

Positive Psychological Capital and Parenting Styles among adolescents: Khasi and Non-Khasi Scenario

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The psychological capital (PsyCap), an individual's positive psychological state of development, is characterized by four components. These four components are (1) Hope (commonly associated with one's positive expectancy towards the future), (2) Self-efficacy (confidence to put in considerable effort to succeed at challenging task), (3) Resilience (individual's capability to successfully cope with adverse circumstances, uncertainty and conflict and (4) Optimism (a cognitive process directed at positive outcomes or expectancies of a bright and prosperous future). The sample consists of 160 Khasi (75 boys and 85 girls selected from East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya) and 185 non-Khasi (100 boys and 85 girls selected from Kolkata district of West Bengal) adolescents studying at high schools of East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya and Kolkata district of West Bengal. Parental Authority Questionnaire and Psychological Capital Scale were used to assess the parenting style and positive PsyCap, respectively. The results revealed that dimensions of positive PsyCap vary with respect to culture and the effect of culture is prominent among adolescent boys. Non-Khasi adolescent boys are significantly higher on positive PsyCap dimensions than their Khasi counterparts. Adolescents who perceive their parents as high on authoritarian dimension display lower level of Positive PsyCap and its dimensions while those perceive their parents as high on authoritative style score higher on Positive PsyCap and its dimensions. Implications for parental practices and positive PsyCap in families and schools are discussed.

Keywords: Adolescents, Culture, Parenting style, Positive Psychological Capital.

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Introduction

The concept of positive psychology was introduced by Seligman (1998). Positive psychology assesses human beings' virtues, strengths and weaknesses in order to make them effective in a dynamic environment (Sheldon & King, 2001). From the concept of positive psychology, the notion of psychological capital (PsyCap) has been emerged. Positive PsyCap is an individual's state of advancement that gives rise to positive mental psychological state, which is beneficial at the time of crisis. Positive psychological assets such as hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism (HERO) characterize PsyCap, an individual's positive psychological state.

Hope is the quality that motivates an individual to chase goals persistently and sometimes changing the pathways in order to reach goal successfully. Luthans, Avolio, and Walumba (2005) defined hope as the "perceived capability to derive pathways to desired goals and motivate oneself via agency thinking to use those

pathways". Individuals with high levels of hope are motivated towards attaining goals and consequently display high levels of engagement. Self-efficacy, another crucial component of PsyCap, is defined as an individual's belief about whether or not he/she can accomplish a task. Ouweneel, Le Blanc, and Schaufeli (2012) observed that an individual's level of self-efficacy governs his/her effort when faced with unanticipated impediments. Resilience is an individual's ability to face adverse situations in life in order to adapt to negative events and uncertainties. Optimism is another important component of positive PsyCap. Tiger (1971) defined optimism as "a mood or attitude associated with an interpretation about the social or material – one which the evaluator regards as socially desirable to his [or her] advantage or for his [or her] pleasure". Optimistic persons expect positive outcomes in life and this positivity leads to success in most of the times.

The four psychological dimensions of positive PsyCap are necessary ingredient for a happy and meaningful life. Research has proved that most of the people especially

adolescents are becoming less happy and depression prone (Seligman, Ernst, Gillham, Reivich, & Linkins, 2009) in spite of being surrounded by ultimate comforts of life (Seligman, 1995). According to Seligman (1995), despite the new opportunities, the rates of hopelessness, depression, meaninglessness and passivity among people especially adolescents, are getting higher day by day (Seligman, 2002, 2006; Seligman et al., 2009) and these consequently impair the development of a society. Adolescents move from high school to greater world and encounter new and more challenging situations in different spheres of life. Developing Positive PsyCap will serve as protection against the potentially deleterious impact of negative environmental variables and consequently facilitate mental health.

Parenting style and its effect on overall development is a well-researched topic among researchers. Parenting style represents the strategies that parents use in their child rearing. Baumrind (1966, 1967, 1991) identified three basic styles of child rearing: authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative. The three parenting styles differ in two dimensions of parenting: the amount of warmth a child receives from parents and the extent to which a child's activities and behaviours are controlled by parents (Baumrind, 1991). Parents who display authoritarian style restrict the autonomy of children and expect children to follow their orders without asking any questions. Permissive parents encourage their children's autonomy and do not impose any authority on their children. Though permissive parents foster autonomy, their control over children's behaviour is very poor (Baumrind, 1991; Reitman, Rhode, Hupp, & Altobello, 2002). Authoritative parents tend to foster autonomy among children and employ moderate parental control. Children reared in this style are not completely restricted but have room for expressing their autonomy to certain extent and consequently, this parenting style enables children to make their own decisions and regulate their own activities (Baumrind, 1966, 1967, 1991; Reitman et al., 2002).

