

Psychological Strength in Military Set up: Current Status and Future Direction

Jitendra K Singh

DRDO-Defence Institute of Psychological Research, Delhi - 110 054, India

E-mail: jitender@dipr.drdo.in

ABSTRACT

The paper is an attempt to critically examine the application of some the constructs in vogue of positive psychology with special reference to psychological strength. Dwelling on the application of positive psychology in American army it tries to highlight the application of some of the key psychological strength constructs which are being used to train the soldiers of American army. With reference to India the paper advocates for looking into the indigenous constructs of psychological strength rooted in religio-philosophical traditions of India and its implication in contemporary context. It identifies some of the indigenous constructs of psychological strength which have been empirically investigated in the recent past. Finally, the paper briefly discusses the outcomes studies undertaken to profile psychological strength at different levels of leadership in Indian army. Instead of following American model of psychology, the paper strongly advocates for bringing out a culturally sensitive model of psychological strength applicable to Indian socio-cultural set up. Replication of the method used in the present study is suggested to study psychological strength of other sectors of the country.

Keywords: Psychological strength; Positive military psychology; Religio-philosophical traditions; Indigenous constructs

1. INTRODUCTION

During its journey of more than two decades the field of positive psychology¹ has covered a vast conceptual and empirical terrain and has established itself as one of the most vibrant sub-disciplines of psychology. Following efficiency model it has succeeded in providing viable alternative to look at human health, happiness and wellbeing. Its focus on identifying and enhancing positive traits, positive emotions and positive relationships has created a paradigm shift in terms of looking at human psychological strengths and thereafter designing intervention programmes to optimise those strengths for a relatively better adjustment in different facets of life. Over the years the application of positive psychology in the field of education, organisation, human development, counselling and psychotherapy etc has yielded tangible outcomes. This has reinvigorated the interest of scholars across the world and accordingly positive psychology is being applied in these potential areas of application.

Some of the constructs which have received considerable conceptual and empirical attention are - positive experience², positive emotions³, positive ethics⁴, empathy⁵, self-efficacy⁶, hope^{7,8}, optimism^{9,10}, psychological capital¹¹, and mindfulness^{12,13}. Among these constructs virtue and character strength¹⁴ remains one of the most extensively used constructs to map strength profile of different categories of population across the world. The handbook on character strengths and virtues written by Peterson and Seligman in 2004 is perhaps

one of the landmark development so far as the genesis, assessment and intervention strategy to enhance these strengths are concerned^{14,15}.

2. PSYCHOLOGICAL STRENGTH IN MILITARY SET UP

One of the most potential areas of application of positive psychology in the recent past has been military set up. Positive military psychology¹⁶ as a branch has come up to apply theoretical and methodological principles of positive psychology in military set up with the assumption that military being a positive institution consists of pathology free mentally and physically fit soldiers who share positive traits, positive emotions and positive relation. Therefore, it is imperative to identify, nurture and optimise all those positive aspects of a soldier which can strengthen him for better operational effectiveness, adjustment and optimal functioning. Mapping of psychological strengths and enhancing those strengths through training is perhaps one of the most potential areas where positive psychology is being used in American and European military set up. Such endeavours at first try to identify all those relevant variables dealing with positive traits, emotions and relation in a soldierly life followed by development of assessment measures and training programmes to create psychological strength profile of soldiers and subsequently training them to enhance those strengths for a better operational effectiveness, adjustment and optimal functioning. Some of the initiatives taken in this area are briefly discussed.

3. MAPPING OF CHARACTER STRENGTHS IN THE SOLDIERS OF US ARMY

As one of the positive organisations armed forces pay relatively more attention to moral character and qualities in a soldier. In recent past studies using Values-In-Action Inventory of strength (VIA-IS) on soldiers have revealed some interesting results. It was reported that newly inducted cadets of the US Army scored high on character strength such as bravery, optimism, fairness, persistence, honesty, leadership, self control and teamwork¹⁷. Another study conducted on US soldier and civilian population revealed that soldiers reported the presence character strengths which were essentially required for military operations¹⁸. The character strengths such as kindness, bravery and humour were reported high by the persons who were suffering from some sort of physical disabilities. On the other appreciation of beauty, love of learning, and greater life satisfaction were found high in the individuals who had some psychological problems. However, capacity to love, hope, test, curiosity and optimism were reported as predictor of life satisfaction in the case of non-clinical population¹⁹. The study conducted by Matthews²⁰ on US army Captains who had come back from prolonged deployment from Iraq and Afghanistan indicated that teamwork, honesty, courage, persistence and judgment were very high on these soldiers.

