F	4	RT& P.A
20	46yrs	M	20	RT& P.A

**Table- 2 Identified Codes and Themes**

S.no	Code	Theme
1	Improved Memory Increased Attention Increased concentration Creativity Critical thinking	Cognitive clarity
2	Neural ability Goal setting and achievement Developed organisational skills Increased openness to learn	Adaptive
3	Feeling confident Optimistic Ability to develop insight Hope	Positive Mindset
4	Anxiety Reduction Mental calmness Reduced anger levels Mood Improved Increased sleep quality	Stress Reduction
5	Emotional Regulation Self-efficacy Perseverance	Resilience
6	Acceptance Overcame Inferiority Increased sense of self Improved interpersonal relationships	Self-Perception

Table-2 has a list of codes and identified themes. Themes identified are Cognitive clarity, Adaptive, Positive mindset, Stress reduction, Resilience, Self-perception.

## RESULTS FINDINGS:

After reviewing the participants' narratives, codes, 6 themes were identified.

1. Cognitive clarity, which refers to how positive emotions can broaden individuals' attentional focus. This broadening of cognitive scope facilitates clearer thinking and better decision-making. Regular practice of positive affirmations can help individuals experience an increase in positive emotions, leading to enhanced cognitive clarity.
2. Adaptability is the capacity to adjust to changing circumstances and promotes adaptive coping strategies and problem-solving skills.
3. Positive mindset is the result of accumulating positive emotions over time. It is characterized by optimism, hope, and resilience. By repeatedly practicing positive affirmations, individuals can cultivate a habit of focusing on their strengths and potential, leading to a more optimistic outlook on life.
4. Stress Reduction reduction techniques can help alleviate the effects of stress by promoting physiological relaxation and psychological resilience.
5. Resilience is providing individuals with the emotional resources needed to bounce back from adversity.
6. Self-perception influences how individuals interpret and respond to feedback.

## DISCUSSION

The practice of affirming positive words and handling situations with positivity has been passed down through generations to generations promoting self-assurance and confidence. In today's fast-paced world, many of us are struggling with chronic illnesses, which are often accompanied by anxiety and stress. These negative experiences can have a damaging effect on our inner selves, leading to pessimistic thinking. However, incorporating positive affirmations into our daily routine can bring about significant changes. Research literature suggests

that positive affirmations can improve memory, neural connectivity, and overall well-being.

In this study the results of a narrative analysis provide valuable insights into the subjective experiences of individuals who regularly engage in positive affirmations. These insights shed light on the potential effects of affirmations on memory enhancement, neuroplasticity, and psychological well-being. The study interviewed a total of 20 participants, and the data revealed that all of them have developed a positive affirmation layer around them that protects them from potential fear. Through thematic analysis codes were identified from the data and grouped them into themes, which include cognitive clarity, adaptability, positive mindset, stress reduction, resilience, and self-perception.

Some participants have struggled to understand how they can improve their learning and cognitive abilities. At first, they lacked confidence and believed that their abilities were limited. However, these individuals were able to overcome this perception and were able to process information more effectively. As a result, they experienced significant improvements in their ability to learn and function.

Many individuals reported experiencing better memory retrieval and cognitive clarity through regular affirmation practice. For instance, one individual noted, "I realized that after reciting affirmations related to memory, I was able to easily recall information, especially during exams or presentations." This observation is aligning with prior research that indicates self-affirmation methods can enhance cognitive performance by reducing stress and strengthening executive functioning (Creswell et al., 2005).

Participants reported experiencing improved emotional resilience and self-confidence after practicing affirmations. By affirming positive beliefs about themselves, individuals appeared to develop a more adaptive self-concept and coping strategies for dealing with adversity. One participant expressed, "Affirmations helped me see myself in a more positive light and overcome self-doubt, which in turn boosted my confidence and resilience." This finding is consistent with self-affirmation theory, which suggests that affirmations can enhance self-integrity and protect against threats to self-esteem (Steele, 1988).

## CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The qualitative study concludes that positive affirmations can have a positive impact on memory, neuroplasticity, and psychological well-being. The research highlights the individual experiences of people who practice positive affirmations and suggests that such interventions, in the form of regular self-affirmation practice, can have significant implications for cognitive functioning and mental health. Practice of self-affirmations may have significant implications for cognitive functioning and mental well-being.

### Recommendation

Further research using longitudinal designs and neuroimaging techniques is needed to confirm these qualitative findings and reveal the underlying neural mechanisms.

## APPENDIX

### Interview protocol

The study participants were warmly welcomed and given a brief overview of the study's purpose and interview process. Before beginning the interview, each participant provided informed consent, demonstrating their understanding of the study's nature and willingness to participate voluntarily. It was emphasized that all responses would remain confidential, and participants had the autonomy to withdraw from the study at any point to ensure their comfort and privacy throughout the process.

The study recorded socio-economic data such as age, gender, occupation, cultural background, history of any mental illness, and prior experience with positive affirmation and its impact on the participants.

#### Main questions asked:

1. Can you tell me how you first learned about positive affirmations and what drew you to the practice?
2. How do you include positive affirmations into your daily routine? Could you describe a typical affirmation session for me?
3. What kinds of affirmations do you usually use? Do you focus on specific themes or areas of your life when creating affirmations?
4. How do you feel before and after engaging in a positive affirmation session? Do you notice any changes in your mood, energy levels, or mindset?
5. Have you noticed any effects of positive affirmations on your memory or cognitive abilities? If so, can you share some examples or describe the nature of these changes?
6. How do you think positive affirmations have impacted your overall well-being? Have you seen any noticeable improvements in specific areas of your life, such as relationships, work, or personal growth?
7. Can you share any memorable experiences or anecdotes related to using positive affirmations?
8. Have you faced any challenges or obstacles while practicing positive affirmations? If so, how do you deal with them?
9. What are your thoughts on the long-term benefits of incorporating positive affirmations into your life? Do you plan to continue this practice in the future?
10. Is there anything else you would like to add or any additional insights you'd like to share about your experiences with positive affirmations?

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## Revisiting the Construct of Self - Affirmation

Aakanksha Upadhyay\* & Dr. Soma Pramanik\*\*

### ABSTRACT

*Positive affirmations are being readily discussed and studied in psychology as an emerging and expanding field but positive affirmations are not a novel concept. Conceptually, positive affirmations are found to help boost self-efficacy and self-esteem (Acosta-Gonzaga, 2023) of an individual and researches also show changes in the neural pathways due to positive affirmations. Affirmations were found to enhance problem solving abilities under stress (Creswell, et al., 2013) and help the brain in better processing of self-views (Cascio, et al., 2016) which helps in boosting self-worth.*

*In the present paper we aim to discuss the concept of positive affirmations in light of the techniques used in various psychotherapies. The auto-suggestions or auto-dialogues which are the core component of affirmations also find a crucial place in therapies like hypnosis, mindfulness and self-dialogues techniques used in therapies like cognitive behavioral therapy, assertive training, aversive therapies etc. The paper aims to throw light on the similarity and congruence between the concept of self-affirmations and techniques used in various therapies. Further, the paper also aims to propose a model emphasizing the underlying mechanism through which self-affirmations bring about changes in self-perception and self-concept. In conclusion, the paper outlines the concept of self-affirmations, its relation with self-dialogue and suggestions as well as proposes a model through which self-affirmation helps to achieve the goal of therapies. .*

**Keywords:** *Self-affirmations, Hypnosis, Cognitive Behavior Therapy, Self-Instructional Module.*

### INTRODUCTION

It is unclear how and when the concept of self-affirmation came to light but it can be asserted that the discussion on self-affirmation came into the mainstream

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after Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance. Self-affirmation can be conceptualized as the inner dialogue with self but that will be a myopic version of conceptualizing the construct. Self-affirmation is also closely related to and the functions are relatively dependent on self-esteem of the person affirming. Self-affirmations were not found to be effective on people who had low self-esteem whereas they did seem to work for people having high self-esteem but only for a limited period (Wood et al., 2009). The underlying mechanism is to be discussed in the light of many other constructs and it should not be conceptualized as a sole construct.

## DECODING SELF-AFFIRMATION

The theory of self-affirmation may be a novel concept attracting a lot of attention, especially through social media but the construct has been a part of clinical practices for ages. Self-affirmation can be understood as the inner script of a person which helps the person to communicate with him/herself. In case of a psychological crisis, the self-integrity of the individual is threatened (Sherman & Cohen, 2008) and the individual tries to go back to an equilibrium state as soon as possible. It was found that people who showed resilient behavior when faced with a negative event or a grieving situation, perceived themselves as having greater ability to self-enhance, i.e., the possession of more positive attributes in comparison to others (Taylor & Brown, 1988). The belief, however, seems to have little significance if not backed by self-affirmative thoughts and action. Moreover, self-enhancement is likely when the person is more self-affirmed and there is no cognitive dissonance between the inner script and belief. Since self-affirmation is only beneficial for people who have high self-esteem and people who actually believe in the affirmations they make (Wood et al., 2009), it is safe to infer that self-enhancement is highly unlikely if one is not self-affirmed.

The buffering effect of psychological distress in people who have self-affirmation is well studied and documented (Sherman, Bunyan, Creswell & Jaremka, 2009). Some studies also found that self-affirmations can lead to low levels of neuroendocrine and psychological response towards stressful situations (Creswell, Welch, Taylor, Sherman, Gruenewald & Mann, 2005). Since the construct is so closely related to moderation of stress, it is natural to draw inference that self-affirmation would prove to be a helpful therapeutic technique. The present paper aims at exploring the use of self-affirmation as a technique in various therapies and gain an insight into how the self-affirmation practices help an individual in therapy.

## USE OF SELF-AFFIRMATION IN THERAPIES

Self-affirmation and therapies go hand in hand since ages but the relationship had not been explicitly documented as yet. Different therapies use different terminologies like suggestions, self-dialogue, automatic suggestions etc. but are eventually talking and relying on the same mechanism which helps in addressing the mental illness through altering the belief mechanisms. Besides, self-affirmation has been found to reduce the stigma around seeking help for psychological illness (Lannin, Gyll, Vogel & Madon, 2013) which can help solve the issue of under-reporting of mental illness. The next section will focus on some established therapies and the use of self-affirmation in those therapies.



## HYPNOSIS AND SELF- AFFIRMATION:

The practice of hypnosis dates back to the late 19th century and is still practiced by many psychologists for treatment of mental disorders. Hypnosis is an altered state of consciousness where the therapist helps the client reach a trance-like state, detaching the attention from the present environment and creating hypnotic reality through suggestions (Williamson, 2019). Many researchers who posited that hypnosis elevates self- efficacy and increased tolerance towards pain (Jensen, Adachi, Tomé-Pires, Lee, Osman & Miró, 2015) but there are varied non- conclusive models discussing the mechanism of the beneficial effects of hypnosis. The theories, however, have consensus on two key factors attributed to the client. The mental ability of the client to respond to hypnosis and client's belief in responding to hypnosis (Williamson, 2019). One crucial factor in creating a hypnotic reality is the suggestibility of the client. People who have vivid imagination and are capable of adhering to suggestions of the therapist are more likely to achieve a hypnotic state (Kirsch, 1997). The authors put forward that self- affirmation is one of the many underlying mechanisms through which the beneficial effects of hypnosis are achieved. The study by Wood et al. (2009) found that people who have high self- esteem were the only clients who benefitted from self-affirmation whereas those who did not really believe in whatever they affirmed did not have any beneficial effect of self- affirmation. People who do not have firm belief that they truly possess the qualities they were affirming to, experienced cognitive dissonance as their internal script did not match with the affirmation statements they were making. The authors put forward that constructing hypnotic reality is a function of affirmation in oneself. It is only possible to achieve the hypnotic reality when the inner script and the suggestibility of the therapist are not in a state of cognitive dissonance.

Moreover, self- hypnosis is also a prevalent technique used by many people to achieve a higher level of attention and consciousness. It is crucial that the internal dialogue and the construction of hypnotic trance like state are in sync, for self - hypnosis. It is difficult to achieve a trance-like or altered consciousness state with conflicting thoughts and mental overload, therefore, self- affirmation becomes a crucial component of self- hypnosis.

### Box 1. An example of suggestions in creating hypnotic reality

A therapist uses the following suggestions to create a hypnotic reality for a group of students. The example is only an initial section of suggestions provided by the therapist:

"I want you to picture one of those massive, ancient dictionaries in front of me. One of those thousands-page dictionaries, you know? It needs to be forty pounds in weight. Additionally, visualize myself clutching a lot of balloons. Lots of balloons. There are so many that you may think I might simply float away while holding them. I'll put this bulky dictionary on top of your left hand in a moment. How dense it will feel. I'm curious how much work you'll have to put in just to hang onto that book. Now that I've put the book in your hand, just feel how weighty it is."

At the end of the session, some students were able to move their hands whereas some others were not able to move their hand depending on the levels of suggestibility they have.

## COGNITIVE BEHAVIOR THERAPY AND SELF- AFFIRMATION

Similar underlying mechanisms of self- affirmation can be traced in many therapies which are widely used by psychologists and clinicians. Therapies like Cognitive Behavior therapy, Assertion therapy also use self affirmation as the underlying mechanism. The emphasis and the core philosophy of CBT holds that cognitive restructuring can lead to altered emotions and behavior which in turn help with mental disorders (Fenn & Byrne, 2013). The process of cognitive restructuring involves a major shift in the perspective towards life which initially causes a lot of dissonance. CBT also puts a great deal of emphasis on self- dialogues and asserts that self-talk eventually is transformed into automatic thoughts and self- beliefs. The belief about oneself is available almost automatically, especially, during times of crisis which is believed to be the underlying cause of feelings of emotional turmoil in people. Self talk was also found to enhance self- confidence and reduce anxiety among people (Hatzigeorgiadis, Zourbanos, Mpoupaki & Theodorakis, 2009). In light of the discussion and empirical support, it is safe to infer that self- affirmation and boosting self with positive self-dialogues is the underlying process through which cognitive restructuring happens. Further, cognitive restructuring can only be translated at behavioral level only when the self dialogue or self talk also gets restructured. Moreover, it is also crucial that the person believes in the shift in perspective and there is no dissonance between the already held thought structure and the new restructured thought process.

### **Box 2. An example of automatic thought identification and suggestions in cognitive behavior therapy**

A therapist using CBT was dealing with a client who felt frustrated at work. The example is a verbatim between the client and therapist and shows how automatic thoughts are identified and altered through therapist's suggestion and intervention:

Client: I guess I was thinking that no-one appreciates what I do.

Therapist: Alright. We refer to what you just described as an automatic thought. They are owned by all. These are the kinds of ideas that come to you effortlessly and without any effort on your part. The idea usually happens so fast that you don't recognise it, but it affects your feelings anyway. Usually, you notice the emotion instead of the thought. These instinctive thoughts are frequently flawed in some manner, but we seldom pause to consider if they are actually true. But is that what we're going to do today?

Therapist: Tell me, what is the effect of believing that 'no-one appreciates you'?

Client: Well, it infuriates me! I feel so undervalued and it puts me in such a foul mood.

Therapist: Okay, now I'd just like you to think for a moment what could be the effect if you changed that way of thinking

Client: You mean, if I didn't think that 'no-one appreciates me'?

Therapist: Yes.

Client: I guess I'd be a lot happier in my job. Ha, ha, I'd probably be nicer to be around. I'd be less snappy, more patient.