Researchers also showed parenting styles aim to shape and enhance children's positive PsyCap, competencies and overall development. Authoritarian parenting style has negative relationship with self-efficacy among adolescents (Tam, Chong, Kadirvelu & Khoo, 2012; Shaw, 2007; Dehyadegary, Nejad, Nasehzadeh & Divsalar, 2014; Yousaf, 2015), while self-efficacy has significant positive relation with authoritative/flexible parenting style (Tsemrekal, 2013; Chao, 2001; Yousaf, 2015) and permissive parenting style (Lopez, 2002; Anjum & Kausar, 2009; Yousaf, 2015). Griess (2010) suggested that the perceived authoritative parenting style contributed to higher levels of optimism than the authoritarian parenting style. Gota (2012) revealed that authoritative parenting style has positive impact on academic self-efficacy and achievement motivation among boys and girls compared to non-authoritative parents. Children of authoritative parents have high level of self-esteem and tend to be self-reliant, self-controlled, secure, and inquisitive than youth having authoritarian or permissive parents (Buri, Louiselle, Misukanis, & Mueller, 1988; Wenar, 1994). Gera and Kaur (2015) found insignificant correlation between Parenting style and Resilience. Zakeri, Jowkar and Razmjoe (2010) revealed a positive and significant correlation between acceptance-involvement parenting style and resilience. Warmth, supporting, and child-centred parenting style associated with the development of resilience. Ritter (2005) found that an authoritative parenting style is

associated with high levels of resiliency while authoritarian and permissive parenting styles were most often associated with those participants with low resiliency. Parents are the primary teachers who inculcate the motivational thinking and encourage in finding out suitable route to achieve goals. Kumar, Sharma and Hooda (2012) revealed significant positive correlation between hope and three types of perceived parenting style i.e. democratic, accepting and overprotecting and negatively correlated with rejecting parenting style.

However, adopting different types of parenting styles in family is influenced by several factors and culture is one of them. Most of the times, children in Asian cultures, especially in India, imbibe values, customs and respect for others (mostly elderly people). Children are taught to obey decisions of elderly person and significant others in the family and society in order to get social approval in the form of external rewards rather than internalizing values into one's sense of self. Chaudhary (2004) argued that 'familism' is a significant reality for Indian families. Indian children live with their parent's identity whereas in the Western culture children are encouraged to have their own identity (Geertz, 1984). In India, children aged below 12 years expect to obey authority unquestioningly, adolescents aged between 12 to 14 years are given relatively more freedom but constantly supervised by family members (mostly elders in the family) and mature aged above 16 years are given freedom, while also being guided and somewhat controlled (Bisht, 2008). On the other hand, Western parenting styles provide enough freedom to behave without any pressure of complying with societal expectations and norms (Keller & Otto, 2009). Adolescents of European background in Canada reported their mothers as authoritative in nature whereas adolescents in India reported their mothers as authoritarian in nature (Garg et al., 2005). India, a land of unity in diversity is also influenced by the trend of globalization. It may be assumed that parenting style differ largely in matrilineal and patriarchal society because in matrilineal society, the descent or the family name is through the mother side, and is known as "matrilineal descent" (Kapadia, 1966). On the other hand, in a patriarchal structure, men are given considerable authority and are perceived as superior than women. Rai, Pandey & Kumar (2009) studied boys and girls from Khasi tribe of Meghalaya state. The results revealed that boys have significantly more rejection from father as compared to girls and girls have shown significantly better emotional warmth from father. Jambunathan and Counselman (2002) compared parenting style of Indian mothers living in India with Indian mothers living in the United States. The authors found that Indian mothers living in the U.S. were employing authoritative parenting, while the mothers living in India had a clear authoritarian parenting style. These results are important in highlighting the many ways in which culture influences our actions and determines who we are.

