

An In-Depth Study of the Relationship between Character Strengths and Resilience in Youth

Sonia Manhas and Rupan Dhillon

Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar

In the present study, we examined the relationship between character strengths and resilience in youth. The sample of 500 middle-adolescents (250 females and 250 males), completed the questionnaire comprising measures of character strengths and resilience. A correlational research design followed by step wise multiple regression analysis was used to study the association between character strengths and resilience. Findings unveil significant gender differences in 10 out of 24 character strengths, while no significant gender difference was reported for resilience. Significant positive correlations were found between all the character strengths and resilience. In the regression analysis for the female sample, hope, curiosity, perspective, love of learning, and prudence, emerged as the significant predictors of resilience. Together, these predictors accounted for 35.1% of the variance in resilience. Whereas, for the male sample, love of learning, judgement, hope, and forgiveness emerged as significant predictors of resilience. Together these factors accounted for 25.3% of the variance in resilience.

Keywords: Character Strengths, Resilience, Youth, Gender Differences

Positive youth development thrives when young individuals receive support, opportunities, and a nurturing environment to foster their skills and character (Lerner et al., 2019). Despite the potential for growth, youth often face challenges ranging from societal pressures to personal obstacles, highlighting the importance of comprehensive strategies to empower them. Navigating these challenges is crucial to ensure that youth can unleash their potential and contribute positively to society (Shek et al., 2019). Seligman (2002) emphasises in Positive Psychology the need to focus on an individual's power and positive feelings, regardless of stressful circumstances. This approach has influenced current adolescent research, directing the focus towards understanding and supporting youth's strengths. Unlike the traditional perspective, which tends to emphasize potential risks and negative outcomes, this strengths-based approach recognizes the developmental

resources and potential of adolescents as protective factors.

In the context of successful strengths-based approach, Zimmerman (2013) discuss the importance of recognizing 'resilient attributes'. Masten (2001), resilience refers to a dynamic system's capacity to endure or recover from major changes that jeopardize its stability, viability, or progress. This is accomplished mostly by regulating negative emotions and generating behavioural responses to ease stressful conditions. Masten (2011) notes that resilience has been demonstrated in vulnerable children facing mental health and developmental challenges stemming from genetic or environmental factors. According to research studies, people with strong character strengths handle stress more effectively (Li et al., 2017). This suggests that character strengths and resilience are interconnected in a bidirectional manner, wherein character strengths contribute to resilience and overall

well-being, and resilience fosters the development of character strengths (Martinez-Marti & Ruch, 2014,2017)

Character strengths, as defined by Peterson and Seligman (2004) encompass “positive attributes that are observable in mental, emotional, and behavioral dimensions”. They derived a classification system for character strengths and virtues from an in-depth analysis of religious and philosophical texts. They identified six virtues: wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence, which represents core characteristics valued by religious thinkers and philosophers.

A key objective of Positive Psychology Interventions (PPIs) is to cultivate and nurture character strengths (Ghielen et al., 2018). Moreover, character strengths play a very crucial role in various well-being indicators and exhibit an inverse relationship with symptoms of psychopathology. Research by Wood and colleagues (2011) discovered that the utilization of strengths is linked with reduced stress, heightened vitality, and increased positive affect. Studies, such as those conducted by Rust et al. (2009), have also revealed that employing character strengths leads to a decrease in depression and an enhancement of well-being in specific populations.

In an alternative investigation, Peterson et al. (2008) observed that individuals who had encountered a more significant number of traumatic events tended to exhibit higher scores across most character strengths. Additionally, all strengths positively correlated with posttraumatic growth, with religiousness/spirituality, gratitude, kindness, bravery, and hope to show particularly strong associations. These findings imply that the recovery process is conducive to cultivating strengths. Hutchinson et al. (2011) delved into the connection between resilience and the six theoretical virtues proposed by

Peterson and Seligman. Notably, the six virtues, particularly courage, displayed positive correlations with resilience. According to Hefferon and Bonniwell (2011) psychological resilience is crucial when dealing with unfavourable events and life challenges. Psychological resilience refers to the ability to adapt to unfavourable events, deal with issues, and sustain mental health (Bonanno, 2021).

