

## Relationship between perceived parenting style, gratitude and resilience in college students of Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh

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### ABSTRACT

Gratitude and resilience are values that can be acquired and learnt through environmental influences; and parents are considered to be significant contributors towards instilling values that can promote healthy or maladaptive coping mechanism. Young adulthood is a phase of transition in various aspects of life such as career, relationships, work, finances, etc. This poses multiple challenges to this population making them more susceptible to mental illness. Their perception about their upbringing can play a vital role in shaping their attitude towards self and others, and their way of responding to stressful life situations. The present study aimed to assess the relationship between perceived parenting styles, resilience, and gratitude among young adult college students of Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. A purposive sample of 73 college going students was assessed using three questionnaires. A significant relationship was found between authoritative parenting and gratitude and the same has been discussed.

**Keywords:** Parenting style, Resilience, Gratitude, Positive psychology, Mental health

Gratitude and resilience have sought mention in tales and texts from ancient times. They have been a part of many religious, spiritual, as well as philosophical texts and it has been implied in wellbeing at micro as well as macro aspects of life (Jain & Jaiswal, 2016 ; Masten, 2007). Gratitude is a trait that refers to being able to acknowledge and be thankful for the positive things in an individual's life (Seligman, 2011). Resilience refers to adequate adaptation and ability to get back to an equilibrium from negative situations (Nathan, Snyder, & Lopez, 2011). Gratitude and resilience are values that can be acquired and learnt through environmental influences. Parents are considered to be significant contributors towards instilling values that can promote healthy or maladaptive coping mechanism, and this important role of parenting thus certainly goes beyond just fulfilling the basic needs of a child (Wu, Tseng, Wu, & Chen, 2016). Young adulthood is a phase of transition in various aspects of life such as career, relationships, work, finances, etc. This poses multiple challenges to this population, thus makes this phase a very crucial one in developmental aspects (Schulenberg & Schoon, 2012). Their perception about their upbringing, the identity they form as a result of the same, can play a vital role in shaping their attitude towards self and others, and their way of responding to stressful life situations (Bonnie, Stroud, & Breiner, 2015). The fact that

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## Relationship Between Perceived Parenting Style, Gratitude and Resilience in College Students of Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh

this developmental phase has so many unique challenges of its own, poses the need to study the relationship between perceived parenting styles, gratitude and resilience in the Indian context.

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### *Sample*

The present study was an exploratory study. It was descriptive and cross-sectional in nature and quantitative approach was followed for the same.

#### *Inclusion criteria*

1. Students between age groups of 18-21years.
2. Students with both parents alive.
3. Students residing in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh.

#### *Exclusion criteria*

1. Students with a psychiatric history
2. Students who have stayed away from parents during formative years.

A purposive sample for the current study comprised of 73 college going young adult students, out of which 39 were males and 34 were female young adults, between the age range of 18-21years, from Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh.

#### *Instruments*

1. **Parental Authority Questionnaire developed by John Buri (1991):** Parental Authority Questionnaire developed by John Buri is based on Baumrind's model of styles of parenting. Parenting styles namely, Authoritative, Authoritarian, and Permissive, are measured by this tool that consists of 30 items with ten items pertaining to each style of parenting. The scale has a high reliability and validity quotient (Buri, 1991).
2. **Gratitude Questionnaire developed by McCullough et al. (2002):** Gratitude Questionnaire is a six item self-report measure of gratefulness experienced by individuals in their day to day life. The scale is a 7 point Likert Type Scale. The scale has high reliability and validity quotient (McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002).
3. **Brief Resilience Scale developed by Smith et al. (2008):** Brief Resilience Scale is a six item self-report measure which is a 5 point Likert Type Scale. It measures an individual's ability to bounce back from any negative situation in various aspects of life (Smith, et al., 2008).

#### *Procedure*

A purposive sampling was conducted among college students of Amity University Madhya Pradesh, Gwalior. Informed consent was obtained from all participants meeting the inclusion criteria. The scales were then administered individually with all participants. The duration of assessment with each participant ranged from 20 to 30 minutes. The data was analyzed using SPSS Software. The correlation of scores between Perceived parenting style and Resilience, and correlation between Perceived Parenting Style and Gratitude was assessed.

## RESULTS

*Table 1 Pearson Product Moment Correlation between Perceived Parenting Styles and Gratitude, and Perceived Parenting Styles and Resilience.*

Perceived Parenting Style	N	Resilience Sig.	Gratitude Sig.
Permissive	73	.923	.195
Authoritarian	73	.750	.414
Authoritative	73	.771	.000*

\*Pearson Correlation  $r = .567$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , Significant at 0.05 level.

The results of the present study indicate a significant positive correlation between Authoritative perceived parenting style and Gratitude, whereas all other correlations came out to be non-significant.

## DISCUSSION

The present study indicates that Authoritative parenting style may be associated with the virtue of gratitude experienced by an individual. Authoritative parenting style has been known to be associated with mental well-being and is seen in positive light (Nair, 2014). Previous studies have shown positive correlations between parent-child relationship, gratitude and prosocial behaviour. Gratitude has been seen as a mediating factor in such behaviours (Wu, Tseng, Wu, & Chen, 2016). Gratitude has also been associated with higher life satisfaction and can help curb mental illness like depression. We are striding into prevention paradigm, and the focus is shifting from just treating illness, to promoting well-being (Prilleltensky, 2005). Understanding the parenting processes in greater detail and associations between virtues like gratitude can help in instilling more beneficial parenting skills to promote development of gratitude. Implications of understanding these factors range from developing positive virtues, in recovery from mental illness, and in policy formation (Nair, 2014).

**Strengths and limitations:** The tools used for the study is not indigenous in nature. The sample is a purposive sample and is not very large in nature, so the results may not be highly generalizable. The study is descriptive in nature so the processes underlying the development of gratitude and resilience need to be understood with further research studies in the Indian context. Furthermore, tools that are more relevant to Indian context can be developed.

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## Relationship Between Perceived Parenting Style, Gratitude and Resilience in College Students of Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh

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### ***Conflict of Interest***

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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