Self instructional learning has also become a viable tool for cognitive restructuring in clients and clients learn to replace their negative or maladaptive thoughts with more positive thoughts through instructions to self. Self instructional module

is a relatively recent development which was originally designed for students to enhance their learning outcomes. The module contains material to achieve predetermined learning outcomes through self instructions. The module has been implemented into therapy as well. The therapist asks the client to verbalize a set of instructions to oneself when faced with a crisis situation. The technique helps the client to focus the attention back to more positive things and helps the instructions to regulate the negative emotions by shifting the approach towards the issue (Groenewold & Der, 1987). Instructions that the client verbalizes are self-affirmations which help the client to regulate their emotions.

### **Box 3. An example of self suggestions in self instructional module**

A girl, named S, reported feeling nervous and fidgety, had poor posture and problems making eye contact. She was reluctant to come to therapy as the initial rapport could not be established. The therapist decided to work on her posture and eye contact, as these symptoms are not threatening to the client. The therapist decided to try a self instructional module with the client an example of which is given below:

"I have to remind myself to keep my head up and walk straight up. It's not difficult at all. I have to keep in mind to sit up straight and raise my head when in class. I have to look at the individual, make eye contact and pay attention when they are speaking. I can do it! Fantastic!"

Once S was able to work through her posture and eye contact improved through these self-instructions, the therapist started working on her feelings of nervousness.

Source : Groenewold, G. F., & Der, D.-F. (1987).

Assertiveness training is a famous behavior technique used to help people to take their stand. It is usually used by therapists for people who find it difficult to say "no" to people, draw healthy boundaries and stage fright. Self-affirmed people are more likely to be assertive as confidence in self is one of the main factors in assertiveness. Assertiveness and self-affirmation are such overlapping concepts that studies have used the terms interchangeably (Wagener, Delvaux, Sarto, Roodthoof & Blairy, 2013).

### **Box 4. An example of self dialogue in assertiveness training**

K, was successful in her job but her seniors offered her much less than she thought she deserved. K initially did not take a stand for herself, considering that it will only worsen the situation, thinking to herself "I would take what they offered because I was afraid to demand my asking price,".

K started feeling dissonance however as she knew that she deserves more but was afraid to ask. When she tried asserting herself, she decided to express her opinion whenever she felt that she was only compromising because she was afraid. Gradually, her conflict (which arose out of no being able to put forward her thoughts and accepting offers because she was afraid) resolved and she felt

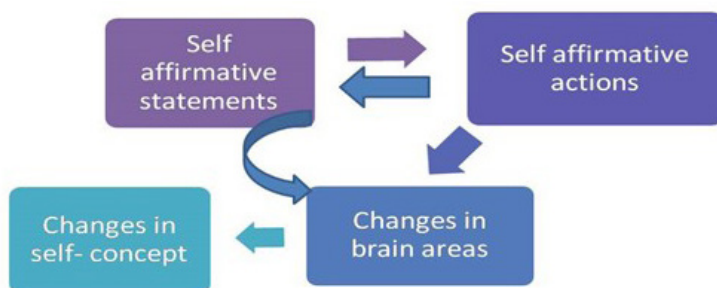
"Living a life where you speak what you think and feel is so much more freeing than holding everything in".

Source: Magazine article by Amy Gallo (2012)

Self affirmation may not seem like the agent for change in the first instance but a deeper understanding of the concept gives an insight into how self affirmation acts as an underlying mechanism for an altered self concept and self perception. Therapies have used it conceptually, though the terminologies changed with every therapy.

### THE MECHANISM OF SELF AFFIRMATION IN CHANGE

The authors propose that self- affirmation works at cognitive level , in a similar way as biofeedback works at emotional level. Biofeedback provides information about the physical changes whereas self- affirming behavior or repeated verbalisation gradually creates a change in the internal script of a person. The authors, hereby, propose a model which attempts to understand the mechanism through which self -affirmation leads to change. Self- affirmation brings about a shift in the inner script which further changes the self- concept of the individual. Though this mechanism seems plausible, it is unlikely that the change comes about with affirmation alone. Some behavioral activity of the affirmation is also crucial for it to work. The model suggests that self affirmative statements and self assertive behavior are interdependent. When a person performs self affirmative behavior, it can lead to increased self assertive thoughts as self assertive behavior is likely to enhance self esteem. The model posits that self affirmation brings about changes in the neural structure thus changing the self concept of the individual as well. Studies have found that people who self affirm have activated brain systems related to self processing areas and reward processing areas (Cascio, O'Donnell, Tinney, Lieberman, Taylor, Strecher & Falk, 2016). The change in self processing areas is also likely to bring about changes in the perception of self, thereby altering the self concept. Further, the activation of reward related areas also puts forward a possibility that individuals who self affirm have a more positive outlook and are more future oriented (Cascio, et al., 2016). Positive self concept helps individuals to be more self affirmed , therefore, becoming a cyclic process where the individual intentionally starts self affirmative statements and behavior but gradually starts feeling the same way as well as affirmative behavior and thoughts bring about a change in the inner dialogue of the individual.



The model shows the gradual transformation of self affirmative statements to an altered self concept of the individual through the process of actions and changes in brain areas.

## CONCLUSION

The chapter focuses on the use of self affirmation in various therapies as therapeutic tools. Though the term used for self affirmation have varied across therapies, it has remained a crucial underlying mechanism for change. It is safe to infer that there is an inner script which is not always in sync with the overt behavior. When there is a dissonance between the inner script or belief and the overt behavior, the individual faces a dilemma and change is unlikely as the individual displays attentional bias, picking up such cues as is in sync with the inner script. Therapies aim to not only address any psychological crisis but also help an individual gain insight into their pattern and enhance their potential. Self affirmation brings to light the maladaptive patterns one holds, therefore affirmation is not only a tool to deal with mental illness but also an active technique to gain insight into one's potential and capabilities.

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## Positive Bio-Psycho-Social Interventions for Individual and Community Health Maximisation: Human Sports Resource Development (HSRD)

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### ABSTRACT

*There is an imperative need, importance, and scope for inculcating the physical activity culture, which plays a crucial and cardinal role for the holistic development of health of an individual and society (Sound Mind & Sound Body). Bio-psychosocial interventions creating positive and pragmatic impact must be evolved out with integration of cardinal aspects of Positive Psychology, Sports Psychology, Health Psychology and, Community Psychology etc. Enhancement of physical activity (self-propelled directional impetus) and unleashing the creative, competitive potential initiatives of walking, jogging, running, cycling, swimming, sports with yoga, meditation, mindfulness, and life skills etc, must be evolved out involving the target motivators. To study the lifestyle patterns of everyone to identify the causes, barriers, or constraints for the life span development. The positive interventions and committed efforts are to be incorporated from the early developmental stages. Application of various Motivational theories inculcating internally aroused, community conscious, committed community initiatives must be taken up. Various experimental activities for the Human Sports Resource Development (HSRD) conducted by Sunkara Bhaskara Rao Sports & Games R&D Centre, Rajahmundry like Sports Assessment Cards, Health-Conscious Cards, Fastest Man/Boy/Lady/Girl of Rajahmundry, Nagin's Kreedha Diksha (40 days Camp with disciplined exercise/Physical Activity), Awareness Campaigns etc. With self-awareness, self-discipline, self-love mingled with cohesive community-based interventions with bio-psychosocial*

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*strategies, we can bring back the inherent potential energy of the individual to improve their health by incorporating physical activity in all stages of their life. The practice of physical education, physical activity and sport is a fundamental right for all (UNESCO).*

**Keywords:** *Physical Activity, Bio-Psychosocial, Community Interventions.*

## INTRODUCTION

There is an imperative need, importance, and wide scope for inculcating physical activity culture among children and youth. This culture plays a crucial or cardinal role for the holistic development of health of an individual, community/society (Sound Mind & Sound Body) with Mass Human Sports Resource Development strategies, with impactful interventions from each and everyone concerned.

As noted in the executive summary of Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018-30 (GAPPA - WHO) executive Summary “Regular physical activity promotes both mental and physical health. It is beneficial for people of all ages and abilities, and it is never too late to start being more active and less sedentary to improve health. Yet 81% adolescents and 27.5% of adults currently do not meet WHO’s recommended levels of physical activity and this affects not only individuals over their life span and also their families, but health services and society as a whole”. (The economic burden of physical inactivity in large, globally almost five hundred million new cases of preventable NCDs will occur in between 2020 and 2030, incurred treatment costs of just over US 300 billion annually if there is no change in the current prevalence of inactivity. Half of these new cases NCD’s (47%) result from hypertension and 43% will result from depression. Three quarters of all cases will occur in lower- and upper-income countries. The largest economic cost is set to occur among high-income countries, which will account for 70% health care expenditure on treating illness resulting from physical inactivity).

GAPPA-WHO 2018-2030: envisages inputs and enablers of Policy Action on physical Activity and Policy Implementation through:

- **Active Systems-** Governance, leadership, ownership, policy, research, and financing with drivers of Physical Activity.
- **Active Society-** Community wide campaigns and promotion.
- **Active environments** - Supportive environments & facilities.
- **Active people** - Services and programs in key settings. National campaign on public activity.

National Mass participation of events followed by monitoring and evaluation. Despite the fact that most of the people are aware of the need, importance, and benefits of physical activity across Life Span (from toddler to the old age), we can identify sedentary lifestyle and physical inactivity in all stages of life, which involves excessive screen time, social media, excessive pressure in academics, procrastination etc.

We cannot order Happiness, Health, peace etc. from Zomato, Swiggy, though google can give us directions, knowledge, and ways of how why of PA, but it should be self-driven, self-activated concept. Children and youth should learn that though physical activity may appear like a pain (short time) but reaps long



term gain.

We can inculcate or make a child or youth towards physical activity along with utilizing and applying the motivational theory of David McClelland - Achievement Motivation, peer group competition, camaraderie with broad and cohesive sportive spirit.

Positive bio-psychosocial interventions creating positive and pragmatic impact have to be evolved out with integration, coordination and cooperation of cardinal aspects of Positive Psychology, Sports Psychology, Health Psychology and Community Psychology etc and other relevant fields have to be taken up with committed involvement of all concerned (viz, target motivators ) for creating awareness and activating PA and Sports Culture among all. Creating awareness (among target persons) with impactful interventions for the enhancement and implementation of PA culture with self-propelled directional impetus and unleashing the creative, comparative and competitive potential inspiring initiatives like walking, jogging, running, cycling, swimming, sports, games mingled with yoga, meditation, mindfulness and life skills development etc. mentored and monitored by the target motivators (parents, teachers, peers, coaches, etc.).

Creating awareness about the need, importance and scope of taking part in PA, Sports and games yielding benefits like motor development, prevention and control of heart diseases, diabetes, cancer, strengthening of bones, neuromuscular coordination, improved psychosocial health (reduce anxiety and depression), physical and psychological endurance, strength, stamina and determination and emotional regulation,

Positive Psychology interventions with way-power and will-power initiatives, intrinsic pathways mingled with self-awareness, self-efficacy, self-esteem, self-confidence no doubt are necessary to unleash sports potential embedded within every individual.

Health psychology interventions with the "Cause and effect" (cause of undertaking PA and effect of reaping benefits), as Sports, P.A. act as the medicine to prevent or control many of the diseases. No doubt making the children and youth to utilize their 'body' (Hardware), the mind (or psychological interventions) are needed to activate them with Community Psychological perspectives of diversity, equity and inclusion, irrespective of any discrimination, of sex, gender, religion, and projecting and utilizing those sports is for all. It is community social responsibility to enthuse co-operation co-ordination, collaboration with community conscious interventions to develop and improve the community based cohesive sports / games and physical activity programmes.

### **About Sunkara Bhaskara Rao Sports and Games Research & Development Centre**

Sunkara Bhaskara Rao Sports and Games Research & Development Centre was established in 2002, registered in 2010 with the mission "to inculcate Sports, Physical Activity and Exercise culture among children and youth", with various Human Sports Resource Development (H.S.R.D) initiatives, participative interventions for mobilization and utilization for the individual / community

health maximization.

The Centre is started in memory of a reputed football player (late) Sunkara Bhaskara Rao who dedicated his life, properties for the development of game of Football and other games. He was hailed as the "Father of A.P. Football", for taking vital role in organizing two National level Gold Cup Football Tournaments (prior to 1962) and many more. In recognition of the phenomenal sportive services rendered by him, a school is named as "Sunkara Bhaskara Rao Municipal Corporation High School" at Rajahmundry.

Human Sports Resource Development (H.S.R.D) has been defined as "An encouragement, participation, inspiration and motivation with commitment by an individual(s), group(s), organizations, government, N.G.Os. or any other concerned for the mobilization, utilization and development of the inherent sports potential of an individual(s), groups, society etc. in an organized way towards Healthier Society" – Sunkara Nagendra Kishore & Dr. D. Lalitha Rani 2013.

### **HSRD ACTIVITIES OF THE CENTRE**

The primary importance of Human Sports Resource Development (HSRD) is to inculcate the positive wellbeing of the sportsmen/community.

#### **Sports Assessment / Initiation Cards:-**

A Social Awareness / Physical Literacy Initiative Campaign. To unleash the Sports & Physical potential and ability embedded in each and every student / child / youth, and to create awareness, interest, urge, need among them Sports Initiation / Assessment cards are introduced in selected government / corporate schools as the Initial Motivational tool. Photo affixed Sports Assessment Cards depicting the comparative, creative competitive potential measurements of each and every student viz; Time of 50 mts. Run, Jumps, Throws, with the Height, Weight, BMI, Blood group, were given with the Signatures of Headmaster, P.E.T. R & D Centre Directors and resource person available in the geographical area as the community participative initiative. The first Sports Assessment Cards were introduced the parameters were measured Municipal Corporation School Rajahmundry (named after Sunkara Bhaskara Rao afterwards). As it was the very first / initial physical activity movement Photo affixed Sports Assessment Cards measuring and incorporating the parameters of each and every student with appropriate physical psycho & social interventions / inspiration were given (i.e. Almost from 'a stage of 'inertia to activity'' physical movement.) Impressed by this Sports Activating concept it is pertinent to note that with the initiation, inspiration, passion and interest the Chairman of Sri Gowthami Public School, Rajahmundry wherein the competitive abilities of 1000 students are measured (which took more than 1½ months with committed active involvement, co-operation, co-ordination of PETs, teachers, prominent athletes of the city, coaches, parents and the students (as participants and spectators). The Photo affixed Sports Assessment Cards were presented to each one of them with Motivational impact and fervor mingled with positive, penetrating and impactful speeches by Resource persons (along with a lawyer, principal, journalist, parents and students) Rotary Club of Rajahmundry River City has

adopted a School (children below 6 years) and given Sports Initiation Cards to them, measuring their abilities, skills and enjoying their enthusiasm, group cohesion and the Commissioner of Municipal Corporation, Rajahmundry took up a very impactful inspiring role for the measurement of various parameters for the Sports Assessment Cards, for all the youngsters (270 nos.) during the Summer Camp organized for athletes, football, volleyball, cricket and other games.

### **Fastest Man, Boy, Lady and Girl of Rajahmundry (100 mts. Run):**

To commemorate the Birth Anniversary of Sunkara Bhaskara Rao on 12th September every year, 100 mts. Run is conducted to create comparative competitive awareness with inspiration interest to participate. The timings (approx.) of each and every participant is measured leading to Motivational inspiration with enhanced sportive spirit, need and urge to compete. While in the initial 2 years the participation of women was less than 10, the participation of girls / ladies increased drastically with above 50 to 100. (There was an impact and healthy competition among the Municipal / Government Schools to send a greater number of participants. (the highest of 100 girls from a Government Girls High School in a year along with all 200 girls' competitions with each other was feast to the eyes). It is noted that along with the increase in number of participants (Quantitative increase), the competitive potential of each and every one respect of their starting, strides, speed and with competitive involvement (Qualitative enhanced performance) is worth mentioning. Another significant aspect is the number of Spectators (from the Government degree college) the peer group, parents and general public increased year after year with the active integrated consistent, committed inspirational involvement of the Rajahmundry Zone PETs association ,parents and the coaches is praiseworthy. Every village, town or city may conduct this run, with the title, prize or tag as "the Fastest Man / Boy / Lady / Girl of particular towns / city for the year will definitely attract many children and youth.