A closer inspection of the review of studies reveals that parenting rearing style has greatest influence on the development of child's positive PsyCap, self-esteem and self-reliance. In psychological literature, there are huge numbers of studies regarding relationship between parenting style and development of children. However, studies in North-East India, particularly on Khasi population, a matrilineal tribe of Meghalaya is few. Therefore, the present study explores the nature of perceived parenting style and positive PsyCap among Khasi and Non-Khasi adolescents.

The present study

In view of these objectives, the present study is to investigate:

- The perception of different dimensions of parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative and permissive) by Khasi (belonging East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya) and non-Khasi (belonging to Kolkata district of West Bengal) adolescents.
- The perception of different dimensions of Psychological Capital (Hope, Optimism, Self-efficacy and Resilience) by Khasi and non-Khasi adolescents.
- The relationship between perceived parenting style and psychological capital in Khasi and non-Khasi adolescents.

Method

Participants

The sample consists of 160 Khasi (75 boys and 85 girls) and 185 non-Khasi (100 boys and 85 girls) adolescents studying at high schools. Participants of the study were drawn from different schools of East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya and Kolkata district of West Bengal. These districts were selected for convenience and the presence of capitals, thereby, inducing some variation in family background. Four schools (two co-educational, one boy's and one girl's) from each district were selected randomly from the lists taken from District Inspectors' (D.I) offices. Meghalaya is the homeland for three matrilineal tribes and one of them is Khasi. For a comparative study, a group of school students from West Bengal was also selected. The age ranged from 17 to 19 years with a mean age of 18.01 (Standard deviation – 4.02). A stratified random sampling method was used to divide students into two strata i.e. Khasi and non-Khasi. Simple random sampling without replacement (SRSWOR) method was used for selecting students from each stratum (Khasi and non-Khasi).

Measures

The following measures were used in this study:

Personal Data sheet: Certain personal information of students' such as age, gender and place to stay and schooling were collected using personal data sheet.

Psychological Capital (Luthans et al., 2007): Psychological capital scale was developed by Luthans, Youssef, and Avolio (2007). This scale analyzed four dimensions of Psychological Capital: hope, optimism, self-efficacy and resilience. The scale had 24 items i.e., 6 items of each dimension. This is a 7 point scale and scores on the scale varies from 1= strongly disagree to 7= strongly agree. The score for each dimension varies from 6-42. The higher score on each dimension indicates high on the respective dimensions. The Cronbach's alpha of four dimensions range from 0.70 to 0.73.

Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ): It was developed by Lemar (2005) to measure the parenting style as perceived by adolescents. The scale was based on the scale developed by Buri (1991), which adopted three parenting styles of Baumrind (1966). The PAQ scale consists of 21 items. There are four response options for each question. The Cronbach's alphas for authoritarian, authoritative and permissive parenting style subscales for the present study were calculated and were found to be 0.70, 0.68 and 0.64 respectively.

Results

Preliminary analyses

Basic descriptive statistics for the main study variables were calculated. Additionally, we conducted two-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to determine the effect of culture, gender and their interaction effect on positive PsyCap. The result indicates that significant effect of culture [$F(1, 341) = 8.34, p < 0.01$] on overall positive PsyCap and its different dimensions. Closer inspection reveals that non-Khasi adolescents are significantly higher on overall Positive PsyCap [$t(343) = 4.30, p < 0.01$] and its different dimensions [Hope: $t(343) = 3.85, p < 0.01$, Self-efficacy: $t(343) = 3.72, p < 0.01$, Resilience: $t(343) = 4.01, p < 0.01$ and Optimism: $t(343) = 3.64, p < 0.01$] than Khasi adolescents. ANOVA result reveals effect of gender on overall positive PsyCap and its different dimensions. Significant interaction effect of culture and gender [$F(1, 341) = 9.56, p < 0.01$] on overall positive PsyCap and its different dimensions has been determined. Adolescent boys of non-Khasi community report significantly higher on Positive PsyCap [$t(173) = 6.39, p < 0.01$] and its different dimensions [Hope: $t(173) = 5.91, p < 0.01$, Self-efficacy: $t(173) = 4.92, p < 0.01$, Resilience: $t(173) = 5.03, p < 0.01$ and Optimism: $t(173) = 5.89, p < 0.01$] than Khasi boys.