4. PERSONALITY AND SOLDIER PSYCHOLOGICAL STRENGTH

In addition to character strengths, some of the personality constructs have been identified which are perceived as contributing to the psychological strength of a soldier. Studies carried out on these constructs have revealed some interesting trends. These are briefly discussed.

4.1 Resilience

Resilience as a motivational construct is about bouncing back from adverse situation because of perseverance and a never giving up attitude. It helps a soldier to maintain a high level of endurance in extremely adverse and life threatening situation with a hope to overcome those adversities successfully. According to Masten²¹, *et al.* resilience is one's ability to positively adapt to adversity and recover from challenges. It constitutes functioning well in times of adversity, bouncing back from disturbing experience and achieving new level of positive or normal adaptation when conditions improve. It is also defined as "the capacity to rebound or bounce back from adversity, conflict, failure or even positive events, progress and increased responsibility"²².

Training in resilience is one of the core components of American soldiers. Reivich²³, *et al.* designed master resilience training programme. This training programme focuses on three components namely preparation, sustainment and enhancement. Preparation mainly emphasises Penn Resilience Programme (PRP) which covers factors such as optimism, problem solving, self-efficacy, self-resolution, emotional awareness, flexibility, empathy and strong relationships. These factors have been taken from an earlier study of Masten and Reed²⁴. They claimed that there was a significant reduction in depression, anxiety, adjustment disorders and conduct

problems when soldiers were given resilience training through PRP. It was also reported that PRP training controls the onset of PTSD. Sustainment, as the second component, teaches a soldier to sustain resilience in deployment. It has modules for pre-deployment and post-deployment which deal with challenges and reactions of deployment and how to sustain silence during such deployment. The third component enhancement emphasises on performance enhancement of a soldier especially in challenging situations. It tries to inculcate confidence in soldiers by enhancing optimism, enthusiasm, goal setting and commitment, and other aspects such as attention control, energy management and integrating imagery. After completing training on these three components a soldier is certified as Master Resilience Trainer.

4.2 Grit

Grit is another motivational construct which is concerned with a soldier's perseverance and passion for long term goals. In the context of American army Duckworth²⁵, *et al.* have done a number of studies on grit. According to Duckworth²⁵, *et al.* grit deals with an individual's persistence and passion for long term goals, working energetically to overcome challenges, sustaining efforts and maintaining consistent level of interests despite failure, adversity and plateaus in progress. Based on a series of studies carried out on military and civilian they reported that more educated people tend to score high on grit. As a result of learning from past experiences and genetic maturation grit increases. They developed grit scale which is a 12 item scale (6 item each for interest and persistence of effort) Duckworth²⁶, *et al.* With regard to the relationship of grit with big five factors it was reported that grit shared a strong relationship with conscientiousness only. Grit was also reported as a stronger predictor of retention through training Duckworth²⁶, *et al.*

4.3 Personality Hardiness

Kobasa²⁷ who coined this term for the first time in 1979 conceptualised personality hardiness in terms of a high sense of life and commitment, greater control, openness to challenges and changes. According to Kobasa personality hardiness develops early in life and remains stable but can be changed through training^{28,29}. Kobasa further claimed that personality hardiness is a buffer against stress as well as a moderator of combat stress^{30,31}. Personality hardiness is also a better predictor of military performance as revealed in the studies conducted on US army³².

4.4 Comprehensive Soldier Fitness

Comprehensive soldier fitness (CSF) programme is a proactive preparedness initiative for American army developed by Rhonda³³, *et al.* CSF has been designed with a view to enhance resilience and to reinforce optimum positive experience from combat scenario. It focuses on four aspects such as emotional, social, family and spiritual. This programme helps to manage stress reactions which are rooted in frequent movement of a soldier in three locations such as combat field, conflict environment and home.

In order to assess the extent and pattern of comprehensive

fitness Global Assessment Tool (GAT) in the form of a self-report measure was developed by Peterson³⁴, *et al.* GAT is designed to assess the fitness of a soldier in four domain. First is emotional fitness, which assesses fitness of a soldier on positive mood, life satisfaction, optimism, freedom from depression, character strength, personal resilience, and active coping styles. Social fitness being the second domain focuses on tapping the perception of a soldier about the soldierly life. It assesses a soldier's trust in his fellow soldiers and leaders and overall self-control. The third domain family fitness tries to tap a soldier's adjustment in personal and familial relationship. The last domain spiritual fitness endeavours to tap sense of meaning, purpose and accomplishment in soldierly life and beyond.