Very few studies are available where relationship between character strengths and resilience is studied in middle-adolescents in India. With this study, our objective was to address this research gap in the field of positive psychology literature. By exploring this relationship, we aimed to empower youth with the essential strengths that can foster resilience. As adolescents approach adulthood, they exhibit a variety of character strengths, so it becomes crucial to understand what strengths contribute to resilience. Moreover, In the present era, youth are growing up in an environment that places a strong emphasis on gender issues and redefines traditional gender concepts (Dittman et al., 2022). A limited body of research is done to identify gender differences in character strengths (Husain, 2021). However, there are various studies in which some significant differences were reported (Brdar et al., 2011; Husain, 2021). The mean scores of women were higher in gratitude, kindness, love, curiosity, love of learning, social intelligence teamwork, appreciation of beauty, honesty, wisdom, justice, leadership and fairness (Blanca et al., 2018; Brdar et al., 2011; Husain, 2021; Porto Noronha & Martins, 2016; Shimai et al., 2006). Whereas, men scored higher in bravery, perspective, creativity, and self-regulation (Brdar et al., 2011; Shimai et al., 2006).

Nevertheless, various research highlights inconsistencies across studies: In certain research, men scored higher in strengths of

appreciation of beauty and excellence, love of learning and wisdom (Brdar et al., 2011; Porto Noronha & Martins, 2016). Whereas, Blanca et al. (2018) in their research found that girls consistently had higher mean scores in character strengths than boys. Similarly, a recent study conducted by Husain (2021) showed that women scored higher on 22 out of 24 character strengths compared to men. Alternatively, not even on single strength men scored significantly higher than women, which led the researcher to propose that women exhibit greater virtue than men (Husain, 2021).

The present study aims to study the potential gender differences in both character strengths and resilience. In addition, to assess the predictive capacity of various character strengths in relation to resilience. Drawing from the literature review, the following two hypotheses are proposed:

Hypotheses

- H1: There will be gender differences in character strengths and resilience among youth.
- H2: There will be a positive correlation between character strengths and resilience.

Method

Participants and procedure

The sample size was determined based on Stevens' (1996) guideline, which recommends 15 subjects per predictor in multiple regression analyses. In this study, we have 24 predictors, hence a minimum sample of 360 was needed. The study cohort consisted of 500 middle-adolescents, aged 15 to 17 years, evenly divided into 250 females (mean = 16.30; SD = .63) and 250 males (mean = 16.42; SD = .57).

After obtaining the approval from the Institutional Ethics Committee Reg. No. 1090/HG Dated 22/11/2022, the data was collected

from various English medium CBSE schools in Jammu and Kashmir, India. In adherence to ethical protocols, formal consent was diligently sought from the respective school authorities. Moreover, informed consent was obtained from the participants and their parents, and confidentiality was assured. Following an initial introduction, participants were given an overview of the study and what their involvement entailed. They received instruction on recording their responses and were encouraged to seek clarification for any confusion. The questionnaires were administered in a group format. A purposive sampling technique was used for data collection.

Measures

Character strengths: Values in Action Inventory of Strengths by Park and Peterson (2006) was utilised to measure the character strengths. Christopher Peterson and Nansook Park originally made a 198-question version of the VIA Youth test, but later they made a shorter one with 96 questions (Park & Peterson, 2006). The reliability (how consistent the answers are) for the 198-question version is .82 on average, and for the shorter one, it's a bit higher at .86. Studies have shown that the 96-question version is more efficient than the longer one, and it's just as good in terms of accuracy. This test is meant for young people aged 13 to 17 and covers all 24 character strengths, with four questions for each strength. It has been translated into 41 languages and is known for being reliable and valid. The test is available online for everyone, but certain conditions and terms must be followed for other uses.

Resilience: Assessed resilience by using the resilience scale by Wagnild and Young (1993). The scale is suitable for individuals of various age groups, encompassing youth and the elderly. It comprises 25 items, and respondents rate their agreement on a 7-

point Likert scale. According to Wagnild and Young (1993) this scale is characterized by two main factors: acceptance of self and life, and personal competence. Personal competence pertains to qualities like self-reliance, determination, mastery, independence, and resourcefulness. Acceptance of self and life involves adaptability, balance, flexibility, and a well-rounded perspective. Scores on this scale can fall within the range of 25 to 175. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients, indicating the scale's internal consistency, have been observed to range from 0.72 to 0.94 (Neill & Dias, 2001).

Results

The normality assumptions were met for responses to character strengths and resilience. In general, for skewness and kurtosis a range of -2 to +2 is often considered acceptable in sample of 200 or more (Ghasemi & Zahediasl, 2012). All the values were found to be between +1 and -1.