Two-way ANOVA was carried out to determine the effect of culture, gender and their interaction effect on the perceptions of different dimensions of parenting style. Main effect of culture $F(1, 341) = 8.23, p < 0.01$ and interaction effect of culture and gender $F(1, 341) = 11.01, p < 0.01$ was found to be significant. Closer scrutiny suggests that Khasi adolescents significantly higher on perceived parental control than their non-Khasi counterparts [$t(343) = 5.61, p < 0.01$] whereas the opposite trend is evident in case of authoritative parenting style [$t(343) = 5.01, p < 0.01$] and permissive parenting style [$t(343) = 4.13, p < 0.01$]. Khasi boys reported significantly higher perceived parental control than non-Khasi [$t(173) = 4.81, p < 0.01$] and non-Khasi boys reported significantly higher parental authoritarianism than their Khasi counterparts [$t(173) = 3.12, p < 0.01$].

Main analyses

Bivariate correlations were also conducted and the results are presented in Table 1. They indicate that for non-Khasi adolescents, perception of authoritarian parenting style is negatively and significantly associated with overall positive PsyCap and its dimensions whereas the reverse relationship is evident in case of authoritative parenting style. The positive association is seen between perception of permissive parenting style and positive PsyCap but none of the correlation index was found to be significant. For Khasi adolescents, perception of authoritarian style is negatively associated with positive PsyCap and its dimensions. None of the correlational value was significant. The positive and significant association is seen between perception of authoritative parenting style and overall positive PsyCap, hope and self-efficacy. Permissive parenting style is also positively associated with positive PsyCap and its dimensions but none of the values is significant.

Hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to assess the significant predictors of positive PsyCap and the results are displayed in Table 2. In each regression analysis, the statistical control variables (adolescent gender and parent gender) were entered in the first step, while the three parenting dimensions (authoritarian, authoritative and

permissive) were simultaneously entered as predictors in the second step. Regression analyses were conducted separately for non-Khasi and Khasi on each of the four dimensions of positive PsyCap.

Table 2 displays that in step 1, none of the predictors is found to be significant for both Khasi and non-Khasi adolescents. In step 2, perception of authoritarian dimension is negatively associated with overall positive

PsyCap and its dimensions for non-Khasi adolescents only. Authoritative parenting style is positively and significantly associated with overall Positive PsyCap and its dimensions for non-Khasi adolescents whereas resilience and overall positive PsyCap are positively and significantly associated with perception of authoritative parenting style of Khasi adolescents.

Table 1. Bivariate correlations among main study variables

	Parenting style					
	Authoritarian		Authoritative		Permissive	
	Non-Khasi (N=185)	Khasi (N=160)	Non-Khasi (N=185)	Khasi (N=160)	Non-Khasi (N=185)	Khasi (N=160)
Overall Positive PsyCap	-0.24**	-0.11	0.32**	0.16*	0.13	0.08
Hope	-0.25**	-0.10	0.28**	0.17*	0.12	0.07
Self-efficacy	-0.27**	-0.09	0.31**	0.19*	0.11	0.09
Resilience	-0.22**	-0.11	0.29**	0.10	0.10	0.06
Optimism	-0.24**	-0.08	0.30**	0.09	0.14	0.11

Notes: *p<.05; **p<.01.

Table 2. Regression analyses of parenting style dimensions and positive PsyCap

	Dimensions of Positive PsyCap									
	Hope		Self-efficacy		Resilience		Optimism		Overall Positive PsyCap	
	Khasi	Non-Khasi	Khasi	Non-Khasi	Khasi	Non-Khasi	Khasi	Non-Khasi	Khasi	Non-Khasi
Step 1										
G	0.04	0.08	0.05	0.04	0.08	0.004	0.007	0.08	0.03	0.004
PG	0.09	0.10	0.007	0.08	0.003	0.06	-0.002	0.005	-0.007	0.08
R ²	0.04	0.03	0.06	0.07	0.03	0.02	0.06	0.01	0.07	0.05
Step 2										
G	0.09	0.07	0.04	0.05	0.003	0.05	0.04	0.002	0.06	0.07
PG	0.03	0.02	0.006	-0.03	0.03	0.05	0.06	0.03	0.02	0.04
AN	0.04	-0.25**	-0.09	-0.23**	0.10	-0.26**	-0.10	-0.30**	0.009	-0.39**
AV	0.07	0.27*	0.10	0.19*	0.18*	0.27**	0.12	0.29*	0.20**	0.29**
PM	0.07	0.04	0.06	0.009	0.07	0.10	-0.09	0.10	-0.09	0.07
R ²	0.07	0.17	0.05	0.20	0.15	0.23	0.1	0.27	0.14	0.29

Notes: *p<.05; **p<.01, G= Adolescent gender, PG=Parent gender, AN=Authoritarian, AV=Authoritative, PM=Permissive.