5. PSYCHOLOGICAL STRENGTH: THE INDIAN SCENARIO

A perusal of the studies conducted on American and European soldiers indicate that such an approach has created a paradigm shift in a soldier's perception toward self, others and his professional career. In India the application of theoretical and methodological principles of positive psychology is a recent beginning. However, the studies carried out in Indian set up unwittingly use the established constructs like virtue and character strength, psychological capital, mindfulness etc without looking into the relevance, replicability, and feasibility of these constructs in Indian socio-cultural context. On the other hand, there are indigenous constructs which have been conceptually and empirically explored in Indian socio-cultural context but they are neither part of mainstream literature on positive psychology nor the Indian scholars who claim to use positive psychology perspective have tried to use these constructs. These indigenous constructs are rooted in religio-philosophical traditions of ancient India and are equally relevant in contemporary period.

The religio-philosophical literatures of ancient India are perhaps one of the richest sources dealing with psychological strength. These literatures were compiled around four thousand years ago and are still referred to understand various facets of human existence. A majority of these sources such as *Vedas*, *Upanishad*, *Bhagavad-Gita* etc deal with human experiences and the ideal states of being, living one's life and spiritual evolution of human being. A variety of pathways and practices are offered by these texts to cultivate wellbeing to attain the highest state of evolution. Such a growth oriented approach focusing on psychological and spiritual aspects of life are perhaps one of the key driving forces of positive psychology rooted in American socio-cultural set up.

The reflection of teachings documented in those literatures is still relevant in different facets of life particularly the spiritual one. In Indian tradition two aspects of spirituality has been mentioned namely transcendental and collective³⁵. The transcendental perspective focuses on understanding of what is truly satisfying and the limitations of *Artha* and *Kama*. The collectivistic perspective is socially oriented and is governed by the concept of *Dharma* which primarily deals with a value oriented life. It considers man as a social being interdependent on each other and the idea that happiness is not something that

is aspired for merely oneself but for the entire universe. Some of the indigenous constructs dealing with human psychological strength documented in religio-philosophical literatures are briefly discussed.

The *Panchkosha Sindhanta* mentioned in *Taittiriya Upanishad* is perhaps one of the oldest conceptualisations dealing with unfolding of *jiva* or the self³⁶⁻³⁷. It discusses in detail the five stage (sheaths) and the associated characteristics of each stage. These are-*Annamaya kosha* (the sheath of matter), *Parnamaya kosha* (the sheath of energy or life), *Manomaya kosha* (mind or the sheath of conscious activity), *Vijnanamaya kosha* (knowledge or the sheath of intelligence) and *Anandamaya kosha* (the sheath of bliss). From the perspective of the *koshas*, sensuous pleasures (*Tirpti*) are related to *Annamaya Kosha*. Emotions such as *Harsha* (the experience of excitement associated with some event), and *Ullasa* (pleasantness related to experience and appreciation of natural beauty) are seen as belonging to *Pranamaya* and *Manomaya Koshas*. Moments of bliss pertain to *Vigyanmaya Kosha*. Finally, blissfulness is considered as the core characteristic of *Anadamaya Kosha*³⁸. The ultimate happiness in one's life can be experienced after attaining the stage of *anadamaya kosha*.

The concept of *triguna* constituting of *Sattva* (Mode of Goodness), *Rajas* (Mode of Passion), *Tamas* (Mode of Ignorance/Darkness) mentioned in *Upanishads* and *Bhagavad-Gita* has been explored by the Indian researchers as dimensions of personality³⁹⁻⁴⁷. The three *gunas* represent principles of illumination, energy and inertia respectively. According to *Sankhya* school, increasing *sattvik* qualities from *tamas* to *rajas* is considered important for spiritual evolution. Purification of mind and reduction in *tamas* are considered achievable goals through methods such as *tapas* (penance), *jnana* (intuitive knowledge), *brhamacharya* (restraining and turning the sense inward) and *shradha* (dedication and devotion to realise the self).

In *Bhagavad-Gita* a detailed description of all the three *guna* has been mentioned. While describing *Sattva guna* *Bhagavad-Gita* mentions that one who is predominantly shares *Sattvik guna* is illuminating and is free from all sinful deeds. The person who is situated in the mode of goodness is usually happy and possesses knowledge. Manifestations of the mode of goodness can be experienced when all the gates of the body are illuminated by knowledge. These gates are- two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, the mouth, the genitals and the anus. The person who is predominantly *sattvik* can see things in the right position, can hear things in the right position, and can taste things in the right position.

In the mode of goodness, knowledge is relatively more eternal and spiritual. The person performs action without attachment, without love or hatred, and without desire for fruitive results. He also performs the duty without association with material desire, without false ego, and without wavering in success or failure with great determination and enthusiasm at the same. The person is in a position to evaluate what should be done and what should not be done, what is to be feared and what is not to be feared, what is binding and what is liberating. The person maintains indissoluble and unrelenting determination with steadfastness and controls the activities of

the mind, life and senses. The person enjoys happiness that is initially like a poison but like the nectar in the end.