Table 1 Means, standard deviations and t-ratios for female (n=250) and male (n=250) youth on different character strengths

S. No	Variables	Female		Male		t-ratios
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1	Creativity	3.82	0.82	3.71	0.73	1.5
2	Curiosity	3.75	0.79	3.73	0.71	0.19
3	Judgement	3.91	0.77	3.78	0.74	1.99*
4	Love of learning	3.84	0.93	3.79	0.80	0.64
5	Perspective	3.74	0.71	3.64	0.78	1.45
6	Bravery	3.97	0.73	3.74	0.70	3.59**
7	Persistence	3.61	0.75	3.54	0.79	0.88
8	Honesty	3.62	0.74	3.47	0.61	2.47*
9	Zest	3.51	0.81	3.78	0.73	-3.90**
10	Love	3.60	0.90	3.58	0.87	0.33
11	Kindness	4.18	0.63	3.90	0.64	5.00**
12	Social Intelligence	3.70	0.71	3.70	0.75	-0.11

13	Appreciation of Beauty	4.16	0.76	3.84	0.70	4.95**
14	Gratitude	4.03	0.74	3.69	0.76	5.06**
15	Hope	3.88	0.78	3.79	0.70	1.4
16	Humour	3.82	0.92	3.81	0.87	0.09
17	Spirituality	3.90	0.83	3.69	0.82	2.88*
18	Teamwork	4.11	0.70	3.85	0.73	3.95**
19	Fairness	3.77	0.75	3.75	0.72	0.36
20	Leadership	3.48	0.90	3.43	0.84	0.67
21	Humility	3.51	0.76	3.54	0.71	-0.49
22	Prudence	3.41	0.77	3.37	0.69	0.56
23	Forgiveness	3.75	0.91	3.63	0.82	1.55
24	Self-Regulation	3.16	0.72	3.30	0.64	-2.33*
25	Resilience	126.46	21.34	123.89	23.23	1.29

** Value significant at 0.01 level

* Value significant at 0.05 level

Table 1 includes the means, standard deviations, and t-ratios of female and male youth; statistically significant differences were observed across various character strengths. Notably, females demonstrated higher levels of judgment $t(498) = 1.99, p = 0.048$, bravery $t(498) = 3.59, p < 0.01$, honesty $t(498) = 2.47, p = 0.014$ kindness $t(498) = 5.00, p < 0.01$, appreciation of beauty $t(498) = 4.95, p < 0.01$, gratitude $t(498) = 5.06, p < 0.01$, spirituality $t(498) = 2.88, p = 0.004$, and teamwork $t(498) = 3.95, p < 0.01$. Conversely, females exhibited lower levels of zest compared to males $t(498) = -3.90, p < 0.01$. Additionally, there was a significant difference in self-regulation, with females scoring lower than males $t(498) = -2.33, p = 0.020$. Hence, H1 is partially accepted. Also, these differences provide insights into the unique strengths and potential areas for growth in each gender group.

The top five signature strengths in females were kindness, appreciation of beauty, teamwork, gratitude, and bravery. For males, signature strengths were

kindness, teamwork, appreciation of beauty, humour, love of learning, and hope. The identification of the top five (or six) signature strengths in females and males, reveals notable commonalities and subtle distinctions. Kindness and Teamwork emerged as the primary strengths for both genders, underscoring shared values of empathy and collaboration. Appreciation of beauty also holds a significant position in both groups. However, females prioritize Gratitude and Bravery within their top five, while males exhibit a preference for Humour, Love of Learning, and Hope.

The correlation Table 2, indicates the strength and direction of the relationship between virtue-wise character strengths and resilience, broken down by gender.

Both genders demonstrate significant positive correlations between all the character strengths and resilience, with a slightly stronger association in females. In males, there were slightly larger correlations for judgement, honesty, social intelligence, gratitude, prudence, forgiveness, and self-regulation. Additionally, self-regulation showed a positive correlation with resilience in males but a very weak and non-significant correlation in females, indicating that self-regulation may be more influential in resilience among males.

Table 2. Correlation of virtue-wise character strengths with resilience

Virtue-wise Character Strengths	Gender		Full sample (n=500)
	Female (n=250)	Male (n=250)	
Wisdom			
Creativity	.394**	.352**	.374**
Curiosity	.450**	.316**	.382**
Judgement	.326**	.379**	.356**
Love of learning	.416**	.409**	.411**
Perspective	.391**	.215**	.298**
Courage			
Bravery	.348**	.289**	.322**