### **Health-Conscious Cards:**

The target Motivators like P.E.Ts., Press person etc. to elicit the importance of PA / Exercise to the target motivators Affixing the individual photos, measuring their competitive potential of running 50 mts. Jumps, throws, 1 K.M. walk along with indicating their, height, weight, BMI with medical checkups like B.P., Sugar etc. (monitored by Dr. C.V.S.Sastry, Executive Director of R&D Center ,followed by an exhaustive Medical Camp / Interactive sessions) Health conscious Cards were presented to the Press (Journalists, editors) at Rajahmundry and also to the Physical Education Teachers at Amalapuram. This Health-Conscious Cards are being planned for the Police, Parents, Walkers, and others.

### **Mass Circular Relay Runs:**

Mass Circular Relay Runs (100 girls from 4 Schools total  $4 \times 100 = 400$  girls)  $25 \times 4 \times 50$  mts. Relay Run. Each lap will have 4 girls participating in one lane, with 4 lanes and every girl will Run 50 mts. It is really feast to the eyes to see the girls running with grit, determination, teamwork, cohesion, co-ordination and sportive competitive spirit. The concept and the modus operandi of organizing

this as presented (poster) by Nagendra Kishore was appreciated by eminent Sports Scientists of the world at Gwalior International Conference. As the part of the International Seminar on “Global Peace and Health Maximization- A community perspective” organized by SCRA (Society for community Research & Action) Dev. 27 of APA, in association with Spruha Alumni, Department of Psychology, and this R&D Centre a community-oriented Mass Circular Relay Run was held on 29th November 2023, wherein around 400 girls from 4 academic institutions took part. Eminent Sports Psychologist Prof. Jitendra Mohan (One of the Keynote speakers of the Seminar & the Chief guest) along with the Principal of Government (A) College, Rajahmundry Dr. Ramachandra, Faculty of Psychology of Adikavi Nannaya University with more than 30 Physical Education Teachers, and Prof. Meena Sehgal profusely appreciated this Mass Circular Relay Run as one of the best unique events they have ever seen. In the Focused Group Discussions held to review the event soon after this Mass Circular Relay Run with the physical education teachers and the psychologists. It is opined that instead of 5 K, 10 K Runs these Mass Circular Relay Runs (Short Runs) will have better impact to inculcate sports culture, among participants and spectators along with other physical, psychosocial, economic and community cohesive benefits.

#### **“Nagin’s Kreedha Diksha” Cards:**

Kreedha Diksha Cards observing 40 days voluntary self-propelled disciplined, daily routine and impetus with “pleasure to perform” instead of “pressure to perform”. Various parameters like Walk, Run, Jump, Throws, Sit runs and other aerobic and anaerobic exercises, Yoga, Surya Namaskars’ meditation, (as per the attached Card) incorporated with self-evaluation perspectives. It may be pertinent to note that children and youth (overcoming their sedentary lifestyle) are taking part with their parents or friends in pursuing the Camp/Diksha, as per their time and convenience without any interruption.

During the FGD, the Physical Directors, Mentors, Doctors, Psychologists expressed that slowly and steadily the interventions suggested are gaining the attention and momentum among +40 and others, especially among exercise addicts.

#### **Conducting of Olympic Day Run and National Sports Day Runs.**

Centre regularly organized Olympic Day (June 23rd) and National Sports Day Run (Dhayanand’s Birth Anniversary (August 29th) with more than 500 children, youth and sports persons taking part, followed by honoring eminent sports persons for the last 25 years along with Seminars, sports development speeches, activities were undertaken, which were well appreciated.

R&D Centre has organized the First Mini Olympiad (District) at in memory of the founder of East Godavari District Olympic Association Sunkara Bhaskara Rao. This mini-Olympiad was dedicated to Sachin’s 200 Run in one days. Mini Olympiad was hailed as the “Magnum opus Sports activity of the State”. A column in the vernacular newspapers with Octogenarian / Senior citizens elaborating that regular physical activity / exercises in their childhood till the old age was the main reasons for their healthier life has significant impact on

middle aged people, children and youth. Community Relay Walking - team with 10 walkers, 4 teams each walking 800 mts. and giving to other was also highly appreciated and enjoyed activity undertaken by this center.

Visit of eminent sports persons Arjuna Awardees G. Jagannath, Achanta Sarath Kamal, Dhyan Chand awardee Syed Hakim, Dronacharya awardee A Srinivasa Rao and other eminent sports person paying their floral tributes and as the mark of their appreciations for Sunkara Bhaskara Rao for his impactful and inspiring services. Life Time Achievement Awards in memory of Sunkara Bhaskara Rao were presented to G.Jagannath Arjuna Awardee (Table Tennis), Chukka Sadasiva Reddy (Ball Badminton, star of India for several times) Late V. Rathina Sabapathy (92 years who was the Sports promotion Secretary and Quality Control Officer of FCI) during last two years, and six eminent Billiards, Snooker, Cricket, Football, Athletes, and Ball Badminton players are recognized and going to be presented with the awards this year.

This center in association with department of Psychology and Spruha alumni Association has taken up physical activity, psycho-social interventions, activities for the physically and psychologically challenged children and youth using play therapy interventions. Along with the psycho-social / interactive sessions during summer coaching camps, this R&D center in association with Spruha yoga psychologists, football players and coaches, organized a Yoga Training Camp on the impact of Yoga on football players. Several, Seminars, interactive sessions, motivational speaker meetings enhancing physical, psychosocial health and wellbeing were taken up by this Centre at Sunkara Bhaskara Rao Municipal Corporation High School, Rajahmundry. This center in collaboration with Rotary Club of Rajamahendra Varam Icons has taken up a "Project Positive Health Awareness Programme / Project" at four municipal corporation schools (1000 students) making each and every student to get their parents B.P. Sugar checked by giving a proforma and also to monitor their food habits etc.

## CONCLUSION

Keeping in view of imperative need of combating sedentary lifestyle prevailing, Mass Human Sports Resource Development / Physical Literacy strategies and positive pragmatic policies must be evolved out. With constant, committed mentoring and monitoring of all concerned a comprehensive multidisciplinary (applying sports, health, community and positive psychology with bio psychosocial positive impactful collaborative interventions can play a pivotal role for individual and community health Maximisation.

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**Theme - 9**  
**Mindfulness and Life satisfaction**  
**through Technology**

## Cultivating the Garden Within: Mindfulness, Flow, and the Flourishing Mind

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### ABSTRACT

**Background of the Study:** The human mind operates along a continuum between mindfulness and mindlessness. In this context, mindfulness refers to being fully present and aware, while mindlessness involves operating on autopilot. Ellen Langer's work emphasizes the significance of mindfulness in cultivating a flourishing mental state. **Aims/Purpose:** This exploration serves two main goals: Fostering Mindfulness, Promoting Flow and Flourishing. We emphasize the importance of mindfulness, drawing from Ellen Langer's work. By cultivating present-moment awareness, individuals can regulate emotions, reduce reactivity, and enhance overall well-being. In addition to mindfulness, we explore flow states—complete absorption in an activity. Achieving flow contributes to happiness, creativity, and resilience, ultimately cultivating a flourishing mind. **Methodology:** The chapter draws on research and insights from positive psychology, particularly focusing on mindfulness practices. These practices include meditation, which cultivates present-moment awareness, emotional regulation, and resilience. Additionally, the concept of flow states—complete absorption in an activity—is explored as another tool for well-being. **Findings:** The findings suggest that mindfulness improves emotional awareness, reduces reactivity, and enhances emotional regulation. It also fosters resilience by equipping individuals with coping mechanisms for complex emotions. Flow experiences, achieved through activities like creative play or hobbies, contribute to happiness, creativity, and overall well-being. **Implications:** Practical applications of mindfulness and flow are discussed, including mindful breathing, mindful movement, and gratitude practices. By incorporating these techniques, individuals can cultivate a flourishing mind and better navigate the challenges of our fast-paced modern world.

**Keywords:** Mindfulness, Mindlessness, Cognitive Rumination, Emotion Regulation, Flow, Flourishing Mind.

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The human mind is a curious paradox. It can soar to imaginative heights, solve complex problems, and forge deep connections. Yet, it's also prone to negativity bias, dwelling on past mistakes, and getting caught in repetitive thought patterns. This chapter explores the fascinating interplay between mindfulness and mindlessness, drawing on the work of Ellen Langer, a pioneer in positive psychology research. We'll delve into how fostering mindfulness and flow states can promote effective emotion regulation, reduce cognitive rumination, and ultimately contribute to a flourishing mental state.

### **The Duality of Mind: Mindfulness and Mindlessness**

Our minds exist on a spectrum between two distinct states: mindfulness and mindlessness. Mindfulness refers to conscious awareness of our thoughts, feelings, and sensations without judgment. It's a state of focused attention where we actively engage with the present experience (Kabat-Zinn, 1990). Conversely, mindlessness describes a state of automatic or autopilot thinking. We engage in routine activities on "cruise control," our minds wandering without full awareness of our actions or surroundings.

Ellen Langer's groundbreaking work, particularly her theory of mindlessness, highlights the potential pitfalls of autopilot thinking. In her seminal study on decision-making in a nursing home, Langer demonstrated that promoting mindfulness through a simple intervention (asking residents to personalize their rooms with plants) led to increased feelings of control, engagement, and even improved physical health (Langer & Rodin, 1976). This study emphasizes the power of mindfulness in enhancing well-being and highlights how even small shifts in perspective can have a significant impact.

The contemporary world thrives on fostering mindlessness. Social media feeds bombard us with carefully curated realities, while constant notifications keep us perpetually distracted. This lack of present-moment awareness has significant consequences across all age groups.

### **The Pitfalls of Mindlessness: A Global Malaise**

**Children and Adolescents:** Mindless scrolling on social media sites can foster feelings of inadequacy and peer pressure, leading to greater anxiety and despair in young people (Przybylski et al., 2013). The inability to regulate emotions effectively due to a lack of mindfulness can further exacerbate these issues.

**Case Study 1:** Social Media Frenzy and FOMO (Fear of Missing Out): A 15-year-old spends excessive time on social media platforms, constantly comparing themselves to their peers' seemingly perfect lives. This triggers feelings of inadequacy and social anxiety. The inability to regulate emotions effectively due to a lack of mindfulness leads to social isolation and a decline in academic performance. Mindfulness practices are introduced to help teenagers become aware of negative thought patterns associated with social media use and cultivate self-compassion.

**Adults:** Adults grappling with work-life balance often find themselves on autopilot, feeling overwhelmed and stressed. This chronic stress can manifest as burnout, hindering productivity and overall well-being (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Furthermore, mindlessly scrolling through news feeds can exacerbate negativity bias, fuelling feelings of helplessness and cynicism.

**Case Study 2: The Burnout Trap:** A working professional juggles a demanding job with family responsibilities. Feeling overwhelmed and stressed, they mindlessly check work emails and news notifications outside working hours. This constant state of "on" leads to chronic stress burnout and hinders their ability to connect with family and enjoy leisure activities. Mindfulness meditation is incorporated into their daily routine to promote emotional regulation and create a healthy work-life balance.

**Older Adults:** The digital divide can leave older adults feeling isolated and excluded from the hyperconnected world. Additionally, the constant influx of negative news can contribute to feelings of anxiety and helplessness in this age group.

**Case Study 3: News Anxiety and Digital Divide:** An older adult feels increasingly isolated due to the rapid pace of technological change. They struggle to keep up with the constant stream of negative news on social media and traditional media outlets, leading to feelings of anxiety and helplessness. Mindfulness practices combined with support groups for digital literacy help this individual navigate the online world with greater awareness and connect with others meaningfully.

### **Cognitive Rumination: Fuelling the Fire**

Mindlessness often leads to cognitive rumination, the repetitive and unhelpful dwelling on negative thoughts and experiences. Stuck on autopilot, our minds replay past failures and anxieties, amplifying feelings of stress and negativity (Nolen-Hoeksema, 1991). This negative thought spiral can significantly impact mental health, contributing to conditions like depression and anxiety.

### **Case Study: The 24-Hour News Cycle and Mental Health**

A recent news story highlighting the mental health impact of the 24-hour news cycle exemplifies the dangers of mindlessness and rumination. A study published in the journal *Computers in Human Behavior* (August 2023) found that excessive consumption of negative news content, mainly through social media and news alerts, was linked to increased symptoms of anxiety and depression in adults. The constant barrage of negativity can trigger rumination on personal worries and contribute to feelings of helplessness and hopelessness.

### **The Antidote: Cultivating Mindfulness and Flow**

Positive psychology offers tools to counter the harmful effects of mindlessness and rumination. Practices like meditation and mindful breathing train us to be aware of our thoughts and emotions in the present moment, without judgment. This detachment helps us break free from negative thought cycles and develop skills to regulate our emotions effectively.

### **The Benefits of Mindfulness: Regulation, Rumination, and Resilience**

Mindfulness practices cultivate several skills crucial for mental health. One critical benefit is its impact on emotion regulation. Emotions are essential to the human experience, but difficulty managing them can lead to a cascade of negative consequences. Mindfulness allows us to observe our emotions non-judgmentally, understand their underlying causes, and choose healthy responses. According to research, mindfulness activities like meditation can improve emotional awareness, reduce reactivity, and strengthen the ability to effectively regulate emotions (Keng et al., 2011). Emotion regulation promotes

mental health and resilience. Effective emotion regulation strategies enable individuals to modulate the intensity and duration of emotional experiences, cope with stressors, and maintain psychological well-being. A theory developed by Gross in 1998 suggests that we can manage our emotions in different ways. This theory, called the Process Model of Emotion Regulation, identifies strategies like rethinking a situation (cognitive reappraisal), holding back emotional expressions (expressive suppression), or even avoiding situations altogether (situation selection) as all playing a role in how we experience and respond to emotions. According to research, adaptive emotion regulation strategies like reappraisal and acceptance are linked to lower levels of depression, anxiety, and psychological distress (Aldao et al., 2010).

Furthermore, mindfulness helps combat cognitive rumination, which is the repetitive and unhelpful dwelling on negative thoughts and experiences. Cognitive rumination, characterized by repetitive and intrusive negative thoughts, is a common feature of various mental health disorders, including depression and anxiety. Rumination involves dwelling on past events, problems, or negative emotions without resolution or effective problem-solving. According to Nolen-Hoeksema's Response Styles Theory, rumination exacerbates psychological distress and interferes with adaptive coping mechanisms (Nolen-Hoeksema, 1991). High levels of rumination are associated with an increased risk of developing mood disorders and poorer treatment outcomes (Watkins, 2008). Studies have shown that mindfulness-based therapies can be highly effective in reducing rumination in individuals struggling with anxiety and depression (Teasdale et al., 2000). By cultivating present-moment awareness, we can break free from the cycle of negative thoughts and develop a sense of psychological flexibility.

Finally, mindfulness fosters resilience, the ability to bounce back from challenges and setbacks. By strengthening our emotional regulation skills and reducing rumination, mindfulness equips us with the tools necessary to navigate complex emotions and maintain a sense of well-being even in the face of adversity (Fredrickson et al., 2008).