In addition to *triguna* other indigenous constructs which have received ample amount of conceptual and empirical attention in recent past are- *Anasakti*⁴⁸, *Ahamkara*⁴⁹, *Santosh*⁵⁰, *Wisdom*^{51,52}. For an elaborate discussion on these constructs the reader may refer to Singh⁵³. Srivastava and Misra⁵⁴ analysed *suktis* in *Sanskrit* related to happiness and reported the following themes. Contentment (renunciation of craving for what is not obtained and being satisfied with what comes unsought), Control over desires (it includes interrelated concepts such as *jitendriya*, control over impulses, emotions and actions), *Chittaavriti nirodha* (regulation of mental activities), *Surrender* (an attitude of surrender to /union with the divine will), *Non attachment* (focus on working constantly without being attached to outcomes and reserving the power of detaching from everything), and Equanimity in opposites (Maintaining composure across circumstances and giving equal treatment to joy and sorrow). Jeste and Vahia⁵⁵ after carrying out analysis of verses of *Bhagavad-Gita* identified ten domains of wisdom. These are - knowledge of life, emotional regulation, control over desires, decisiveness, love of god, duty and work, self-contentedness, yoga or integration of personality, compassion/sacrifice, and insight/humility (Jeste and Vahia⁵⁵)

The principle of *karma* documented in *Bhagavad-Gita* advocates the idea that actions determine destiny and that freedom from the bondage of *karma* does not come from avoiding actions but carrying on one's duties without attachment to the consequences. Thus, the concept of *Nishkama karma* (non attachment) and impulse control are combined in *Bhagavad-Gita* and gets its reflection in a personality type called '*sthitiprajna*'. A person who is predominantly '*sthitiprajna*' is intellectually stable, serene under all circumstances, maintains equidistance from positive and negative affect, and blends cognition and affect in a harmonious way. *Kautilya*, the architect of *Mauryan Empire*, while dealing with the core characteristics of *manava dharma* advocated for harmlessness, truthfulness, purity, wisdom, freedom from spite, abstinence from cruelty and forgiveness as the essential virtue of a person. The various principles and practices incorporated in *Pathanjali's* yoga-sutra are aimed at promotion of health and well being in the highest possible sense of the term. *Satsang* (company of wise people) is also considered as one of the most effective pathways to happiness, health and wellbeing in Indian context. *Sevabhava* (serving others without expectation of anything) and '*Shramdaan*' (offering physical labour unconditionally) are the key defining features of religious and spiritual traditions of India.

A perusal of available literature on positive psychology indicate that the emergence of this sub-discipline rooted in the study of human psychological strength in terms of positive traits, emotions and relation is a recent beginning in American socio-cultural context. On the contrary the diverse religio-philosophical traditions of India rooted in *Hinduism*, *Buddhism*, *Jainism*, *Islam*, and *Sikhism* are centuries old and offer a broader canvas to tap human psychological strength. These strengths are indigenous in nature, the relevance and reflection of which are observed in different aspects of

everyday life of Indians. Therefore, it is imperative to look for all those defining features of psychological strength which have origin in religio-philosophical traditions of India and manifestation of such strength in contemporary period. Such an approach is perhaps a relatively better methodological strategy as compared to looking at psychological strength on Indians using conceptual and methodological foundation of so called 'American Positive Psychology'. Following this basic premise an effort was made to map psychological strength of soldiers (Middle rank and Junior leaders) Indian army as well as to develop an assessment procedure to profile their psychological strength.

6. PSYCHOLOGICAL STRENGTH OF THE LEADERS OF INDIAN ARMY

Keeping the operational requirements into consideration Indian Army prepares its soldiers to take on the diverse challenges of combat and non-combat environment. Such preparedness, in addition to physical fitness, focuses on inoculating a soldier with all the essential psychological inputs to optimise his operational efficiency and effectiveness as well as adaptability to diverse environmental conditions. In this regard, identifying and strengthening positive aspects of a soldier in a proactive way is perhaps a relatively better approach. Such an approach, in fact, subscribes to efficiency model of human being and tries to identify, optimise and strengthen all the positive aspects in a soldier's personality which facilitates him to deal with the challenges of diverse operational environment.

Since the soldiers of Indian army are relatively young, healthy, and pathology-free mentally and physically fit individuals so applying the framework of positive psychology to tap their psychological strength is a better approach. Such an approach may enhance operational efficiency and effectiveness of a soldier in combat and counter insurgency environment. The framework can also help a soldier to regulate his affective states and to be aware of and to capitalise on his own hierarchy of psychological strengths. It can also help a soldier to achieve greater satisfaction, adapt more effectively to novel and challenging situations, and develop a sense of positive meaning in life. Moreover, the Indian army with its strong emphasis on character development, self-control, and welfare can be construed as a positive institution where the application of positive psychology will prepare the institution and its forces to take on the challenges posed by adversaries.