Persistence	.359**	.245**	.300**
Honesty	.263**	.332**	.297**
Zest	.418**	.262**	.324**
Humanity			
Love	.274**	.139*	.205**
Kindness	.304**	.256**	.284**
Social Intelligence	.285**	.322**	.304**
Appreciation of Beauty	.386**	.336**	.363**
Transcendence			
Gratitude	.278**	.317**	.303**
Hope	.462**	.392**	.428**
Humour	.098	.086	.092*
Spirituality	.427**	.392**	.412**
Justice			
Teamwork	.353**	.347**	.354**
Fairness	.203**	.164**	.183**
Leadership	.280**	.229**	.255**
Temperance			
Humility	.186**	.169**	.175**
Prudence	.303**	.309**	.306**
Forgiveness	.151*	.291**	.223**
Self-Regulation	.068	.260**	.154**

** . Correlation is significant at 0.01 level

* . Correlation is significant at 0.05 level

Further perusal of Table 3, In the stepwise multiple regression analysis of a female sample with resilience as the criterion variable, successive models incorporated important predictors. In the first model, Hope, alone explained 21.4% of the variance in resilience. The second model incorporated Curiosity, which increased R^2 by 7.6%. The third model added Perspective, contributing to a further 2.6% increase in R^2 . The fourth model included Love of Learning, which resulted in a 2.2% increase in R^2 and in the final model Prudence was added which explained an additional 1.3% increase in R^2 . Together, these predictors accounted for 35.1% of the variance in resilience in the female sample.

Table 3 Stepwise multiple regression analysis of a female sample (n=250) with resilience as the criterion variable

Model	Variable	R	R ²	ΔR ²	β	F	Sig.
1	Hope	0.462	.214	-	.462	67.359	.000
2	Hope	0.538	.289	.076	.328	50.285	.000
3	Curiosity	0.562	.316	.026	.306	37.806	.000
	Hope				.273		
4	Curiosity	0.581	.338	.022	.263	31.276	.000
	Perspective				.182		
	Hope				.241		
5	Curiosity	0.592	.351	.013	.184	26.347	.000
	Perspective				.177		
	Love of learning				.180		
	Hope				.205		
	Curiosity				.199		
	Perspective	.145					
	Love of learning	.174					
	Prudence	.124					

The table 4, shows the contribution of different predictors in subsequent models in the stepwise multiple regression analysis of male sample with resilience as the criterion variable. The initial model, Love of Learning, alone accounted for 16.7% of the variability in resilience. The second model incorporated Judgement, which resulted in a significant increase in R² by 4.6%. The third model adds

Hope as a predictor, love of learning, and Judgement, resulting in an additional 2.4% increase. Finally, the fourth model incorporated Forgiveness, resulting in a slight 1.6% increase. Each model has a substantial F-statistic ($p < .001$), suggesting that the predictors together accounted for 25.3% of the variance in resilience.

Table 4 Stepwise multiple regression analysis of a male sample (n=250) with resilience as the criterion variable

Model	Variable	R	R ²	ΔR ²	β	F	Sig.
1	Love of Learning	.409	.167	-	.409	49.862	.000
2	Love of Learning	.462	.213	.046	.298	33.510	.000
3	Judgement	.488	.238	.024	.242	25.585	.000
	Love of Learning				.219		
4	Judgement	.503	.253	.016	.193	20.790	.000
	Hope				.191		
	Love of Learning				.193		
	Judgement				.176		
	Hope	.175					
	Forgiveness	.134					

Discussion

The present study examined the relationship between character strengths and resilience in youth. The observed significant gender differences may be due to societal expectations and cultural norms. For example, certain character strengths such as kindness, gratitude, and teamwork may be encouraged and reinforced more in females owing to cultural expectations and beliefs.

In this study we observed a trend, females scored higher than males in most character strengths, with a few exceptions. Previous research also indicates that throughout adolescence, girls exhibit higher scores in character strengths compared to boys (Ferragut et al., 2014; Brown et al., 2020). Development of character strengths in youth could be credited to the ingrained socialization practices, immediate environment, cultural and family influences (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Biswas-Diener, 2006; Heintz et al., 2019). Understanding the diverse nature of these influences is crucial for a comprehensive exploration of how youth develop their character strengths. In a country like India, females are frequently encouraged to make thoughtful decisions from an early age, express their feelings more openly, which may have resulted with higher scores in judgement, bravery, honesty, kindness, appreciation of beauty, gratitude, and teamwork. These findings suggest an overarching societal emphasis on interpersonal and cooperative virtues, while the unique strengths in each gender highlight diverse individual preferences. The findings are consistent with Littman-Ovadia and Lavy (2012) they found that females scored higher than male on love, kindness, teamwork, appreciation of beauty and gratitude.