#### Flow: The Sweet Spot of Engagement

Furthermore, the pursuit of flow states offers another powerful antidote to mindlessness. Flow, as defined by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1990), is a state of complete absorption in an activity characterized by total immersion, focused concentration, and a sense of timelessness. When we engage in flow activities that challenge us appropriately, we lose ourselves in the present moment, fostering a sense of accomplishment and well-being.

Flow experiences can be found in various activities across different age groups:

- **Children:** Engaging in creative play or learning a new skill can induce flow in children.
- **Adults:** Flow experiences can be found in hobbies, work projects, or engaging physical activities, fostering a sense of accomplishment and well-being in adulthood.
- **Older Adults:** Activities that engage the mind and spirit, like learning a new language or volunteering, can promote flow experiences in later life.

## The Power of Flow: When Mindfulness Meets Engagement

Mindfulness is not about mere passivity; it's about actively engaging with the world. Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1990) coined the term flow to describe a state of complete absorption in an activity characterized by total immersion, focused concentration, and a loss of self-consciousness. Flow experiences allow us to utilize our skills to the fullest, feel motivated, and positively lose track of time.

Interestingly, achieving flow requires a balance between challenge and skill. Activities that are too easy or too difficult lead us out of the flow state. Mindfulness practices can be instrumental in navigating this balance. By cultivating awareness of our skills and the task at hand, we can choose activities that offer an optimal challenge and promote flow experiences. Flow, in turn, has been linked to increased happiness, creativity, and overall well-being (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009).

### Cultivating a Flourishing Mind: Practical Applications

The principles of mindfulness and flow can be translated into everyday practices to enhance mental well-being. Here are some starting points:

- **Mindful Breathing:** Take a few minutes daily to focus on your breath. Observe the sensation of your inhales and exhales without judgment.
- **Mindful Movement:** Pay attention to your body as you engage in daily activities, such as walking, eating, or cleaning. Focus on the sensations in your muscles and joints.
- **Mindful Gratitude:** Take time each day to reflect on things you're grateful for, big or small. This simple practice can significantly improve well-being (Emmons & McCullough, 2004).
- **Flow Activities:** Identify and immerse yourself in activities that challenge you appropriately. This might be painting, playing a musical instrument, or working on a challenging project.

Let's explore a case study that sheds light on how flow and flourishing intersect during challenging times. In a groundbreaking study, Liu, Zhang, van der Linden, and Bakker (2023) delved into the impact of proactive behaviors on daily well-being and flow experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their research sheds light on the interesting balance of taking the initiative and thriving in the face of global challenges.

Here are the key findings:

1. **Flow Experience:** Flow is a state of complete absorption in an activity characterized by focused concentration, intrinsic motivation, and a loss of self-awareness. It's like being "in the zone" where time seems to fly by.
2. **Leveraging Strengths and Creative Play:** Researchers found a positive correlation between two proactive behaviors—utilizing personal strengths and engaging in playful design—and experiencing flow. In other words, when individuals leverage their unique abilities and create enjoyable activities, they are more likely to enter a state of flow.
3. **Daily Flourishing:** Flow experiences, in turn, were positively associated with daily flourishing. Flourishing refers to overall well-being and optimal functioning.

4. **Moderating Effect of COVID-19 Rumination:** Amidst the tempest of pandemic-induced rumination, two beacons emerged—strengths use and playful design. Like seasoned sailors, those who harnessed their unique abilities and crafted joyous experiences found themselves riding the waves of flow. These strategies, resilient and buoyant, proved most potent when the seas were roughest.

#### Practical Implications:

- **Strengths Utilization:** In times of adversity, individuals can strategically employ their inherent strengths to navigate challenges effectively. Whether through problem-solving, creative thinking, or empathetic engagement, these abilities contribute to the experience of flow—a state characterized by optimal engagement and heightened well-being. By intentionally tapping into these unique capacities, individuals can enhance their adaptive responses during crises.
- **Playful Design:** Infuse playfulness into your daily activities. Approach tasks with curiosity, experiment, and find joy in the process. Playful design can create a conducive environment for flow.

Remember, even under challenging circumstances, we can actively engage with life, leverage our strengths, and design our experiences to foster flow and flourishing.

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have explored the fascinating interplay between mindfulness and mindlessness. This separation from negative thought patterns allows us to interrupt the cycle of rumination and develop emotional regulation skills, highlighting the potential pitfalls of autopilot thinking in a world saturated with distractions. We can cultivate a flourishing mental garden by nurturing mindfulness and flow states, fostering emotional well-being and resilience. Mindfulness practices like meditation and mindful breathing equip us with the tools to observe our thoughts and emotions without judgment. This detachment from negative thought patterns empowers us to break free from the cycle of rumination and cultivate emotional regulation skills.

Furthermore, the pursuit of flow states offers another powerful antidote to mindlessness. Flow, characterized by complete absorption in a challenging and engaging activity, fosters a sense of accomplishment and well-being. Mindfulness plays a crucial role in achieving flow by enabling us to identify activities that offer an optimal challenge and promote focused engagement. The practical applications explored in this chapter provide a roadmap for cultivating mindfulness and flow in our daily lives. By incorporating simple practices like mindful breathing, mindful movement, and gratitude into our routines, we can develop a greater sense of present-moment awareness and appreciation.

Additionally, identifying and engaging in flow activities that leverage our strengths and bring us joy can significantly enhance our well-being. The case study on flow and flourishing during the pandemic exemplifies the power of these practices even in challenging times. By intentionally using our strengths and incorporating playful design into our activities, we can foster flow experiences that contribute to daily flourishing, even amidst adversity.

Remember, cultivating a flourishing mind is an ongoing process. By embracing mindfulness and flow, we can empower ourselves to navigate the distractions of the modern world and create a life filled with purpose, engagement, and well-being.

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**Theme - 10**  
**Other Related to Theme**

## Potential Benefits of Occupational Self-Efficacy and Employee Engagement for Enhancing Employees' Sustainability

Dr. Farah Shoaib\*

### ABSTRACT

*Employee engagement (EE) has always been an important concept in positive organizational behavior (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). The emergence of positive psychology movement has made researchers shift their research from burnout (characterized by cynicism, exhaustion, personal inefficacy) to an opposite, positive state, namely work engagement (Schaufeli et al., 2006; Storm & Rothmann, 2003). The conceptualization of self-efficacy in the present study is based on domain specific variable termed as "occupational self-efficacy (OSE). The study aims to explore the effect of occupational self-efficacy on employee engagement which leads to employees' sustainability.*

*Employees' intention to stay and organizational commitment reflected employees' sustainability. Data was collected from three different print media by 189 participants. The findings suggested that occupational self-efficacy is the most important predictor of employee engagement ( $R^2 = .49$ ). The correlation between OSE and EE shows positive relation ( $r = .69^{**}$ ) and the organizational commitment was significantly high among these employee. The quantitative method was used in the present study.*

**Keywords:** Employee Engagement, Occupational Self-Efficacy, Sustainability.

### INTRODUCTION

Employee engagement has emerged as one of the most interesting phenomena attracting both researchers and practitioners.

"In every profession and pursuit, engagement ignites talent and skill and disengagement shuts it down. The brilliance and full potential of even the brightest employee will never be expressed unless he/she is engaged. It is the ratio of engaged to disengaged workers that drives the financial outcomes and impacts profitable growth" (Loehr, 2005).

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The existing literature on employee engagement focuses more on work-related conditions (Langelaan, Bakker, van Doornen, & Schaufeli, 2006; Saks, 2006; Kelista Lea Burns, 2016 ) than individual factors of engagement. However, individual factors also play an important role in employee engagement. It is worth questioning why employees in similar work environments report different levels of engagement. Why do some employees flourish in particular jobs whereas others do not? (Langelaan et al. 2006)? Why do employees differ in performing their tasks and their levels of engagement and energy differ? (Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2009a)? Based on the findings of extensive research, Wellings et al. (2005) explained that some employees, based on a set of personal characteristics, are more likely to be engaged than others in their work. Six personal factors were significantly correlated with engagement: attachment to the job, agreeableness, and emotional stability, openness to experience, achievement orientation, and self-efficacy. Studies on personal factors related to engagement have been conducted in the West (cf. Hallberg, Johansson, & Schaufeli, 2007; Langelaan et al., 2006; Zhang, Gan, & Chan, 2007; Mauno, Kinnunen, & Ruokolainen, 2007; Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2007). Indian researchers have contributed to this stream (P. Surya, 2010; Ravichandran. K et al 2011& Richa Chaudhary , 2013).

This study is an attempt to enrich the literature with personal characteristic and employee engagement in the Indian workplace context. Specifically, the study attempts to examine the role of occupational self-efficacy (domain-specific), which is an individual characteristics (Leiter, 1992), in making employees engaged.

## EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Employee engagement is rooted in positive organizational behavior (Bakker and Demerouti, 2008). The emergence of the positive psychology movement has led researchers to shift their research from burnout (characterized by cynicism, exhaustion, and personal inefficacy) to an opposite, positive state, namely work engagement (Schaufeli et al., 2006; Storm & Rothmann, 2003).

Kahn (1990) coined this term and defined engagement as “the harnessing of organization’s members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during role performance.” With this definition, engagement can be understood in three terms: the expressions of employees on the physical, cognitive, and emotional levels.

Schaufeli & Bakker, (2001); Schaufeli et al., (2006) has categorized work engagement in three terms: vigor, dedication, and absorption. Vigor is the high levels of energy and mental resilience. Dedication is can be understood in terms of being inspired, enthusiastic, and involved in one’s work. Absorption is to be engrossed in work. The benefits of having engaged employees in organizations provide positive outcomes at both personal and organizational levels (Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti, & Xanthopoulou, 2007).

Burnout researchers have also defined engagement as the positive antithesis of burnout (Maslach et al., 2001), and According to Maslach et al. (2001), engagement

is characterized by energy, involvement, and efficacy, the direct opposite of the three burnout dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy.

## OCCUPATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY

Bandura (1997), founding father of self-efficacy defined the term as "belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the course of action required producing given attainments' (p. 3). It is the belief that one can acquire with the skills one currently possesses (Bandura, 1986). Self-efficacy is one of the most important components of social cognitive theory, and directly influence human thought, motivation, action, and performance. Stajkovic and Luthans (1998) suggested that self-efficacy enables employees to produce positive work-related outcomes.

There are ways of researching self-efficacy in different definitions, such as a global construct generalized over several domains (Shelton 1990), as a domain-specific variable (e.g., Schwarzer & Fuchs 1995), and as a task-specific behavior. Löve et al., 2012; Azizli et al., 2015 suggested that Self-efficacy can be divided into general self-efficacy and domain-specific self-efficacy. The conceptualization of self-efficacy for the present study is based on domain specific variable termed as "occupational self-efficacy. Collani (2002) define occupational self-efficacy as "one's belief in one's own ability and competence to perform successfully and effectively in situations and across different tasks in a job". In other words, occupational self-efficacy is related to the domain of the workplace.

Salanova et al. (2002) prioritized the need for a domain-specific measure over a general measure of self-efficacy

Research interests have shifted from generalized self-efficacy (Schwarzer, 1999) to more specific kinds of self-efficacy (Chemiss, 1993; Murphy, Coover, & Owen, 1989; Schaubroeck & Merrit, 1997) due to its robust results. Theoretically, this is because self-efficacy beliefs are domain-specific; a person's self-efficacy belief is very likely to differ depending on the activity to which it is related (Bandura, 1997, 1999). The distinction between various levels of self-efficacy specificity exists; therefore researches need to highlight the differences and their effect on the organizational success. In this study occupational self-efficacy has been studied as an antecedent of employee engagement which leads to organizational sustainability.

Rigotti, Schyns and Mohr (2008) defined occupational self-efficacy as "the competence that a person feels concerning the ability to successfully fulfill the tasks involved in his or her job". Pethe, Chaudhary, and Dhar (1999) defined it as "the belief in ability and competence to perform in an occupation."

Empirical research has verified the effectiveness of occupational self-efficacy with a broad range of attitudes, behaviors and work performance measures such as commitment (Schyns & Collani, 2002), job satisfaction (Rigotti et al., 2008), work-related performance (Rigotti et al., 2008), performance increase (Eden & Ravid, 1982), training success (McLaughlin, Moutray, & Muldoon, 2008; Tziner, Fisher, Senior, & Weisberg, 2007), learning styles (Berings, Poell, Simons, & van Veldhoven, 2007), and career satisfaction (Abele & Spurk, 2009). The available literature supports the relation between occupational self-efficacy, work attitudes and behaviors. The significance of occupational self-efficacy for employee well-being (Grau, Salanova, & Peiro, 2001) and engagement (Salanova, Llorens, Cifre,

Martinez, & Schaufeli, 2003) has been clearly demonstrated in literature.

The findings of Bresó et al., (2011) demonstrated that employees high on occupational self-efficacy tend to be determinant and driven by their belief in future success.

## EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND OCCUPATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY

According to Bandura's (1982) seminal work on self-efficacy, there are four primary factors that contribute to its development: mastery experiences, social persuasion, vicarious learning, and emotional states. Schyns (2004) posits that these four factors are equally instrumental in fostering occupational self-efficacy (OSE). Drawing upon the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004), it is evident that the experience of mastery, vicarious learning, and social persuasion precipitate enhanced positive emotions. This emotional upswing, in turn, bolsters an individual's sense of self-efficacy, which serves to enhance their overall well-being and work engagement (Fredrickson, 2004). From the perspectives of the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989) and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), the availability and utilization of one's strengths, coupled with job resources, are essential for cultivating positive emotions. This, in turn, fosters feelings of self-efficacy and work engagement. Deci and Ryan's (1985) work highlights the significance of job resources in promoting a sense of competence and efficacy among employees. Proctor and colleagues' (2011) research provides empirical support for the positive relationship between the use of strengths, self-efficacy, and well-being. Koutsounari and Antoniou's (2011) study also underscores the interconnectedness of job resources, OSE, and work engagement.

The literature review, in conjunction with Fredrickson's (2004) broaden-and-build theory, suggests that the deliberate cultivation of weaknesses can lead to a broader action-thought repertoire. This expanded repertoire can, in turn, enhance an individual's resilience and adaptability, ultimately contributing to their self-efficacy and well-being. Saks (2019) reevaluated his employee engagement model (2006) and found that skill variety is the main antecedent of employee engagement.

Furthermore, the combination of high occupational self-efficacy and employee engagement has been shown to have a synergistic effect on employees' sustainability. A study by Bakker and Schaufeli (2008) found that employees who reported high levels of both self-efficacy and engagement were more likely to experience a state of "work engagement," characterized by high levels of energy, enthusiasm, and dedication to their work. This state of work engagement has been linked to lower levels of burnout, higher levels of job performance, and greater overall well-being.

- Hypothesis 1 Employees high on occupational self-efficacy will be more engaged at their workplace.
- Hypothesis 2 Employee engagement will lead to organizational commitment and thus, it will be positively associated with it.
- Hypothesis 3 Employee engagement will be negatively related to employees' intention to quit.

## METHOD

### Sample

The target sample of the present study consists of journalists (N=77), editors (N=33), graphic designers (N=23) and technicians (N=56) from Dainik Jagran (Varansai, N =72), Hindustan Newspaper (N= 58) and Dainik Jagran (Allahabad, N= 59). A total of 189 employees participated in the study. The sample comprised of 144 male and 45 female age ranged between 20-45. The educational qualification varied; there were 74 post graduates, 105 graduates, 6 intermediate and 4 other.