With this consideration studies were taken to map the psychological strength of different levels of leadership of Indian army. In the initial phase the focus was to study the middle rank leaders and junior leaders. In a period spanning over six years three studies were carried out, the purpose of Study 1 was to identify relevant psychological strength variables applicable to the different levels of leadership of Indian army. Study 2 focused on mapping the psychological strength of middle rank officers followed by development of an assessment tool to profile their psychological strength. The focus of Study 3 was junior leaders whose psychological strength was mapped and an assessment tool was developed to profile their psychological strength.

6.1 Study 1: Identification of Psychological Strength Variables

In Study 1 effort was made to identify relevant variables characterising psychological strength of the leaders of Indian army. Towards this end available literature on psychological strength, conceptualisation of soldier in ancient Indian texts as well as Indian military doctrine was consulted. A list of 120 strength variables was identified after going through these literatures. A 5- point Likert type checklist was developed using these strength variables. The checklist was administered to the leaders of different hierarchies of Indian army (N=765). The analysis revealed that out of 120 strength variables 99 were relevant to describe the psychological strength of the leaders of Indian army. Using these strength variables, a self-report measure in the form of a 5-point rating scale was developed. This self-report measure was representative of different levels of hierarchies of leadership of Indian army as it was an outcome of the study in which these levels of leadership had participated.

6.2 Study 2: Psychological Strength Profile of Middle Rank Leaders

Study 2 was carried out with a purpose to map psychological strength of middle rank leadership of Indian army as well as to develop an assessment tool to profile their psychological strength. This tool was administered to middle rank leaders (Captain, Major, Lt Colonel) of Indian army (N=601). Factor analysis of the responses yielded four dimensions of psychological strength. Using the strength variables loaded on the respective dimensions an operational definition of each dimension was developed. These definitions are applicable to middle rank leaders of Indian army.

6.2.1 Intellectual Resourcefulness

Intellectual resourcefulness is conceptualised as the ability to take sensible and effective decisions using cognitive, motivational and affective resources earned through knowledge and experience. It also reflects a willing acceptance from others for such decisions. An intellectually resourceful leader is relatively more knowledgeable, talented, competent, efficient, and capable to take decisions and has the ability and skill to persist with that in spite of adverse situations. He also receives a willing respect, command and submission from others for the decisions taken by him.

6.2.2 Nurturance

It is conceptualised as a positive attitude to extend unconditional help, care and support to unit members with a purpose to groom them in an interpersonally effective and socially acceptable manner without any biases and prejudices. It reflects a kind, humane, and empathetic understanding about the concerns of unit members and dealing with those concerns in a realistic and impartial way.

6.2.3 Dynamism

It is the ability to successfully make one's presence felt in a situation with enthusiasm, energy, and flamboyance. It is also characterised by maintaining dedication, commitment,

perseverance, and *Jujharoo* attitude while dealing with such situation in a lively and joyful but emphatic manner.

6.2.4 Self-control

It is characterised by tendency to remain confident, controlled, composed and strong while dealing with challenges and hardships. It also reflects an unquestionable acceptance to remain loyal, truthful, and committed towards the values and ethos of the self as well as of the unit/regiment.

In order to profile psychological strength of middle rank leaders 'Psychological Strength Questionnaire' (PSQ) constituting of 58 items was developed and its psychometric properties were established. PSQ is a Likert type 5-point self-report measure the items of which constitute the strength variables that describe the four dimensions. A middle rank leader who wishes to know his strength profile can give responses on each item of the questionnaire. Thereafter, he can follow the scoring and interpretation scheme to calculate his psychological strength profile.

6.3 Study 3: Psychological Strength Profile of Junior Leaders

Study 3 was carried out to identify the dimensions of psychological strength of junior leaders (Junior Commissioned Officers & Non-Commissioned Officers) and an assessment procedure to profile their psychological strength. Towards this end the 99 item psychological strength questionnaire was administered to a group of junior leaders (N=479) of Indian army. Factor analysis of data revealed as many as three factors/dimensions namely Professional competence, Sociability, and Vivacity. These dimensions were operationally defined taking into account the strength variables which constituted the respective dimension. The operational definitions are applicable to Junior Leaders of Indian Army only. The dimensions along with its operational definition are as follows.

6.3.1 Professional Competence

It refers to a tolerant, resistant and persistent approach towards various challenges of soldierly life. A professionally competent junior leader is knowledgeable, talented, sensible and resourceful in his sphere of work. He is sharp, vigilant and spontaneous in taking action. He maintains restraints and control in professional life to avoid any undesirable consequences of his action.