Whereas, in this study we found that males scored significantly higher than females on zest and self-regulation. One possible explanation for this could be

socialization patterns that encourages boys to explore, engage in more adventurous and energetic activities, resulting in development of greater enthusiasm and vigour. Various other studies also highlight male participants scoring higher in these strengths (Shimai et al., 2006; Martínez-Martí & Ruch 2017) and self-regulation, where males scored higher, one potential explanation is that males might be socialized to exhibit traits associated with self-control and discipline from a young age, impacting their self-regulation skills (Gomez-Baya et al., 2020). Further, the high level of self-regulation observed in boys could stem from societal expectations regarding their performance and competitiveness, necessitating consistent effort and restraint (Ellemers, 2018). However, recent research by Huo et al. (2022) presented a contradictory finding, they found that girls actually scored higher on measures of self-regulation than boys. The inconsistencies highlight that understanding how boys and girls regulate themselves is a sensitive topic.

Although females scored higher than males in the measure of resilience in our study, the difference was not statistically significant. This finding adds to the ongoing debate in the literature regarding gender related differences in resilience. While some studies propose that girls and boys respond differently to adversity, potentially indicating differences in the levels of resilience between genders. Whereas, other research suggests that there are no clear cut distinctions in resilience between adolescent girls and boys.

A significant positive correlations were found between all the character strengths and resilience, hence, H2 is accepted. Moreover, the three individual strengths that yielded the largest correlations with resilience among youth were hope, love of learning and spirituality. Hope, characterized by a positive outlook and belief in the possibility of favourable outcomes, may provide individuals with the motivation and

resilience needed to persevere through adversity (Snyder et al., 1991; Soylu, 2020). Love of learning, on the other hand, reflects an intrinsic curiosity and eagerness to acquire new knowledge and skills, Martínez-Martí and Ruch (2017) also found high correlation between love of learning and resilience. Similarly, spirituality, which encompasses beliefs and practices related to the transcendent or higher purpose, may offer individuals a sense of meaning, purpose, and connectedness that can enhance their resilience in times of hardship (Huta & Hawley, 2010; Brewer-smith & Koenig, 2014; Schwalm et al., 2022). It is interesting to note that the highest association of hope and spirituality both are strengths of the virtue of transcendence (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Overall, from the results it can be concluded that females showed higher correlations between most character strengths and resilience in comparison to males. However, different strengths may carry varying significance during different stages of psychological development, as demonstrated by their correlation with resilience (Martínez-Martí & Ruch, 2014)

The multiple stepwise regression analysis was performed to find out the gender specific strengths that predict resilience. Results revealed that in both the female and male samples, hope and love of learning emerged as significant predictors. However, the other predictors varied between the two genders. These findings are consistent with the exciting literature of positive psychology and resilience research. Theoretical perspectives such as the broaden-and-build theory, as proposed by Barbara Fredrickson, provide a framework for understanding the positive impact of hope (character strengths) on resilience (Fredrickson, 2004). The significant impact of hope as the initial predictor is consistent with existing literature highlighting the crucial role of hope in

fostering resilience. Snyder et al.'s (1991) hope theory suggests that hope involves goal-setting, planning, and the motivation to pursue these goals, which can enhance an individual's ability to overcome adversity. The assertion that hope is indicative of psychological resilience finds support in several studies within the literature (Satici, 2016; Soylu, 2020). Valle et al. (2006) found that hope plays a significant role to enhance children's ability to bounce back in challenging life circumstances.

A limited body of research has highlighted love of learning as a prominent strength, exhibiting high correlation with resilience. Our study revealed that, in males, love of learning alone explained 16% of the variance in resilience, this finding suggests that individuals who possess strong inclination and enthusiasm towards acquiring new knowledge, skills, and experiences may have better chances to bounce back from adversity. Martínez-Martí and Ruch (2017) in their study reported that males scored higher than females in love of learning and in this study, it emerged as a significant predictor of resilience for both males and females. Given the results, it is crucial to foster a sense of hope and love of learning among both male and female students; it can serve as a proactive strategy in cultivating a resilient mind set, thereby empowering them to navigate challenges effectively.