## MEASURES

### 1. Occupational Self Efficacy(OSE)

To measure OSE, the short version OSE scale developed by Rigotti et al., (2008) was used. The shortened version of scale has been tested in five countries (Germany, Sweden, Belgium, Great Britain and Spain) and a one-dimensional model was accepted for the different language versions. Rigotti et al (2008) found reliable Cronbach alpha coefficient for this one-dimensional model that range between .72 and .90. Schyns and Szensny (2010) also found a reliable Cronbach alpha coefficient of .78 for this scale. The scale consisted of six items.

### 2. Organizational Commitment

The scale on organizational commitment develop by Rhoades et al., (2001) was adapted to measure the construct. The scale had 6 items. Five of these 6 items were originally adapted from Mayer and Allen's affective commitment scale (1997) and one item concerning pride in organizational membership was from the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire by Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979).

The Cronbach alpha value of the scale was .90.

### 3. Intention to Quit

To measured intention to quit a scale of Colarelli (1984) was adapted. This scale was composed of three items estimating to which extent respondents are thinking about leaving the organization. Out of these three items Item 1 was reverse scored. High scores represented strong intentions to quit. Colarelli (1984) found an alpha reliability of .75 for this scale.

## STATISTICAL ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Data were analyzed using correlation analysis. First, the means, standard deviations and inter-correlations were computed for the study variables.

Table No. 1. Mean, Standard Deviation and Inter-correlation

Variables	Mean	SD	EE	OSE	OC	ITQ
EE	4.02	.52	1	.69**	.70**	-.25**
OSE	4.24	.57		1	.62**	-.21**
OC	3.96	.51			1	-.22**
ITQ	3.77	.49				1

\*p<.05. \*\* p<.01.

EE-employee engagement, OSE-Occupational Self-Efficacy, OC-Organizational Commitment, and ITQ- Intention to Quit

The above table shows that there is positive and significant correlation between occupational self-efficacy, organizational commitment and employee engagement. This is also notable that the intention to quit is negatively correlated. The employees high on occupational self-efficacy will be highly motivated and will be committed to their organization and they will stay in the organization for longer time.

**Table No 2. Correlation of Occupational Self-efficacy with Employee Engagement and its Domain**

Individual Factors	Employee Engagement			
	Affective	Cognitive	Behavioral	EE
OSE	.52**	.35*	.43**	.56**

\* $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ .

The above table shows Occupational self-efficacy was highly correlated with employee engagement and it's all domains.

**Table No 3. Correlation between Domains of Employee Engagement and Consequences**

Consequences	Employee Engagement			
	Affective	Cognitive	Behavioral	EE
Organizational Commitment	.61**	.19	.34*	.54**
Intention to Quit	-.23	-.25	-.27	-.30

\* $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ .

The above table shows that organizational commitment was significantly correlated with employee engagement and its affective, cognitive and behavioral domain except cognitive domain was not found significant with organizational commitment. The outcome intention to quit of employees was negatively correlated with employee engagement and its domain.

## DISCUSSION

The domain specific self-efficacy was studied in the present study. The result suggested that occupational self-efficacy is the most important predictor of employee engagement. The hypothesis was confirmed with the findings.

The results of correlational analysis indicated that occupational self-efficacy and employee engagement were positively and significantly correlated.

The results of the present study can be lucidly elucidated through the lens of Albert Bandura's seminal social cognitive theory (1986), which provides a robust theoretical framework for understanding the intricate relationship between occupational self-efficacy and employee engagement. Bandura posits that efficacy belief or an individual's conviction in their ability to successfully navigate tasks and achieve desired outcomes, serve as the foundation of human spirit and motivation. Consequently, a fortification of occupational self-

efficacy can significantly strengthen an employee's confidence in their capacity to effectively manage their responsibilities and attain their goals, thereby facilitating a deeper immersion in and dedication to their work. Furthermore, self-efficacious individuals, armed with the conviction that they are skilled to master challenges and thrive under pressure, are more likely to seek out and engage with personally meaningful and fulfilling activities. This heightened sense of purpose and engagement can be attributed to their inherent belief in their capabilities and resilience (Kittredge, 2010). The findings of present work corroborate with some previous work in which employee engagement was positively linked with self-efficacy. (Pati & Kumar, 2010; Xanthopoulou, 2007, 2008, 2009; Llorens, Salanova, Schaufeli, & Bakker, 2007; Salanova et al., 2003).

The findings of Salanova et al. (2003) demonstrated the importance of self- and collective efficacy in explaining employee engagement. They reported that groups with higher levels of collective efficacy showed higher engagement and group performance. Bakker, Gierveld and Van Rijswijk (2006) conducted a study on female school principals and suggested that resilience, self-efficacy and optimism highly contributed to employee engagement, and were able to explain unique variance in engagement scores.

Breso et al. (2011), based on their quasi-experimental study among university students, reported that self-efficacy interventions focused on students' psychological states lead to a significant increase in employee engagement. Chaudhary, R. (2013) found that occupational self-efficacy plays a significant role in distinguishing the groups of engaged employees from non-engaged ones, with 54.8% of the variance in the discriminant function being explained by group differences.

The robust evidence linking employee engagement to turnover intentions has important implications for organizations. Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes (2002) conducted a meta-analysis of 7939 business units across 36 companies, concluding that engagement is a significant predictor of turnover. This finding has been replicated in subsequent studies, such as the research by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) in Dutch organizations, and more recent studies like Juhdi, Pa'wan, and Hansaram's (2013) work. The consistent findings across different contexts suggest that organizations can significantly reduce turnover by focusing on enhancing employee engagement.

Hallberg and Schaufeli (2006) reported a moderate negative relationship between a composite measure of work engagement and turnover intention.

Saks (2006) showed, in a heterogeneous sample of 102 employees, that job and organization engagement partially mediated the effects of a variety of job resources on, for example, organizational citizenship behavior and organizational commitment.

These findings can be explained with social exchange theory. Saks (2006) has also explained employee engagement with social exchange theory.

## LIMITATIONS

It is important to note several limitations of the present study and directions for further research. The present study focused on knowledge-based organizations,

where employees scored high on both occupational self-efficacy and engagement. These findings suggest that fostering self-efficacy is a key strategy for promoting employee engagement within this type of organizational context.

Interestingly, the research findings may not generalize to all types of organizations or industries. For instance, in print media organizations where the job focus is more on the task at hand, the primary driver of engagement may differ. Further research is needed to explore how self-efficacy interventions and their impact on engagement vary across different organizational settings.

Moreover, future research should consider the interrelated nature of socio-demographic variables and personal resources (optimism, hope, and personality factors) to better understand causality. These variables should be the focus of future studies, along with a larger sample size to improve generalizability. Additionally, the dynamic and reciprocal relationship between self-efficacy and employee engagement, as demonstrated in recent studies, should be further explored in the Indian context.

Future research in this area should continue to explore the interventions that can be implemented to enhance these factors in the workplace

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## Mental Health in Curriculum Towards 21st Century Students' Wellbeing

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### ABSTRACT

*Education is a training of journey towards self-defence, self-exploration, self-discovery, self-experimentation, etc. Students' emotional and mental well-being needs to be fostered, especially considering the rise of mental health issues among students in India. Educational institutions should create safe spaces to promote all students' emotional well-being at all levels. The National Crime Record Bureau of India has reported that 13,000 students committed suicide in India in 2021 and according to UNICEF, in 21 countries surveyed in the "State of the World's Children 2021" report, one in seven youngsters between the ages of 15 to 24 in India reported poor mental health, with only 41% feeling the need to seek support. This was the lowest percentage among the 21 countries surveyed and developing countries must address the issue seriously by raising awareness through curriculum at all courses in 21st century education, teaching, learning, etc.*

**Keywords:** Curriculum, Mental Health, Students, Teaching, Wellbeing, 21st Century.

### INTRODUCTION

According to Swami Vivekananda "Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man... Therefore, the only duty of the teacher... is to remove all obstructions from the way." and incorporating mental health education into the curriculum can be fruitful for 21st century students. It helps raise awareness, reduce stigma, etc. and provide coping strategies. Many foreign educational institutions are beginning to integrate mental health education into their curriculum to support students' overall well-being. Mental health is a crucial aspect of the overall well-being of students, especially in India, where the education system is highly competitive, stressful, demanding, etc. and the present study explores the challenges faced by Indian students regarding

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their mental health and discusses potential solutions to address these issues. Increasing awareness about mental health issues and the importance of seeking help is crucial and all educational institutions should incorporate mental health education into their curricula,

### Objectives of the Study

- To know the concept of Mental Health and its importance
- To overview the challenges faced by students in India
- To study the solutions to improve Mental Health Among 21st century Indian students
- To discuss the significance of Mental Health in Curriculum

### Methodology

The study has been conducted based on the method of document review in accordance with the qualitative approach of research and has been done on the basis of the secondary sources of data like books, research journals, newspaper articles and different websites towards “Mental Health in Curriculum Towards 21st Century Students’ Wellbeing”

### Facts and Figures

- About 60% of school students report getting very tense when they study.
- Just over 60% of girls and 40% boys say they feel very anxious about doing tests at school, even when they are well prepared.
- Over 70% of parents say they would choose to send their children to a school with below-average exam results if students were happy there.

## WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH

Well-being is the experience of health and happiness and includes mental and physical health, physical, emotional safety, a feeling of belonging, sense of purpose, achievement and success.

### Types of Wellbeing

- **Emotional:** It is the ability to be resilient, manage one’s emotions and generate emotions that lead to good feelings
- **Physical:** It is the ability to improve the functioning of one’s body through healthy eating and good exercise habits
- **Social:** It is the ability to communicate, develop meaningful relationships with others and create one’s own emotional support network
- **Workplace:** It is the ability to pursue one’s own interests, beliefs and values in order to gain meaning and happiness in life and professional enrichment
- **Societal:** It is the ability to participate in an active community or culture.

### Significance of Wellbeing

Well-being is important at school because schools/colleges have an essential role to play in supporting students to make healthy lifestyle choices and understand

the effects of their choices on their health and well-being and childhood and adolescence is a critical period in the development of long-term attitudes towards personal well-being and lifestyle choices. The social and emotional skills, knowledge and behaviours that young people learn in the classroom help them build resilience and set the pattern for how they will manage their physical and mental health throughout their lives and schools/colleges are able to provide students with reliable information and deepen their understanding of the choices they face and they are also able to provide students with the intellectual skills required to reflect critically on these choices and on the influences that society brings to bear on them, including through peer pressure, advertising, social media and family and cultural values. There is a direct link between well-being and academic achievement and vice versa, i.e. well-being is a crucial prerequisite for achievement and achievement is essential for well-being. Physical activity is associated with improved learning and the ability to concentrate. Strong, supportive relationships provide students with the emotional resources to step out of their intellectual 'comfort zone' and explore new ideas and ways of thinking, which is fundamental to educational achievement.

### Students' Challenges and Issues

**Academic Workloads:** Immense expectations from a young age, the relentless pursuit of high grades, and the fear of failure can lead to anxiety, depression, and burnout among Indian students and Rajasthan's Kota city is a prime example, where students under pressure have tragically committed suicide.

**Parental Illogical Expectations:** Parents in India often have high expectations for their children's academic achievements, subject selection, and stream selection and the pressure can be overwhelming and detrimental to students' mental health.

**Heavy Pressure of Examinations:** Competitive entrance examinations for prestigious institutions contribute significantly to stress levels among students and the intense competition and limited seats exacerbate the situation.

**Lack of Counseling Services in Educational Institutions:** Many educational institutions in India lack adequate mental health counselling services, leaving students facing emotional or psychological challenges without proper support.

**Stigma towards Mental Health in Society:** Significant stigma is associated with mental health issues in Indian society, leading students to hesitate in seeking help and classroom discussions and open communication are crucial in combatting this stigma.

**Negative Media Impact:** Biased media content and hateful debates in Indian media, along with similar trends in social media, contribute to mental health issues among students and creating a safe space for classroom discussions can help address these concerns.

**Sleep Deprivation:** Irregular lifestyles, excessive social media use, improper study hours, and late-night cramming are common practices among Indian students, leading to chronic sleep deprivation, which negatively impacts cognitive function and emotional well-being.

**Social Isolation and Lack of Physical Activities:** Academic pressures can lead to

social isolation, reducing opportunities for students to build a support network and engage in physical activities and the lack of a strong support system in a nuclear family structure further hampers students' mental health.

Solutions to Improve Mental Health Among Students Through Curriculum

**Counseling Services in Institutions:** Educational institutions like schools, colleges, etc. should offer easily accessible and confidential counselling services with trained counsellors to provide support, guidance, and interventions when necessary.

**Parental Mental Health Education:** Parents should be educated about the potential harm of excessive pressure on their children and encouraging a balanced approach to academics and extracurricular activities is essential.

**Stress Reduction Programs and Workshops:** Institutions can implement stress reduction programs, seminars, workshops, etc. such as mindfulness and relaxation techniques, to help students manage stress effectively.

**Inclusive Stigma-free Environment:** Fostering an inclusive and empathetic environment can reduce the stigma associated with mental health issues and open conversations about mental health should be promoted, and including it in the curriculum can help.

**Time Management Skills for Students:** Teaching effective time management skills can help reduce the need for late-night study sessions and promote a healthier work-life balance.

**Support Groups:** Establishing peer support groups/mentoring programs can provide students with a sense of belonging and emotional support.

**Social Media Management Skills:** Given students' extensive use of social media, they should be trained in its proper use and its impact on mental health.

**Sex Education Discussion:** Proper and age-appropriate sex education discussions should be included in the curriculum.

### Importance of Mental Health in 21st Century Curriculum

**Integrated Development:** Education should focus on nurturing emotional, social, and psychological well-being, not just imparting knowledge and integrating mental health into the curriculum fosters the holistic development of students.

**Early Intervention for Children:** By incorporating mental health education from an early age, students can learn to recognize signs of emotional distress, enabling early intervention and preventing more severe mental health issues.

**Coping Skills:** Mental health education equips students with coping skills to deal with stress, anxiety, and other emotional challenges, which are essential life skills.

**Enhancing Academic Performance:** Good mental health is closely linked to better academic performance. Students perform well when they are mentally healthy.

**Preparing for Life Challenges:** Teaching students about mental health prepares them to face life's challenges, build resilience, and adapt to change.

**Emotional Intelligence in Curriculum:** Lessons on emotional intelligence help

students understand and manage their emotions effectively.

**Stress and Anxiety Management:** Teaching stress and anxiety management techniques equips students with strategies for handling academic and personal stress.

**Communication Skills:** Improving interpersonal relationships and communication skills enhances students' ability to express themselves and seek help when needed.

**Building Resilience:** Topics on resilience-building emphasize the importance of bouncing back from setbacks and failure, contributing to confidence building.

**Mental Health Literacy for Students:** Providing information about common mental health disorders, their symptoms, and available resources for seeking help is essential.

**Self-Care Practices:** Promoting self-care practices, including physical health, nutrition, and sleep, plays a significant role in mental well-being.

## CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

Educational institutions provide an unprecedented opportunity to improve the lives of children and society at large. As nations have moved toward a commitment to universal education, schools/colleges provide the right place to drive home the point that health is a priority. Schools/colleges, teachers, and lessons have a lot of topics and discussions on the physical part of health with much neglect of the mental health aspects. Schools, with the full support of families and the community, are currently the best place to develop comprehensive mental health education for children because almost all children attend school at some time during their lives. Even by conservative estimates, 10% of all children have mental disturbances with associated impairments at some time during their childhood.[1] The Indian National Education Policy, 2020 envisions the “aim of education will not only be cognitive development but also building character and creating holistic and well-rounded individuals equipped with the key 21st century skills” such as communication, cooperation, teamwork, and resilience. A National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) national survey done in 2022 among school students found their satisfaction with their personal life was 51%, lack of concentration reported at 30%, mood swings at 43%, and difficulty to initiate conversation was reported by 23% of children and the mental health of Indian students is a critical issue that requires attention and solutions. To address the challenges they face, a multifaceted approach involving educational institutions, parents, and society as a whole is necessary and mental health is a fundamental aspect of human well-being and should be integrated into the curriculum. Incorporating mental health education into the curriculum is an important step towards promoting the well-being of students. It empowers them with confidence, knowledge, and skills necessary to navigate the challenges of both academia and life beyond the classroom and by fostering a culture of empathy, self-awareness, and emotional resilience, we can contribute to a society where mental health is valued and supported from an early age towards the foundation for healthier, happier, and more 21st century successful individuals. Mental health is one of the most important factors in determining a

student's academic success. Poor mental health can lead to decreased self-esteem, increased stress levels, and decreased concentration, all of which can affect a student's ability to succeed in school/college, etc. and educators recognize that it's essential to promote mental health among 21st century students in order to create a productive learning environment.

### **Educational Implications and Suggestions**

- Mental health and life skills education can be incorporated into the regular curriculum.
- The extensive curriculum includes the relationship between physical and mental illness, the effects of stress, culture on mental disorders, prevention, and treatment of common mental disorders throughout the life cycle, substance abuse, sexual disorders, intellectual impairments; suicide, mental disorders of the young and adolescents, etc..
- There is a need to engage students in the discussions of values that they hold regarding mental illness and the stigma which may be associated with it.
- The course also includes information regarding the types of mental health problems encountered by young people.
- Establishing a multidisciplinary mental health team to provide consultation in the management of student behavior problems can resolve several issues at the school/college level.
- Mental health education can also happen through routine classes giving examples, lessons in regular subjects that can give message on a positive approach toward mental health, cultural activities involving mental illness themes, alleviating stigma programs, guest lectures, etc.
- Mental health programs can be reinforced through the use of slogans, debates, essay and speech contests, mental health committees, parent/teacher associations, and training workshops.
- Students can visit centers where mental health services are provided.
- The yearly health checkup of students in school should involve a mental health professional.
- Successful implementation of school/college mental health programs will bring out a positive change to the entire society.
- Incorporate mental health education into the curriculum, including lessons on stress management, self-care, and mindfulness.
- Encourage open communication and create a safe space for students to share their emotions and experiences.
- Promote physical activity and healthy eating habits, which are linked to improved mental health.
- Offer resources and support services, such as counselling and therapy, to students who may be experiencing mental health challenges.

- Raise awareness and reduce stigma surrounding mental health through school/college-wide events and campaigns, like Mental Health Awareness Month (May).
- Involving both teachers and students in these activities can make them more engaging while also providing an opportunity for collaboration between educators and students.
- Promoting improved mental health among K-12/college students, helps create an optimal learning environment where everyone feels safe and supported.

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## Exploring Self-Esteem Dynamics: An Investigation among Adolescents in a Private School of Assam

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aimed to investigate the level of self-esteem among adolescents in ninth and tenth grades of a private secondary school of Assam. The sample consisted a total of 120 students, with 60 participants in each grade. The results showed a significant difference in self-esteem between ninth and tenth grade students ( $t=4.159$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Specifically, ninth-grade students exhibited higher levels of self-esteem ( $M=29.57$ ,  $SD=2.41$ ) compared to their tenth-grade students ( $M=27.36$ ,  $SD=3.76$ ). Additionally, a gender-based analysis was conducted to explore variations in self-esteem between male ( $n=60$ ) and female ( $n=60$ ) students. The findings indicated no significant difference in self-esteem between boys and girls ( $t=1.525$ ). Specifically, the mean self-esteem score for males was 29.03 ( $SD=3.04$ ), and for females, it was 28.01 ( $SD=3.63$ ).*

**Key words:** *Self-esteem, Adolescents, Secondary School.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is the time when children turn into adults, typically between 10 and 19 years old (World Health Organization [WHO], 2011). According to Erikson (1968), it's a crucial phase involving physical, mental, and emotional changes. About 18% of the world's population falls into this category (United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], 2012). This stage is recognised for creating stress due to the various changes (Frydenberg, 1997), which can lead to issues like difficulties in adjusting and mental health problems as well as changes in self-esteem (Greenberg et al., 2000).

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Self-esteem is how we feel about ourselves, including how much respect and acceptance we have for who we are. It's like our personal evaluation of ourselves. (Baumiester, 1999). Brown and Dutton (1995) said it's about the affection we feel towards others. Another perspective given by Rosenberg (1979) suggests that it's not just about how good we think we are at something, but also about how good we want to be. It is a psychological trait related to person's image of self confidence in total aspects of human activity.

Self-esteem is said to play a crucial role in influencing various key aspects of life, such as health and social outcomes, both in adolescence and adulthood. Low self-esteem is linked to increased anxiety, depression, and academic stress, significantly affecting students' overall quality of life and playing a major role in thoughts of suicide. (Nguyen et al.,2019). According to Brown (1993), individuals with higher levels of self-esteem are likely to enjoy increased life satisfaction, encounter fewer interpersonal difficulties, consistently perform at higher levels, and demonstrate lower risk to psychological issues such as anxiety and depression. Additionally, these individuals may also experience a reduced likelihood of facing physical illnesses.

Having a better level of self-esteem is crucial for success. Low self-esteem can lead to depression, poor choices, and unfulfilled potential. High self-esteem boosts confidence, clarifies goals, and enables effective communication. It empowers individuals to succeed, be goal-oriented, and resilient in the face of challenges. It fosters adaptability, openness to change, and a positive attitude towards new opportunities. Moreover, high self-esteem contributes to maintaining healthy relationships and overall well-being in various aspects of life. To realise the importance of developing one of the crucial psychological traits i.e., self-esteem, among the adolescents, the present study aimed to investigate the level of self-esteem among adolescents in ninth and tenth grades within secondary school settings.

## 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Jasmine (2015) conducted a study titled "Impact of Self-esteem on Academic Performance among Adolescence School Children" in 2015. The findings revealed a significant negative correlation between self-esteem and academic stress and a positive correlation between academic performance and self-esteem. The study suggested that students with low self-esteem tended to have lower academic performance, potentially linked to stress-related issues. Reddy, Kannekanti, and Hamza (2015) conducted a comparative study on "Self-esteem and Stress among Private and Government High School Students." Results indicated that students from both private and government schools exhibited low levels of stress and normal levels of self-esteem. Naganandini (2017) performed a study on Self-esteem among adolescents. A total of 60 participants were randomly chosen through a lottery method. The findings indicated that the majority of adolescents (55%) exhibited a normal level of self-esteem, while 36.67% demonstrated a high level, and 8.33% had a low level of self-esteem. Kaur and Kaur (2017) in their work on "Self-Esteem among adolescents in relation to their resilience", found gender differences among adolescents and positive correlation in between self-esteem and resilience among adolescents. Minev et al., (2018) in their study revealed that

girls have significantly more negative attitudes towards themselves ( $x = 32.25$ ) comparing with boys ( $x = 25.14$ ). The researchers also concluded that there was no impact of school performance on self-esteem levels of the students included in the study. Ranjan, Gupta and Gujar (2021) in their work on "Self-esteem and wellbeing among tribal and non-tribal adolescent girls" revealed that adolescent girls with tribal ethnicity exhibited lower levels of self-esteem and wellbeing (depressive) in comparison to their non-tribal counterparts. Specifically, 33.9% of tribal adolescent girls and 13.3% of non-tribal adolescent girls were identified as experiencing depressive symptoms. Biswas et al., (2022) conducted a descriptive correlational study on "Assess Life Skills, Self-Esteem, and Self-Reported Lifestyle Practices Among Adolescents" The majority of adolescents displayed low life skills (52.4%) alongside an average level of self-esteem (64%). The researchers revealed the prevalent need for continuous life skills training programs within schools to enhance adolescents' self-esteem. Mandal, SK, and Paria (2023) studied Self-esteem among School-going Adolescents in Murshidabad District and found that female students generally have higher self-esteem than male students. Students from joint families showed higher self-esteem than those from nuclear families. Also, students in the Other Backward Classes (OBC) have higher self-esteem than those in General, Scheduled Caste (SC), and Scheduled Tribe (ST) categories. These differences are statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).

### 3. RATIONAL OF THE STUDY

Adolescence, a crucial phase between childhood and adulthood, brings significant changes in body, mind, and emotions. Self-esteem plays a vital role during this time. External pressures like school, family and societal expectations can challenge positive self-esteem. Low self-esteem in teens is worrisome, leading to negative coping and mental health issues. Ignoring mental health at this developmental stage can affect academics, family, and overall well-being of the adolescents at their later age. This study focuses on teens in secondary schools, exploring self-esteem levels related to gender and grade.

Understanding and promoting positive self-esteem can protect against future challenges. Moreover, research on self-esteem provides insights into effective intervention strategies. Schools can implement programs and initiatives aimed at enhancing self-esteem, creating a positive school culture that fosters personal growth and resilience. (Baumeister et al.,2003).

### 4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- Objective 1.** To assess the level of self-esteem among adolescents studying at 9th and 10th grade in a private school of Assam.
- Objective 2.** To find out the gender differences in level of self-esteem among adolescents.

### 5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. At what level of self-esteem processed by the adolescents studying at 9th and 10th grade in a private school of Assam?

2. Does there is any significant difference in level of self-esteem processed by the adolescents studying in a private school of Assam in relation to their grade and gender?

## 6. METHODOLOGY

The methodology is crucial in a research paper as it's the key factor for assessing the study's validity. It involves providing a clear and detailed description of how the research was conducted, explaining why a specific experimental approach was chosen. This clarity is essential for others to replicate the experiment and check if the results can be reproduced. It enables other researchers to evaluate the validity of the results and make solid conclusions (Richard, 2004). The present research is basically quantitative research where the collected data is analyzed in terms of numbers.

### 6.1. Sample of the study

The sample of the present study comprised students' studying in a private high school of ninth and tenth grade in Assam. Participants were selected using stratified random sampling technique. The present study consists of 120 samples. There were 120 students including 60 boys and 60 girls. Out of which, 30-30 boys were from grade ninth and tenth and 30-30 girls were from ninth and tenth grade.

### 6.2. Tool used for the study

As per nature of the study, the present study used the following scale to measure self-esteem of adolescents

#### 1. Self-esteem Scale developed by Rosenberg (1965)

##### 6.2.1. Description of the tool

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) is a tool developed by Morris Rosenberg to measure adolescents' overall self-worth. It consists of 10 statements, answered on a 4-point scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Some statements are positive, while others are negative, with reverse scoring for the negative ones. Scores range from 1 to 40, with higher scores indicating better self-esteem. The scale has shown high reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.76 in the present study. Test-retest reliability for a 2-week interval was 0.85, and for a 7-month interval, it was 0.63.

## 7. STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED TO ANALYZE DATA

For a study on self-esteem dynamics among adolescents in a secondary school setting, the following statistical techniques employed to analyze and interpret the data.

**Descriptive Statistics:** Basic statistics like frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation used to summarize and describe the central tendencies and variability of self-esteem scores. Descriptive analysis was chosen because it helps to describe and interpret the circumstances.

**T-Tests:** To compare the mean self-esteem scores between different groups, such as gender or grade levels, to identify any significant differences t-test is used for the study.

## 8. RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

### 8.1. Sample Profile:

Table 1 provides a picture of the study participants' demographic profile, focusing on grade and gender. The sample comprises 120 adolescents, aged 14-15, from a private high school. The distribution is evenly split between genders, with 50% females and 50% males. Additionally, half of the respondents are from ninth grade, and the other half are from tenth grade.

**Table 1**

*Demographic profile of respondents (n=120)*

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Grade		
Ninth	60	50
Tenth	60	50
Total	120	100
Sex		
Female	60	50
Male	60	50
Total	120	100

### 8.2 Descriptive Statistics for Self-Esteem

**Table 2**

*Mean and SD for Self-Esteem (n=120)*

Variable	Mean	SD
Self Esteem	28.56	3.36

The average self-esteem score in the group of 120 participants is 28.56, this suggests that, on average, the participants of the study have a self-esteem score of approximately 28.56 and the standard deviation, which is 3.36, in this case, shows how much the self-esteem scores vary around the average. Most participants in this group have self-esteem scores within about 3.36 points of the average.

### 8.3. Self-esteem of Adolescence

#### 8.3.1 Grade wise Self-esteem of Adolescence

**Table 2**

*Mean, SD and t-test for grades ninth (n=60) and tenth (n=60)*

Grade	Mean	SD	t-test
Ninth	29.76	2.41	4.159**
Tenth	27.36	3.76	

\*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$ ,  $p = ns$

The results of the study indicate a significant difference in self-esteem between ninth and tenth-grade students ( $t=4.159$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Specifically, the mean self-

esteem score for ninth-grade students was 29.57 (SD = 2.41), which was significantly higher than the mean score for tenth-grade students, which was 27.36 (SD = 3.76). In summary, the findings suggest that ninth-grade students, on average, have a higher level of self-esteem compared to their tenth-grade students.

### 8.3.2 Sex of Respondents and Self-esteem

**Table 3**

*Mean, SD and t-test for self-esteem boys (n=60) and girls (n=60)*

Sex of Respondents	Mean	SD	t-test
Male	29.03	3.04	1.525 ns
Female	28.01	3.63	

\*\*  $p < .01$ ., \*  $p < .05$ .,  $p = ns$

The total number of boys and girls are 60-60. Result shows that boys and girls do not significantly differ with respect to their self-esteem.

## 9. DISCUSSION

The first objective of this study was to assess the level of self-esteem among the adolescents studying at secondary stage of education in a private school of Assam. The study results revealed the average self-esteem score of 28.56 among the adolescents' students in the private school of Assam suggests a moderately positive self-perception within the study group. The standard deviation of 3.36 indicates a moderate degree of variability around this mean, implying that while many participants share a similar level of self-esteem, there are notable individual differences.

The second objective of the study was to assess the level of self-esteem among the adolescents in relation to their grade and gender. The results showed a significant difference in self-esteem between ninth and tenth-grade students. Ninth-grade students demonstrated a higher mean self-esteem score of 29.76 compared to tenth-grade students with a mean score of 27.36. This finding indicates that, on average, adolescents in the ninth grade have a more positive self-perception than their peers in the tenth grade.

This difference in self-esteem levels between grades may be related to various factors. Promoting from middle school to high school, academic pressures, and increased social, family and personal expectations could contribute to variation in self-esteem during adolescence. The higher self-esteem observed in ninth-grade students might be linked to the initial excitement and optimism associated with entering high school, whereas tenth-grade students may experience increased academic stress and social challenges, potentially influencing their self-esteem. Dhal et al. (2007) also in their study found that early adolescents reported high self-esteem as compared to late adolescents.

The level of self-esteem in terms of gender, both boys and girls displayed similar mean self-esteem scores, with boys scoring slightly higher (29.03) than girls (28.01), although this difference was not statistically significant. This finding is similar with the research findings conducted by Dixit and Singh (2015). In

their study titled "Academic Stress of School Students in Relation to Their Self-Esteem," observed no significant difference in the levels of self-esteem between male and female students. This finding is also consistent with the results reported by Bhardwaj and Agarwal (2013). Additionally, Hossaini (2002) concluded in their study that gender does not serve as a predictor of self-esteem among pre-university students.

## 10. CONCLUSION

Adolescence marks a critical stage of life where remarkable changes occur in a young person's physical, emotional, cognitive, and social aspects. These changes often influence fluctuations in self-esteem, a crucial element of an individual's personality. Recognized widely, self-esteem plays a vital role in helping individuals face daily challenges, navigate stressful situations, achieve success, and enhance mental health and overall well-being.