6.3.2 Sociability

It refers to a sense of commitment for duty as well as maintenance of empathetic attitude towards others. A sociable junior leader is humane, helpful, polite, cooperative and understanding in day to day life. He is honest, truthful, obedient, and responsible so far as executing the orders of the seniors is concerned. He maintains a progressive view towards life and reflects a perseverant approach to achieve the goals. He values self-respect and maintains a spiritual orientation in life which makes him a person with considerable integrity.

6.3.3 Vivacity

In the context of junior leaders vivacity is characterised

by display of liveliness and high-spirit in soldierly life. A vivacious junior leader is fearless, daring and energetic while carrying out his duty. He is capable of efficiently handling the challenges and remains hilarious and flamboyant while dealing with those challenges. His exposure to such situations also makes him to develop expertise and proficiency that helps him to maintain a balance in emotions he experiences while handling challenging tasks.

To assess strength profile of junior leaders, psychological strength questionnaire for junior leaders (PSQJR) was developed using the strength variables of each domain. PSQJR is a 5-point Likert type self-report measure which constitutes 53 items. A junior leader who wishes to know his psychological strength profile can give his response to each item of PSQJR by selecting any one alternative of a 5-point rating scale. Thereafter, he can follow scoring and interpretation scheme to know his psychological strength profile.

A perusal of characteristically different dimensions of psychological strength emerged at the two levels of leadership indicate for role specificity of the leaders in different levels. The dimensions characterising middle rank leadership indicate that the leaders of this level are expected to share fair amount of intellect to deal with unforeseen challenges. They are expected to take care of their subordinates and nurture them for various roles. Such leaders set example in terms of leading from the front when the situation demands. Finally, they are expected to maintain high level of composure in spite of adverse circumstance which they successfully do by controlling their emotions and undesirable wishes and desires. On the contrary a junior leader is expected to execute the tasks assigned to him for which he needs to be professionally competent. At the same time he is expected to maintain a very healthy relationship with his buddy and should extend unconditional help and support. Finally he is expected to maintain a very high level of motivation especially in carrying out jobs in risky and life threatening situations which he does because of being vivacious.

7. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Over the last two decades' positive psychology has made significant progress in addressing the issues of human health, wellbeing and happiness. The field has been successfully meeting the requirements of contemporary American society. However, the application of constructs meant for Americans in other socio-cultural set up such as India may not be a methodologically viable approach as the two societies (American and Indian) are visibly different. India being one of the oldest civilisations of the world has tremendous resources which elaborately discuss positive aspects of life. Therefore, it is perhaps a better approach to look for all those indigenous constructs which deal with health, wellbeing, happiness and strength in Indian socio-cultural context. The outcomes of the studies highlighted in the paper are endeavours in this direction. There is a need to replicate method used in these studies to other categories of Indian population for a culturally sensitive model of psychological strength relevant to Indian socio-cultural set up.

REFERENCES

- 1 Seligman, M. & Csikszentmihalyi, M. Positive Psychology. *American Psychologist*, 2000, **55**, 5-13. doi: 10.1037//0003-066X.55.1.5
- 2 Strand, E.B.; Reich, J.W. & Zautra, A.J. Positive experience. In *Encyclopaedia Positive Psychology*, edited by S.J. Lopez, London: Wiley-Blackwell. 2009, 721-726.
- 3 Fredrickson, B.L. Positive emotions. In *Handbook of Positive Psychology*, edited by S.J. Lopez & C.R. Snyder, New York: Oxford University Press. 2009, 120-134.
- 4 Handalsman, M.M.; Knapp, S. & Gottlieb, M. Positive ethics. In *Handbook of Positive Psychology*, edited by S.J. Lopez & C.R. Snyder, New York: Oxford University Press. 2002, 731-744.
- 5 Stocks, E.L. & Lishner, D.A. Empathy. In *Encyclopaedia Positive Psychology*, edited by S.J. Lopez, London: Wiley- Blackwell. 2009, 320-326.
- 6 Stijkovic, A.D. & Luthans, F. Social cognitive theory and self-efficacy: Going beyond traditional motivational and behavioural approaches. *Organ. Dyn.*, 1998, **26**, 62-74. doi: 10.1016/S0090-2616(98)90006-7
- 7 Snyder, C.R. Genesis: The birth and growth of hope. In *Handbook of Hope: Theory, Measurement, Application*, San Diego, CA: Academic Press. 2000, 25-38.
- 8 Snyder, C. R. *Handbook of Hope: Theory, Measurement, Application*, 2000. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- 9 Seligman, M.E.P. *Learned Optimism*, 1991. New York: Knopf.
- 10 Seligman, M.E.P. *Authentic Happiness*, 2002. New York: Free Press.
- 11 Csikszentmihalyi, M. & Nakamura, J. Psychological capital. In *Encyclopaedia Positive Psychology*, edited by S. J. Lopez, 2009, 801-804. London: Wiley-Blackwell.
- 12 Langer, E. Mindfulness versus positive evaluation. In *Handbook of Positive Psychology*, edited by S.J. Lopez & C.R. Snyder, New York: Oxford University Press. 2009, 279-294.
- 13 Langer, E. *Clockwise Mindful Health and the Power of Possibility*, New York: Random House.
- 14 Peterson, C. & Seligman, M.E.P. *Character Strengths and Virtues: Handbook of Classification*, Washington DC: American psychological Association. 2004.
- 15 Peterson, C.; Park, N. & Seligman, M.E.P. Greater strength of character and recovery from illness. *J. Positive Psychol.*, 2006, **1**, 17-26. doi: 10.1080/17439760500372739
- 16 Matthews, M.D. Towards a positive military psychology. *Military Psychol.*, 2008, **20**(4), 289-297.
- 17 Matthews, M.D.; Peterson, C. & Kelly, D.R. Paper presented at the American psychological Society meeting, New York. *Character Strengths Predict Retention of West Point Cadets*, 2006.
- 18 Matthews, M.D.; Eid, J.; Kelly, D.R.; Bailey, J.K.S. & Peterson, C. Character strengths and virtues of developing military leaders: An international comparison. *Mil. Psychol.*, 2006, **18**(Suppl.), S57-S58.
- 19 Peterson, C.; Ruch, W.; Beermann, W.; Park, N. &