Other strengths that came out to be significant predictors of resilience in females were curiosity, perspective and prudence. Curiosity and perspective both comes under the virtue of wisdom. Curiosity is described as an intrinsic desire to explore, learn, wonder, and understand novel things. This strength fosters adaptability by encouraging individuals to seek new perspectives, equipping them with the problem solving skills crucial for overcoming obstacles. Perspective as a strength, provides the ability to view situations from different standpoints. This

strength could enable the individual to navigate challenges by considering alternative interpretations and solutions. Judgement was another significant predictor of resilience in males, which also falls beneath the wisdom virtue. Wisdom stands out as a crucial concept in relation to resilience. Based on these findings, wisdom emerged as an important virtue that promote the individual's adaptation to life, coping skills and enhance overall resilience. Studies in the literature also support our finding (Bang & Collect, 2021; Kütük et al., 2023)

Further, two more character strengths that emerged as the significant predictors of resilience were prudence in females and forgiveness in males. Prudence means being careful about one's choices and forgiveness means not being vengeful. Both of these strengths falls under the virtue of temperance. Gillham et al. (2011) concluded that virtues of transcendence, temperance and wisdom predicted higher levels of life satisfaction. Logan et al. (2010) stated that students who score high on prudence are less likely to get into trouble.

Implications and limitations

Our study has various implications. In the future, researchers could delve into the dynamic interactions between various character strengths and find out the combination of strengths that exerts the greatest influence on resilience. It's evident that youth resilience, anchored in character strengths, is a formidable asset in facing challenges and adversity. Fostering qualities such as hope, curiosity, love of learning, and resilience empowers young individuals to bounce back from setbacks, contributing to their overall well-being. Recognizing the interplay between character strengths and youth resilience is pivotal for cultivating a resilient mindset that fosters personal growth and development. Moreover, it is crucial to understand that individual differences exist,

and further research is needed to uncover the underlying reasons for gender-specific patterns in different populations. Policymakers need to tailor policies that resonate with the diverse strengths of youth worldwide. Furthermore, teachers and mental health professionals are advised to prioritize the identification and development of individual strengths in stressful situations to support youth in enhancing resilience.

This study has some limitations, as only a sample of mid-adolescents was utilised. In the future, different age groups could be studied. Moreover, we solely relied on self-reported measures, which can introduce potential response bias. To address this, alongside self-report measures, observational and multi-informant approaches could be used in future investigations. Furthermore, experimental and longitudinal studies can be conducted to observe how strengths change over time.

Conclusion

We can conclude from the results that character strengths significantly contribute to resilience in middle adolescents, with notable gender differences in specific strengths. Adolescents globally share some character strengths while also displaying unique ones. In this study, both genders share kindness and teamwork as top strengths, underscoring their universal importance. For females, hope, curiosity, perspective, love of learning, and prudence are key resilience predictors, while for males, love of learning, judgment, hope, and forgiveness are crucial. Tailored interventions focusing on these strengths can effectively enhance resilience in youth, providing valuable insights for developing gender-sensitive strategies to support adolescent well-being. For females, programs should emphasize hope, curiosity, perspective, love of learning, and prudence, while activities for males should enhance love of learning, judgment, hope, and

forgiveness. These gender differences suggest that boys and girls benefit from different approaches to building resilience, with tailored interventions likely being more effective. Gender-sensitive strategies could include developing educational curricula and extracurricular activities that emphasize the identified strengths of each gender, creating mentorship programs that match adolescents with role models exemplifying their key strengths, and designing community and family-based initiatives that foster environments conducive to nurturing these strengths in both boys and girls. Results indicate the importance of studying gender differences. It's imperative to cultivate environments that nurture the full spectrum of strengths present in our youth, ensuring a brighter and more resilient future for all.