Discussion

The present study intends to explore the nature of perception of parenting style (authoritarian, authoritative and permissive) and dimensions of positive PsyCap of adolescents belonging to Khasi and non-Khasi community. The results reveal that dimensions of positive PsyCap vary with respect to culture. Non-Khasi adolescent boys are significantly higher on positive PsyCap dimensions than their Khasi counterparts. The possible explanation for this is that in patriarchal society, the social status of boys is much higher than boys of matrilineal society and consequently, non-Khasi adolescents develop more Positive PsyCap. Interestingly, the result displays no significant difference between non-Khasi adolescent boys and girls with respect to their Positive PsyCap. This may be due to the beginning of the LPG (liberalization, privatization and globalization) era, onset of modernization

and gender equality among adolescents especially in metro cities.

Bivariate correlations reveal that non-Khasi adolescents who perceive their parents higher on authoritarian dimension score lower on Positive PsyCap and its dimensions while those perceive their parents as authoritative score higher on Positive PsyCap and its dimensions. The possible explanation is that authoritative parents exercise control over children in a warm and loving environment and encourage their children’s competencies, qualities and thereby developing positive PsyCap among their children. On the other hand, authoritarian parents exercise strict disciplinary guidelines for their children and consequently, children get very less opportunity for developing self-efficacy, hope, self-confidence and emotional well-being. The lack of self-confidence, self-efficacy and hope also give birth to lower level of optimism and ability to fight back in a stressful situation.

Supportive yet disciplined home environments promote sense of independence and autonomy among adolescents and consequently, encouraging the positive PsyCap among adolescents. Always judging accomplishments of adolescents' in terms of 'absolute standard' and shaping behavior forcefully may lower the level of hope, optimism and self-efficacy.

Regression analyses reveal similar results of bivariate correlations. In the case of resilience and optimism, the perception of authoritative and permissive interacted such that the relation between permissive parenting style and positive PsyCap is dependent upon the level of perception of authoritative parenting style.

Conclusions

The present study explores the relationships between parenting style and positive PsyCap of Khasi and non-Khasi adolescents. The results revealed that dimensions of positive PsyCap vary with respect to culture and the effect of culture is prominent among adolescent boys. Non-Khasi adolescent boys are significantly higher on positive PsyCap dimensions than their Khasi counterparts. Non-Khasi adolescents who perceive their parents as high on authoritarian dimension display lower level of Positive PsyCap and its dimensions while those perceive their parents as high on authoritative score higher on Positive PsyCap and its dimensions. Interestingly, the study has also revealed that freedom is only effective in developing positive PsyCap among adolescents in the context of higher parental concern.

In spite of having interesting findings regarding the relation between parenting style and positive PsyCap, there are several drawbacks of the present study. First, the study is a cross-sectional in nature, thus drawing cause and effect relationship among variables is not possible. Longitudinal study would be an alternative to this. The second limitation is that responses are based on self-report. Future research should replicate these findings using different sources of data collection such as parental reports, teachers' reports etc. The third limitation of this study is relatively small sample. Further study based on large samples from different regions would be useful for generalization.

Despite several limitations, the findings of this study have a number of implications for developing positive PsyCap and providing socialization among adolescents. Parents and teachers need to adopt authoritative style, which develops positive PsyCap among adolescents. Too much of restriction on adolescents hampers the development of positive psychological assets among adolescents. Providing freedom to adolescents is also crucial but this can only be effective when adolescents feel that they are being valued by others. Parents and teachers need to play the role of friend, philosopher and guide to the younger generation especially to adolescents. Adolescents may be encouraged to set specific, challenging personal and academic goals and use means-end analysis (breaking down the ultimate goals down into sub-goals to make it more manageable) to celebrate small successes in order to develop hope and self-confidence. Proper and timely feedback may be given in order to increase the self-efficacy of. In school and college, interactive and activity-based small projects may also be given as a part of curriculum in order to develop resiliency, self-efficacy and optimism. At home, adolescents may be given some responsibility to carry out that eventually enhances self-efficacy, hope and optimism.

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