The study assessed the self-esteem levels of adolescents in a private school of Assam. The average self-esteem score indicated a moderately positive self-perception, with some variability among participants. Significant differences were found between ninth and tenth-grade students, suggesting that ninth-graders had higher self-esteem on average. This difference may be attributed to factors like the transition to high school and increased academic pressures. Gender, however, did not show a significant impact on self-esteem, with both boys and girls having similar mean scores.

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## Positive Psychology and its influence in Teaching Competency

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### ABSTRACT

*Positive psychology, a field focusing on the strengths and virtues that enable individuals and communities to thrive, has shown significant potential in enhancing teaching competency. By emphasizing elements such as well-being, resilience, and optimism, positive psychology provides a framework for teachers to foster a more supportive and effective learning environment. The integration of positive psychology into educational practices is grounded in key theories such as self-determination theory (SDT) and the PERMA model, which highlight the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness for both teachers and students. Research indicates that teachers who apply principles of positive psychology in their pedagogy exhibit higher levels of engagement, emotional well-being, and job satisfaction (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009). Moreover, these teachers are better equipped to create classroom environments that support students' intrinsic motivation and psychological needs, leading to improved academic outcomes and student-teacher relationships (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Reeve & Cheon, 2018). Positive psychology also promotes the development of specific competencies in teachers, such as emotional intelligence, empathy, and resilience. These competencies are critical in managing classroom dynamics and fostering a positive, inclusive atmosphere conducive to learning (MacIntyre, Gregersen, & Mercer,*

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2016; Mercer & Kostoulas, 2018). Furthermore, the application of character strengths and virtues, as advocated by positive psychology, enables teachers to model and teach these values, thus contributing to the holistic development of students (Seligman, 2011). The influence of positive psychology on teaching competency is profound, offering strategies that enhance both teacher and student experiences in the educational process. By prioritizing well-being, fostering positive relationships, and cultivating a strengths-based approach, positive psychology provides a valuable toolkit for educators aiming to improve their professional practice and student outcomes.

**Keywords:** Positive Psychology, Influence, Teaching Competency etc.

## INTRODUCTION:

Positive psychology is a branch of psychology that focuses on understanding and fostering the factors that contribute to human flourishing, well-being, and optimal functioning. Unlike traditional psychology, which often focuses on addressing problems and deficits, positive psychology seeks to identify and cultivate strengths, positive emotions, and virtues in individuals and communities. In recent years, positive psychology has gained increasing recognition and influence in various fields, including education. Educators are increasingly turning to positive psychology principles and practices to enhance teaching competency, improve student outcomes, and create positive learning environments. The fundamental concepts of positive psychology and examine its influence on teaching competency. We will discuss how positive psychology principles can be applied in the classroom to promote student engagement, well-being, and academic success. Additionally, we will explore specific strategies and interventions that educators can implement to leverage the principles of positive psychology in their teaching practice. It has aims to highlight the importance of integrating positive psychology into education and demonstrate how it can contribute to the development of effective and compassionate educators who are dedicated to nurturing the holistic growth and flourishing of their students.

### Importance of the Study on Psychology and its influence in Teaching Competency

The study of psychology holds significant importance in the field of education, particularly in shaping teaching competency and effectiveness. Here's how psychology influences teaching competency:

- i) Psychology provides insights into human behavior, cognition, and development. Teachers who understand psychological principles can better comprehend their students' behaviors, learning styles, motivations, and emotional needs. This understanding allows teachers to tailor their instructional strategies, classroom management techniques, and support systems to meet the diverse needs of their students effectively.
- ii) Psychology offers various theories of learning, such as behaviorism, cognitivism, and constructivism. Teachers can apply these theories to design and implement effective instructional strategies that promote meaningful learning experiences. By understanding how students acquire, process, and retain information, teachers can create engaging lessons, provide appropriate scaffolding, and facilitate deeper understanding and application

of knowledge.

- iii) Psychology informs teachers about the importance of creating a positive and supportive classroom environment. Concepts such as positive reinforcement, social-emotional learning, and self-efficacy play crucial roles in fostering a classroom climate where students feel safe, respected, and motivated to learn. Teachers who incorporate psychological principles into their classroom management strategies can enhance student engagement, participation, and overall well-being.
- iv) Psychology highlights the diversity of learners in terms of cognitive abilities, learning styles, cultural backgrounds, and socio-emotional needs. Teachers equipped with psychological knowledge can differentiate instruction, provide personalized support, and accommodate diverse learning preferences effectively. By recognizing and valuing students' individual differences, teachers can create inclusive learning environments that promote equity and academic success for all students.
- v) Effective communication is essential for building positive teacher-student relationships, fostering collaboration, and providing constructive feedback. Psychology offers insights into effective communication strategies, active listening techniques, and nonverbal cues that can strengthen teacher-student interactions. Teachers who communicate empathetically, express genuine interest in their students' well-being, and provide timely and specific feedback can cultivate trust, motivation, and academic growth among their students.
- vi) Psychology sheds light on the factors that influence student motivation, such as intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, goal-setting, self-efficacy beliefs, and mindset. Teachers can employ motivational strategies grounded in psychological principles to inspire students, build their confidence, and promote self-regulated learning behaviors. By fostering a growth mindset and encouraging persistence in the face of challenges, teachers empower students to take ownership of their learning and achieve academic success.

The study of psychology significantly influences teaching competency by providing valuable insights into student behavior, learning processes, motivation, and socio-emotional development. Teachers who integrate psychological principles into their instructional practices can create engaging learning experiences, build positive relationships, address individual differences, and empower students to reach their full potential.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. What are the fundamental principles and concepts of Positive Psychology?
2. What are the core areas of Positive Psychology?
3. What are the main components and attributes of teaching competency?
4. How Positive Psychology helps to improve the Teaching Competency?
5. How Positive Psychology influences in Teaching Competency?

Objectives:

1. To know the fundamental principles and Concept of Positive Psychology

2. To study the Core areas of Positive Psychology
3. To know the Teaching Competency and Components of Teaching Competency
4. To find out the Positive Psychology helps to improve the Teaching Competency
5. To explore then Positive Psychology and its influence in Teaching Competency

**Methodology:** Descriptive type of research method applied in this paper and most of the data collected from the secondary sources like, Article, Research-Gate, Google Scholar, Text Book, and other primary source like- observation report of the different School for finding the teaching competency.

### **POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY:**

Positive Psychology is a branch of psychology that focuses on the study of positive emotions, strengths, virtues, and factors that contribute to a fulfilling and flourishing life. It emerged as a reaction to traditional psychology's emphasis on pathology, mental illness, and dysfunction. Instead of solely focusing on treating mental illness, Positive Psychology seeks to promote well-being, resilience, and optimal functioning.

### **Concepts of Positive Psychology:**

**Subjective Well-being:** Subjective well-being is a key concept in Positive Psychology, encompassing individuals' evaluations of their own lives, including their experiences of happiness, satisfaction, and fulfillment. Positive Psychology emphasizes the importance of positive emotions such as joy, gratitude, love, hope, and contentment. These emotions are seen as essential for psychological well-being and resilience. Positive Psychology emphasizes identifying and cultivating individual strengths and virtues. Through approaches like the VIA Classification of Character Strengths, researchers and practitioners identify core virtues such as wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence. Resilience refers to the ability to bounce back from adversity and thrive despite challenges. Positive Psychology explores factors that contribute to resilience, such as optimism, social support, and coping strategies. Positive Psychology recognizes the importance of social connections and positive relationships for well-being. Healthy relationships, social support networks, and meaningful connections with others are essential for overall happiness and fulfillment. Positive Psychology explores the role of meaning and purpose in life. Having a sense of meaning and direction is linked to greater well-being and resilience. Positive Psychology incorporates practices such as mindfulness and experiencing flow states. Mindfulness involves being present and aware in the moment, while flow refers to a state of deep engagement and enjoyment in an activity.

Positive psychology is a branch of psychology that focuses on the study of strengths, virtues, and factors that contribute to human flourishing and well-being. It aims to understand and promote the positive aspects of human life, such as happiness, optimism, resilience, and personal fulfillment, rather than merely addressing mental illness and dysfunction.

**DEFINITIONS:**

Martin Seligman and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (2000): Positive psychology is the scientific study of optimal human functioning. It seeks to identify and enhance the qualities that lead to greater fulfillment in individuals, communities, and societies. Seligman, often considered the father of positive psychology, emphasizes the importance of positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement (PERMA model) as pathways to well-being (SpringerOpen) (NEH).

American Psychological Association (APA): Positive psychology is the field of psychological research and practice that focuses on the positive aspects of human experience. This includes the study of positive emotions, strengths-based character, and constructive institutions that support these qualities. It aims to improve quality of life and prevent the pathologies that arise when life is barren and meaningless (SpringerOpen).

Oxford Handbook of Positive Psychology (2009): Positive psychology is concerned with the scientific understanding and effective interventions to build thriving individuals, families, and communities. It encompasses topics such as happiness, gratitude, and the enhancement of positive traits like courage and compassion, aiming to cultivate a more positive and fulfilling life (SpringerOpen) (NEH).

Positive psychology shifts the focus from what is wrong with people to what is right, emphasizing the potential for growth, resilience, and flourishing. It uses scientific methods to explore how individuals and communities can thrive by fostering positive emotions, engaging in meaningful activities, building strong relationships, finding purpose, and achieving personal goals.

**FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY**

Positive Psychology, pioneered by Martin Seligman and others, focuses on understanding and promoting factors that contribute to human flourishing and well-being. Here are some fundamental principles of Positive Psychology:

1. **Focus on Strengths:** Positive Psychology emphasizes identifying and nurturing individual strengths and virtues rather than solely focusing on weaknesses or pathology.
2. **Optimism and Hope:** It recognizes the importance of optimism and hope in fostering resilience and overcoming challenges, encouraging individuals to maintain a positive outlook even in difficult situations.
3. **Gratitude:** Positive Psychology promotes the practice of gratitude, acknowledging and appreciating the positive aspects of life, which has been linked to increased happiness and life satisfaction.
4. **Positive Emotions:** It acknowledges the importance of positive emotions such as joy, contentment, and love, and seeks to understand their role in enhancing well-being and resilience.
5. **Meaning and Purpose:** Positive Psychology explores the significance of having a sense of meaning and purpose in life, as it provides direction, motivation, and a sense of fulfillment.

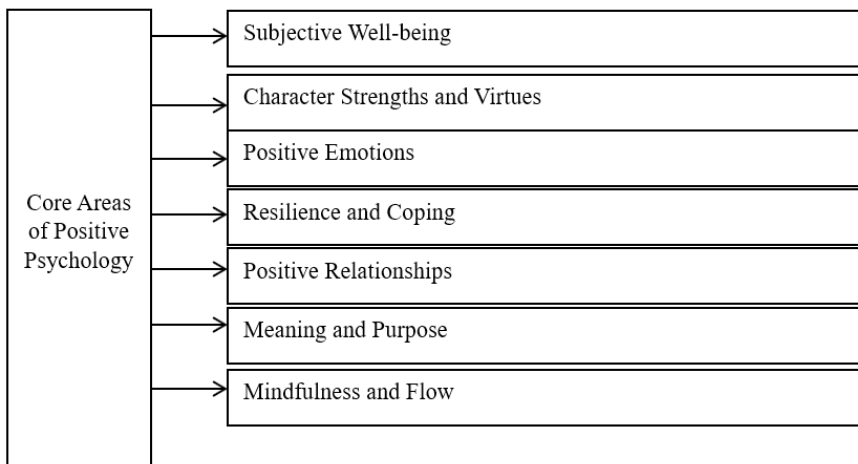
6. **Engagement and Flow:** It highlights the concept of flow, a state of deep immersion and concentration in an activity, which leads to feelings of fulfillment and satisfaction.
7. **Positive Relationships:** Positive Psychology emphasizes the importance of healthy, supportive relationships in promoting well-being, happiness, and resilience.
8. **Personal Growth and Development:** It encourages continuous personal growth and development, fostering a mindset of lifelong learning and self-improvement.
9. **Mindfulness:** Positive Psychology incorporates mindfulness practices, which involve being present and attentive to the current moment without judgment, promoting self-awareness and emotional regulation.
10. **Resilience:** It recognizes the importance of resilience, the ability to bounce back from adversity, and seeks to understand the factors that contribute to resilience and how it can be cultivated.

These principles form the foundation of Positive Psychology and guide its research, interventions, and applications in various domains, including education, mental health, and organizational psychology.

### CORE AREAS OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY:

Positive Psychology, as a field, encompasses various branches that focus on different aspects of well-being, strengths, and optimal human functioning. While there isn't a strict delineation of branches within Positive Psychology, several core areas of focus can be identified:

**Figure: 1 Core Areas of Positive Psychology**



**Source: Primary**

1. This branch of Positive Psychology examines the subjective experiences of individuals regarding their overall life satisfaction, happiness, and fulfillment. Researchers explore the factors that contribute to subjective well-being and develop interventions to enhance it.

2. Positive Psychology emphasizes the identification and cultivation of individual strengths and virtues. This branch focuses on character strengths such as courage, wisdom, gratitude, kindness, and resilience. Researchers develop assessments and interventions to help individuals recognize and leverage their strengths for personal growth and well-being.
3. Positive emotions play a crucial role in promoting well-being and resilience. This branch of Positive Psychology investigates the nature, function, and benefits of positive emotions such as joy, gratitude, love, hope, and contentment. Researchers explore strategies for enhancing positive emotions and integrating them into daily life.
4. Resilience refers to the ability to bounce back from adversity and thrive despite challenges. Positive Psychology research in this area focuses on identifying factors that contribute to resilience, such as optimism, problem-solving skills, social support, and coping strategies. Interventions are developed to build resilience and enhance adaptive coping mechanisms.
5. Positive relationships and social connections are essential for well-being and happiness. This branch of Positive Psychology examines the dynamics of healthy relationships, the benefits of social support, and the role of communication, empathy, and forgiveness in fostering positive connections with others.
6. Positive Psychology explores the importance of having a sense of meaning and purpose in life. Researchers investigate how individuals derive meaning from their experiences, work, relationships, and contributions to society. Interventions aim to help individuals cultivate a deeper sense of purpose and fulfillment.
7. Mindfulness practices involve being present and aware in the moment, while flow refers to a state of deep immersion and enjoyment in an activity. Positive Psychology research in this area explores the benefits of mindfulness and flow for well-being, performance, and psychological resilience. Interventions include mindfulness-based techniques and strategies for fostering flow experiences.

These branches of Positive Psychology are interconnected, and researchers often integrate insights and findings from multiple areas to develop comprehensive approaches to promoting well-being and optimal human functioning. Positive Psychology continues to evolve as researchers explore new topics and develop innovative interventions to enhance individual and collective flourishing.

## TEACHING COMPETENCY

Teaching competency refers to the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that educators possess and demonstrate in order to effectively facilitate student learning and development. It encompasses a wide range of abilities and qualities that contribute to successful teaching practice. Teaching competency is essential for educators to create engaging and supportive learning environments, meet the diverse needs of students, and promote their academic, social, and emotional growth.

Teaching competency refers to the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable teachers to effectively facilitate learning and manage classroom dynamics. It encompasses a wide range of attributes and behaviors necessary for successful teaching, including subject matter expertise, pedagogical skills, classroom management, and the ability to foster a positive learning environment.