References

- Bang, H., & Collet, B. (2021). "I defeat those fears and start a new life": Iraqi refugee students' PTSD, wisdom, and resilience. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 27(2), 297. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pac0000520>
- Biswas-Diener, R. (2006). From the equator to the North Pole: A study of character strengths. *Journal of happiness studies*, 7, 293-310.
- Bonanno, G. A. (2021). The resilience paradox. *European journal of Psychotraumatology*, 12(1), 1942642. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20008198.2021.1942642>
- Blanca, M. J., Ferragut, M., Ortiz-Tallo, M., & Bendayan, R. (2018). Life satisfaction and character strengths in Spanish early adolescents. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 19, 1247-1260.
- Brdar, I., Aniaë, P., & Rijavec, M. (2011). Character strengths and well-being: Are there gender differences? *The human pursuit of well-being: A cultural approach*, 145-156.
- Brewer-Smyth K and Koenig HG (2014) Could spirituality and religion promote stress resilience in survivors of childhood trauma? *Issues in Mental Health Nursing* 35(4): 251–256. <https://doi.org/10.3109/01612840.2013.873101>
- Brown, M., Blanchard, T., & McGrath, R. E. (2020). Differences in self-reported character strengths across adolescence. *Journal of adolescence*, 79, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2019.12.008>
- Dittmann, C., & Forstmeier, S. (2022). Experiences with teachers in childhood and their association with wellbeing in adulthood. *BMC psychology*, 10(1), 283.
- Ellemers, N. (2018). Gender stereotypes. *Annual review of psychology*, 69, 275-298.
- Ferragut, M., Blanca, M. J., & Ortiz-Tallo, M. (2014). Analysis of adolescent profiles by gender: Strengths, attitudes toward violence and sexism. *The Spanish Journal of Psychology*, 17, E59. DOI: 10.1017/sjp.2014.60
- Fredrickson, B. L. (2004). The broaden—and—build theory of positive emotions. *Philosophical transactions of the royal society of London. Series B: Biological Sciences*, 359(1449), 1367-1377. <https://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2004.1512>
- Ghasemi, A., & Zahediasl, S. (2012). Normality tests for statistical analysis: a guide for non-statisticians. *International journal of endocrinology and metabolism*, 10(2), 486–489. <https://doi.org/10.5812/ijem.3505>
- Ghielen, S. T. S., van Woerkom, M., & Christina Meyers, M. (2018). Promoting positive outcomes through strengths interventions: A literature review. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 13(6), 573-585. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2017.1365164>
- Gillham, J., Adams-Deutsch, Z., Werner, J., Reivich, K., Coulter-Heindl, V., Linkins, M., ... & Seligman, M. E. (2011). Character strengths predict subjective well-being during adolescence. *The Journal of*

- Positive Psychology*, 6(1), 31-44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2010.536773>
- Gomez-Baya, D., Tomé, G., Reis, M., & Gaspar de Matos, M. (2020). Long-term self-regulation moderates the role of internal resources for resilience in positive youth development in Portugal. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 181(2-3), 127-149. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00221325.2020.1735986>
- Hefferon, K., & Boniwell, I. (2011). *Positive psychology: Theory, research and applications*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).
- Heintz, S., & Ruch, W. (2022). Cross-sectional age differences in 24 character strengths: Five meta-analyses from early adolescence to late adulthood. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 17(3), 356-374. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2021.1871938>
- Heintz, S., Kramm, C., & Ruch, W. (2019). A meta-analysis of gender differences in character strengths and age, nation, and measure as moderators. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 14(1), 103-112. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2017.1414297>
- Huo, Y., Ding, C., Xie, J., & Kristjánsson, K. (2022). Gender differences in character strengths among Chinese pre-adolescents and adolescents: a multidimensional scaling profile analysis. *Routledge Open Research*, 1, 13. <https://doi.org/10.12688/routledgeopenres.17446.2>
- Husain, W. (2022). Women are the better halves: gender-based variations in virtues and character strengths. *Journal of human values*, 28(2), 103-114. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09716858211039984>
- Huta, V., & Hawley, L. (2010). Psychological strengths and cognitive vulnerabilities: Are they two ends of the same continuum or do they have independent relationships with well-being and ill-being. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 11, 71-93.
- Hutchinson, A. M. K., Stuart, A. D., & Pretorius, H. G. (2011). The relationships between temperament, character strengths, and resilience. In *The human pursuit of well-being: A cultural approach* (pp. 133-144).
- Kütük, H., Hatun, O., Ek'ı, H., & Ek'ı, F. (2023). Investigation of the Relationships Between Mindfulness, Wisdom, Resilience and Life Satisfaction in Turkish Adult Population. *Journal of Rational-Emotive & Cognitive-Behavior Therapy*, 41(3), 536-551. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10942-022-00468-w>
- Lerner, R. M., Dowling, E. M., & Anderson, P. M. (2019). Positive youth development: Thriving as the basis of personhood and civil society. In *Beyond the self* (pp. 172-180). Routledge.
- Li, T., Duan, W., & Guo, P. (2017). Character strengths, social anxiety, and physiological stress reactivity. *Peer Journal* 5, 3396. <https://doi.org/10.7717/peerj.3396>
- Littman-Ovadia, H., & Lavy, S. (2012). Differential ratings and associations with well-being of character strengths in two communities. *Health Sociology Review*, 21(3), 299-312. <https://doi.org/10.5172/hesr.2012.21.3.299>
- Logan, D. E., Kilmer, J. R., & Marlatt, G. A. (2010). The virtuous drinker: Character virtues as correlates and moderators of college student drinking and consequences. *Journal of American College Health*, 58(4), 317-324. [10.1080/07448480903380326](https://doi.org/10.1080/07448480903380326)
- Martínez-Martí, M. L., & Ruch, W. (2014). Character strengths and well-being across the life span: data from a representative sample of German-speaking adults living in Switzerland. *Frontiers in psychology*, 5, 105311. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.01253>
- Martínez-Martí, M. L., & Ruch, W. (2017). Character strengths predict resilience over and above positive affect, self-efficacy, optimism, social support, self-esteem, and life satisfaction. *The Journal of positive psychology*, 12(2), 110-119. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2016.1163403>