- Seligman, M.E.P. Strength of character, orientation to happiness, and life satisfaction. *J. Positive Psychol.*, 2007, **2**, 149-156.
doi: 10.1080/17439760701228938
- 20 Matthews, M.D. Towards a positive military psychology. *Mil. Psychol.*, 2008, **20**(4), 289-297.
- 21 Masten, A.S.; Cutuli, J.J.; Herbers, J.E. & Reed, M.J. Resilience in development. In *Handbook of Positive Psychology*, edited by S.J. Lopez & C.R. Snyder, New York: Oxford University Press. 2009, 117-131.
- 22 Luthans, F. The need for and meaning of positive organisational behaviour. *J. Organ. Behav.*, 2002a, **23**, 695-706.
doi : 10.1002/job.165
- 23 Reivich, K.J.; Seligman, M.E.P. & McBride, S. Master resilience training in the US Army. *Am. Psychol.*, 2011, **66**, 25-34.
doi: 10.1037/a0021897
- 24 Masten, A.S. & Reed, M.G.J. Resilience in development. In *Handbook of Positive Psychology*, edited by S.J. Lopez & C.R. Snyder, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, 74-88.
- 25 Duckworth, A.L.; Peterson, C.; Matthews, M.D. & Kelly, D.R. Grit: Perseverance and passion for long term goals. *J. Pers. Soc. Psychol.*, 2007, **92**, 1087-1101.
doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.92.6.1087
- 26 Duckworth, A.L.; Peterson, C.; Matthews, M.D. & Kelly, D.R. Grit: Perseverance and passion for long term goals. *J. Pers. Soc. Psychol.*, 2007, **92**, 1087-1101.
doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.92.6.1087
- 27 Kobasa, S.C. Stressful life events, personality and health: An inquiry into hardiness. *J. Pers. Soc. Psychol.*, 1979, **37**, 1-11.
doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.37.1.1
- 28 Kobasa, S.C. Stressful life events, personality and health: An inquiry into hardiness. *J. Pers. Soc. Psychol.*, 1979, **37**, 1-11.
doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.37.1.1
- 29 Madii, S.R. & Kobasa, S.C. Homewood, IL: Dow Jones-Irwin. *The Hardy Exec.* 1984.
- 30 Bartone, P.T. Hardiness protects against war related stress in Army reserve force. *Couns. Psychol. J.*, 1999, **51**, 72-82.
- 31 Contrada, R.J. Type A Behaviour, personality hardiness, and cardiovascular responses to stress. *J. Pers. Soc. Psychol.*, 1989, **57**, 895-903.
doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.57.5.895
- 32 Bartone, P.T. Hardiness protects against war related stress in Army reserve force. *Couns. Psychol. J.*, 1999, **51**, 72-82.
- 33 Rhonda, C.; Matthews, M. D. & Seligman, M.E.P. Comprehensive soldier fitness: Building resilience in a challenging institutional context. *Am. Psychol.*, 2011, **66**, 4-9.
doi: 10.1037/a0021420
- 34 Peterson, C.; Park, N. & Castro, C.A. Assessment for the U.S. Army comprehensive soldier fitness program: The global assessment tool. *Am. Psychol.*, 2011, **66**, 10-18.
doi: 10.1037/a0021658
- 35 Salgame, S.K.K. Happiness and well-being in Indian tradition. *Psychol. Stud.*, 2006, **51**(2), 105-112.
- 36 Paranjpe, A.C. *Self Identity in Modern Psychology : Indian Thought*. 1998, New York: Plenum Press.
- 37 Rao, K.R.; Paranjpe, A.C. New Delhi: Springer. *Psychol. Indian Tradit.* 2016,
- 38 Salgame, S.K.K. Happiness and well-being in Indian tradition. *Psychol. Stud.*, 2006, **51**(2), 105-112.