Definitions:

1. Shulman (1987): Teaching competency includes both content knowledge (knowledge of the subject matter) and pedagogical content knowledge (knowledge of how to teach the subject effectively). Shulman emphasizes the integration of these knowledge areas as crucial for effective teaching (SpringerOpen).
2. International Board of Standards for Training, Performance, and Instruction (IBSTPI): Teaching competency involves the demonstration of appropriate teaching behaviors that result in positive student outcomes. It includes planning and preparing lessons, delivering instruction, assessing student learning, and reflecting on and improving teaching practices (IBSTPI, 2005) (SpringerOpen).
3. European Commission (2013): Competence in teaching refers to the ability of teachers to create conducive learning environments, use appropriate teaching strategies, manage classroom activities, assess student progress, and engage in continuous professional development. It also includes interpersonal skills, such as communication and collaboration with students, parents, and colleagues (SpringerOpen).

Teaching competency is a multi-faceted construct that integrates various dimensions of effective teaching practices. It requires a blend of content knowledge, instructional strategies, classroom management skills, and the ability to foster positive relationships and learning environments. Competent teachers are those who can adapt their teaching methods to meet the diverse needs of their students and continuously seek to improve their professional practice through reflective and evidence-based approaches.

Components of Teaching Competency:

**Content knowledge:** Educators must have a deep understanding of the subject matter they teach. This includes knowledge of key concepts, principles, theories, and methodologies relevant to their field. Content knowledge enables teachers to effectively design and deliver instruction, clarify complex concepts, and guide students in their learning.

Table: 01 Components of Teaching Competency

Components of Teaching Competency	
Pedagogical knowledge and skills	Pedagogical knowledge refers to understanding how students learn and the most effective instructional strategies for facilitating learning. Educators need to possess a repertoire of teaching methods, techniques, and approaches tailored to the needs and learning styles of their students. This includes skills in lesson planning, instructional delivery, classroom management, assessment, and differentiation to accommodate diverse learners.
Communication skills	Effective communication is essential for building positive relationships with students, fostering a supportive classroom climate, and conveying information clearly and effectively. Educators must be able to communicate ideas, instructions, and feedback in a way that is understandable, engaging, and respectful to students of varying backgrounds and abilities.
Classroom management	Classroom management involves creating and maintaining a safe, orderly, and conducive learning environment. This includes establishing clear expectations, routines, and procedures, managing student behavior, addressing conflicts and disruptions, and promoting positive social interactions. Effective classroom management enables teachers to maximize instructional time and create a climate conducive to learning.
Differentiation and individualization	Every student has unique strengths, interests, and learning needs. Effective educators recognize and accommodate these differences by providing differentiated instruction and individualized support. This may involve adapting teaching strategies, materials, and assessments to meet the diverse needs of students, providing additional support for struggling learners, and challenging advanced learners to reach their full potential.
Reflective practice	Reflective practice involves critically examining one's teaching practice, identifying strengths and areas for improvement, and making adjustments to enhance student learning outcomes. Educators engage in ongoing reflection on their instructional strategies, student interactions, assessment data, and professional development opportunities to continuously refine their teaching practice and meet the evolving needs of their students.



Collaboration and professional growth	Teaching is a collaborative profession that requires educators to work collaboratively with colleagues, administrators, families, and community partners to support student success. Teachers engage in ongoing professional learning and collaboration to stay informed about best practices, exchange ideas, and enhance their teaching skills and knowledge.
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Source: Primary Designed

Overall, teaching competency is multifaceted and dynamic, encompassing a combination of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that enable educators to effectively facilitate student learning, promote academic achievement, and foster the holistic development of their students. By continually refining their teaching practice and staying committed to professional growth, educators can strive to become more competent and effective in their roles as teachers.

### Positive Psychology helps to improve the Teaching Competency:

Positive psychology can indeed play a significant role in enhancing teaching competency by focusing on strengths, resilience, well-being, and positive emotions. Positive Psychology can significantly enhance teaching competency by providing educators with a framework and tools to cultivate a positive learning environment, foster student engagement, and promote student well-being. Positive Psychology can contribute to improving teaching competency:

1. **Strengths-Based Approach:** Positive Psychology emphasizes identifying and leveraging individual strengths rather than focusing solely on weaknesses. Teachers can apply this approach by recognizing and nurturing the unique strengths of each student, which can lead to increased confidence, motivation, and academic performance. By understanding their own strengths, teachers can also enhance their teaching effectiveness and job satisfaction.
2. **Positive Relationships:** Positive Psychology emphasizes the importance of positive relationships in promoting well-being. Teachers who cultivate positive relationships with their students create a supportive and inclusive learning environment where students feel valued, respected, and understood. Positive teacher-student relationships are associated with higher levels of student engagement, achievement, and overall well-being.
3. **Mindfulness and Resilience:** Positive Psychology promotes practices such as mindfulness and resilience-building, which can help teachers manage stress, enhance emotional regulation, and maintain a positive outlook, even in challenging situations. By incorporating mindfulness practices into their daily routine, teachers can reduce burnout, improve focus, and cultivate empathy and compassion towards their students.
4. **Optimism and Growth Mindset:** Positive Psychology encourages the development of an optimistic and growth-oriented mindset, both in teachers and students. Teachers who believe in their students' potential to learn and grow are more likely to adopt effective teaching strategies, provide

constructive feedback, and persevere in the face of setbacks. By fostering a growth mindset in their students, teachers empower them to embrace challenges, learn from failures, and develop a lifelong love for learning.

5. **Gratitude and Appreciation:** Positive Psychology emphasizes the importance of practicing gratitude and appreciation for the positive aspects of teaching and learning. Teachers who cultivate a sense of gratitude for their profession, colleagues, and students are more likely to experience greater job satisfaction, resilience, and well-being. Expressing appreciation for students' efforts and achievements can also foster a positive classroom climate and motivate students to strive for excellence.
6. **Promotion of Well-Being:** Positive Psychology promotes holistic well-being by addressing not only academic success but also social, emotional, and physical health. Teachers can integrate well-being practices such as self-care, self-compassion, and stress management into their teaching routine to enhance their overall quality of life and modeling healthy behaviors for their students.
7. **Positive Classroom Practices:** Positive Psychology offers evidence-based strategies for creating a positive classroom environment, such as promoting autonomy, fostering a sense of belonging, encouraging collaboration, and providing opportunities for meaningful learning experiences. These practices can enhance student engagement, motivation, and satisfaction with the learning process.

Positive Psychology offers valuable insights and practical strategies for enhancing teaching competency by promoting strengths-based approaches, positive relationships, mindfulness, resilience, optimism, gratitude, well-being, and effective classroom practices. By integrating these principles into their teaching philosophy and practices, educators can create a nurturing and empowering learning environment that maximizes the potential for student success and well-being.

### **Positive Psychology and its influence in Teaching Competency**

Positive psychology, a field that focuses on the scientific study of human strengths and virtues, has made significant contributions to various domains, including education. In the context of teaching competency, positive psychology offers valuable insights and strategies for educators to enhance their effectiveness in the classroom and promote students' well-being and academic success. Following the ways of positive psychology influences teaching competency highlighted below the table:

**Table: 02 Ways of positive psychology influences teaching competency**

Ways of Positive psychology influences teaching competency	
Strengths-based approach	Positive psychology emphasizes identifying and leveraging individuals' strengths rather than focusing solely on weaknesses or deficits. In teaching, this means recognizing and nurturing students' unique talents, abilities, and interests. Educators can incorporate activities such as strengths assessments and reflection exercises to help students discover their strengths and build confidence in their abilities.
Cultivating a positive classroom environment	Positive psychology emphasizes the importance of creating environments that foster positivity, engagement, and well-being. Teachers can cultivate a positive classroom climate by promoting a sense of belonging, respect, and inclusivity, fostering positive relationships among students, and incorporating activities that promote gratitude, kindness, and mindfulness.
Growth mindset	Positive psychology aligns closely with the concept of a growth mindset, which emphasizes the belief that intelligence, abilities, and talents can be developed through effort, perseverance, and learning from failure. Teachers can foster a growth mindset in students by providing constructive feedback, emphasizing the value of effort and resilience, and reframing challenges as opportunities for growth and learning.
Positive relationships and social connections	Positive psychology highlights the importance of positive relationships and social connections for well-being and flourishing. In teaching, building positive relationships with students and creating a supportive learning community can enhance student motivation, engagement, and academic achievement. Teachers can demonstrate empathy, active listening, and genuine interest in students' lives, as well as encourage collaboration and peer support within the classroom.
Well-being and resilience	Positive psychology emphasizes the importance of promoting well-being and resilience in individuals. Educators can incorporate practices that enhance students' emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and coping skills, such as mindfulness exercises, stress management techniques, and resilience-building activities. By equipping students with these skills, teachers can help them navigate challenges, cope with setbacks, and thrive academically and personally.

Source: Primary Designed

Positive psychology significantly influences teaching competency by enhancing various aspects of teaching and learning processes. Following the influences are found from the study:

### **1. Enhancement of Teacher Well-being and Resilience:**

Positive psychology focuses on improving well-being and resilience, which are crucial for teachers to maintain their energy and motivation. Teachers who are psychologically well are better equipped to handle classroom challenges and create a positive learning environment. Resilience helps teachers manage

stress and recover from setbacks, leading to more effective teaching practices (Seligman, 2011; Reeve & Cheon, 2018).

## **2. Promotion of Positive Teacher-Student Relationships**

The principles of positive psychology emphasize the importance of positive relationships, which can significantly improve teacher-student interactions. Teachers who apply positive psychology practices, such as empathy and active listening, can build stronger, more supportive relationships with their students, fostering a collaborative and engaging classroom atmosphere (Mercer & Kostoulas, 2018).

## **3. Improvement in Classroom Management**

Positive psychology provides strategies for effective classroom management by encouraging teachers to use positive reinforcement, create a supportive classroom culture, and address students' emotional and psychological needs. These strategies help in maintaining discipline while promoting a positive learning environment (Dewaele, 2018).

## **4. Development of Emotional Intelligence**

Emotional intelligence, a key component of positive psychology, is critical for teaching competency. Teachers with high emotional intelligence can better understand and manage their own emotions, as well as those of their students. This ability enhances their teaching effectiveness, classroom management, and conflict resolution skills (MacIntyre, Gregersen, & Mercer, 2016).

## **5. Application of Strengths-based Approaches**

Positive psychology encourages a strengths-based approach, where teachers identify and nurture their own strengths and those of their students. This approach can lead to higher levels of engagement, motivation, and achievement in the classroom. By focusing on strengths rather than deficits, teachers can foster a more positive and empowering educational experience (Seligman, 2011; Oxford, 2016).

## **6. Fostering a Growth Mindset**

Positive psychology promotes a growth mindset, which is the belief that abilities and intelligence can be developed through dedication and hard work. Teachers who cultivate a growth mindset in their students encourage perseverance and resilience, leading to improved academic outcomes and greater teaching competency (Costa & Norton, 2018).

## **7. Support for Autonomous Motivation**

Self-determination theory (SDT), a framework within positive psychology, highlights the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in fostering intrinsic motivation. Teachers who create autonomy-supportive environments help students become more self-motivated and engaged in learning, which enhances overall teaching effectiveness (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Gagné & Deci, 2005).

## 8. Encouragement of Reflective Practices

Positive psychology encourages teachers to engage in reflective practices to continually improve their teaching methods and understand the impact of their behaviors on student learning. Reflective practices help teachers to be more mindful, adaptive, and effective in their instructional approaches (Reeve & Cheon, 2018).

### FINDING OF THE STUDY:

#### Objective-wise Findings

##### 1. To know the Concept of Positive Psychology

Finding: Positive psychology is defined as the scientific study of the strengths and virtues that enable individuals and communities to thrive. It focuses on positive experiences, positive individual traits, and positive institutions, aiming to improve quality of life and prevent mental health issues. The field emphasizes elements such as happiness, well-being, resilience, and the cultivation of strengths and virtues.

##### 2. To Study the Core Areas of Positive Psychology

Finding: The core areas of positive psychology include:

- Positive Emotions: Experiences such as joy, gratitude, serenity, and hope.
- Positive Traits: Characteristics such as resilience, courage, and wisdom.
- Positive Institutions: Structures that support positive behavior, like schools and workplaces. Key theoretical frameworks include the PERMA model, which stands for Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment, and self-determination theory (SDT), which emphasizes autonomy, competence, and relatedness

##### 3. To Know the Teaching Competency and Components of Teaching Competency

Finding: Teaching competency involves a blend of knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for effective teaching. Key components include:

- Content Knowledge: Mastery of the subject matter.
- Pedagogical Skills: Techniques and methods for effective instruction.
- Classroom Management: Ability to create a conducive learning environment.
- Emotional Intelligence: Skills in understanding and managing ones own emotions and those of others.
- Reflective Practice: Ongoing self-evaluation and improvement of teaching practices

##### 4. To Find Out How Positive Psychology Helps to Improve Teaching Competency

Finding: Positive psychology enhances teaching competency by:

- Improving Teacher Well-being: Teachers with higher well-being are more effective and resilient.

- **Enhancing Emotional Intelligence:** Helps teachers manage their emotions and understand students' emotions, leading to better classroom management.
- **Promoting Positive Teacher-Student Relationships:** Builds a supportive and engaging classroom environment.
- **Encouraging Reflective Practices:** Teachers who engage in reflective practices continually improve their teaching methods.

## 5. To Explore Positive Psychology and Its Influence in Teaching Competency

Finding: Positive psychology influences teaching competency by:

- **Building Strengths-Based Teaching:** Encouraging teachers to identify and use their strengths and those of their students, fostering a more positive and productive learning environment.
- **Supporting Autonomy and Motivation:** Creating autonomy-supportive classrooms enhances student motivation and engagement, making teaching more effective.
- **Fostering Growth Mindset:** Teachers who promote a growth mindset encourage perseverance and resilience in students, leading to better academic outcomes.

## CONCLUSION:

The study on "Positive Psychology and its Influence in Teaching Competency" demonstrates the significant impact that positive psychology can have on enhancing teaching practices and overall teacher effectiveness. Positive psychology focuses on enhancing well-being, happiness, and personal strengths rather than solely addressing mental illness. It provides a holistic approach to improving the quality of life through the development of positive emotions, traits, and institutions (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). The core areas include positive emotions (e.g., joy, gratitude), positive individual traits (e.g., resilience, optimism), and positive institutions (e.g., supportive educational environments). These elements contribute to a more fulfilling and productive educational experience for both teachers and students (Seligman, 2011; Deci & Ryan, 2008). Teaching competency encompasses a wide range of skills and knowledge, including subject matter expertise, pedagogical skills, classroom management, emotional intelligence, and reflective practices. Effective teaching requires the integration of these components to create a positive and productive learning environment (Shulman, 1987; IBSTPI, 2005). Positive psychology enhances teaching competency by improving teacher well-being and resilience, promoting positive teacher-student relationships, enhancing classroom management, and encouraging reflective practices. These aspects lead to more engaged and effective teaching (Seligman, 2011; MacIntyre et al., 2016; Reeve & Cheon, 2018). Positive psychology influences teaching competency by fostering strengths-based teaching, supporting autonomy and motivation, and promoting a growth mindset. These practices help create a more dynamic and supportive educational environment, benefiting both teachers and students (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Gagné & Deci, 2005; Costa & Norton, 2018).

The integration of positive psychology into teaching practices offers a promising avenue for enhancing teaching competency. By focusing on well-being, strengths, and positive relationships, teachers can create more engaging and effective learning environments. The principles of positive psychology not only improve teachers' professional satisfaction and resilience but also contribute to better educational outcomes for students. This holistic approach emphasizes the importance of fostering a positive and supportive atmosphere in educational settings, ultimately leading to the flourishing of both teachers and students.

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