- Masten, A. S. (2011). Resilience in children threatened by extreme adversity: Frameworks for research, practice, and translational synergy. *Development and psychopathology*, 23(2), 493-506. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954579411000198>
- Neill, J. T., & Dias, K. L. (2001). Adventure education and resilience: The double-edged sword. *Journal of Adventure Education & Outdoor Learning*, 1(2), 35-42. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14729670185200061>
- Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2006). Moral competence and character strengths among adolescents: The development and validation of the Values in Action Inventory of Strengths for Youth. *Journal of adolescence*, 29(6), 891-909 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2006.04.011>
- Peterson, C. and M. E. Seligman (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*, Oxford University Press.
- Peterson, C., Park, N., Pole, N., D'Andrea, W., & Seligman, M. E. (2008). Strengths of character and posttraumatic growth. *Journal of Traumatic Stress: Official Publication of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies*, 21(2), 214-217. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jts.20332>
- Porto Noronha, A. P., & Martins, D. D. F. (2016). Associations between character strengths and life satisfaction: A study with college students. *Acta Colombiana de Psicología*, 19(2), 97-103.
- Rust, T., Diessner, R., & Reade, L. (2009). Strengths only or strengths and relative weaknesses? A preliminary study. *The Journal of Psychology*, 143(5), 465-476. <https://doi.org/10.3200/JRL.143.5.465-476>
- Satici, S. A. (2016). Psychological vulnerability, resilience, and subjective well-being: The mediating role of hope. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 102, 68-73. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2016.06.057>
- Schwalm, F. D., Zandavalli, R. B., de Castro Filho, E. D., & Lucchetti, G. (2022). Is there a relationship between spirituality/religiosity and resilience? A systematic review and meta-analysis of observational studies. *Journal of health psychology*, 27(5), 1218-1232. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1359105320984537>
- Seligman, M. E. (2002). Positive psychology, positive prevention, and positive therapy. *Handbook of positive psychology*, 2(2002), 3-12.
- Shek, D. T., Dou, D., Zhu, X., & Chai, W. (2019). Positive youth development: Current perspectives. *Adolescent health, medicine and therapeutics*, 131-141.
- Shimai, S., Otake, K., Park, N., Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. (2006). Convergence of character strengths in American and Japanese young adults. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 7, 311-322.
- Snyder, C. R., Harris, C., Anderson, J. R., Holleran, S. A., Irving, L. M., Sigmon, S. T., ... & Harney, P. (1991). The will and the ways: development and validation of an individual-differences measure of hope. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 60(4), 570. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.60.4.570>
- Soylu, Y. (2020). University Students' Emotions and Hopes as the Predictors of Their Psychological Resilience after Terrorist Attacks. *International Journal of Progressive Education*, 16(2), 17-25.
- Stevens, J. (2002). *Applied multivariate statistics for the social sciences* (Vol. 4). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Valle, M. F., Huebner, E. S., & Suldo, S. M. (2006). An analysis of hope as a psychological strength. *Journal of school psychology*, 44(5), 393-406. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2006.03.005>
- Wagnild, G. M., & Young, H. M. (1993). Development and psychometric. *Journal of nursing measurement*, 1(2), 165-17847.
- Wood, A. M., Linley, P. A., Maltby, J., Kashdan, T. B., & Hurling, R. (2011). Using personal

and psychological strengths leads to increases in well-being over time: A longitudinal study and the development of the strengths use questionnaire. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 50(1), 15-19. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2010.08.004>

Zimmerman, M. A. (2013). Resiliency theory: A strengths-based approach to research and practice for adolescent health. *Health Education & Behavior*, 40(4), 381-383. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1090198113493782>

Sonia Manhas, *Research Scholar, Department of Psychology, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar. Email Address- soniapsy3@gmail.com

Rupan Dhillon, PhD., Associate Professor. Department of Psychology, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar. E-mail Address- rupan.psy@gndu.ac.in