- 39 Krishnan, B. Typological conceptions in ancient Indian thought. In *Perspective of Indigenous Psychology*, edited by G. Misra & A.K. Mohanty, New Delhi: Concept. 2002, 292-304.
- 40 Mathew, V.G. University of Kerala, Kerala. *Mathew IAS Rating Scale Manual*. 1995,
- 41 Rao, K.R.; Paranjpe, A.C. New Delhi: Springer. *Psychol. Indian Tradit.*, 2016
- 42 Shilpa, S. & Murthy, C.G.V. Development and standardisation of Mysore triguna scale. *Sage Open J.*, 2012, 1-10.
doi: 10.1177/2158244012436564
- 43 Singh, J.K.; Misra, G. & De Raad, B. Personality structure in the trait lexicon of Hindi, a major language spoken in India. *Eur. J. Pers.*, 2013, **27**, 605-620.
doi: 10.1002/per.1940
- 44 Singh, J.K. & De Raad, B. The personality trait structure in Hindi replicated. *Int. J. Pers. Psychol.*, 2017, **3**, 26-35.
- 45 Suneetha, S.S. & Srikrishna, C. Triguna personality theory: Classical representation and modern research. *J. Indian Psychol.*, 2009, **27**, 35-46.
- 46 Wolf, D.B. The Vedic Personality Inventory: A study of three gunas. *J. Indian Psychol.*, 1998, **16**, 26-43.
- 47 Wolf, D.B. A psychometric analysis of the three gunas. *Psychol. Rep.*, 1999, **84**, 1379-1390.
doi: 10.2466/pr0.1999.84.3c.1379
- 48 Pande, N. & Naidu, R.K. Anasakti and health: A study of non-attachment. *Psychol. Dev. Soc.*, 1992, **4**(1), 89-104.
- 49 Salgame, K.K.K. Ego and ahamkara: Self and identity in modern psychology and Indian thought. In *Foundation of Indian Psychology*, edited by R.M.M. Cornelissen, G. Misra, & Varma, S., New Delhi: Pearson. 2011.
- 50 Singh, J.K. & Misra, G. Understanding contentment in everyday life. *Indian Psychol. Rev.*, 2000, **54** & **55**(4 Special issue), 113-124.
- 51 Jeste, D.V. & Vahia, I.V. Comparison of the conceptualisation of wisdom in ancient Indian literature with modern views: Focus on the *Bhagavad Gita*. *Psychiatry*, 2008, **71**(3), 197-209.
doi: 10.1521/psyc.2008.71.3.197
- 52 Srivastava, A.K. & Misra, G. Going beyond the model of economic man: An indigenous perspective on happiness. *J. Indian Psychol.*, 2003, **21**(1), 12-29.
- 53 Singh, J.K. Progress in positive psychology: Some reflections from India. In *Positive Psychology: Appl. Work, Health Well-being*, edited by U. Kumar, Archana, & V. Prakash, New Delhi: Pearson. 2015, 19-36.
- 54 Srivastava, A.K. & Misra, G. Going beyond the model of economic man: An indigenous perspective on happiness.

J. Indian Psychol., 2003, **21**(1), 12-29.

- 55 Jeste, D.V. & Vahia, I.V. Comparison of the conceptualisation of wisdom in ancient Indian literature with modern views: Focus on the Bhagavad Gita. *Psychiatry*, 2008, **71**(3), 197–209.
doi: 10.1521/psyc.2008.71.3.197

CONTRIBUTOR

Dr Jitendra K Singh did M.Phil and PhD from University of Delhi. Currently working as Scientist 'E' in DRDO-Defence Institute of Psychological Research, Delhi. His main areas of interest are personality, political psychology, positive psychology and qualitative research method. He has contributed in the area of personality profiling of target leaders, profiling of social groups of conflict environment, and training in personality assessment, perception management and social engineering. He has twenty-nine research publication in journals and seven book chapter in edited volumes.