Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that children of fathers working in the government sector (M=29.84, SD=4.45) have higher self-esteem than children of fathers working in the private sector (27.88, SD=4.40) or fathers who are self-employed (M=28.73, SD=3.94). Self-esteem did not significantly differ between the private sector and self-employed work conditions.

**Father’s Profession and PLO**

Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that children of fathers working in the government sector (M=34.14, SD=4.50) have higher PLO than children of fathers working in the private sector (M=32.15, SD=4.16) or fathers who are self-employed (M=32.85, SD=4.38). PLO did not significantly differ between the private sector and self-employed work conditions.

**Discussion**

**Domestic Harmony and Positive Life Outcomes**

For children, in particular, their perception of the family environment and its corresponding effect on their development is salient. Previous research has noted that conflict or harmony within the family may be expressed to the children in different ways, and the children may differently interpret, get affected by, and respond to the home environment (Sameroff, 2000). For this reason, it was imperative to measure primarily the perception of domestic harmony in the present research. The reciprocity and reactivity of interactions between family members ensures the potential development of positive life outcomes in children when they are young adults. In this regard, domestic harmony was found to significantly predict all four positive life outcome variables, namely resilience, empowerment, self-esteem, and PLO.
Domestic Harmony and Resilience

Domestic harmony significantly accounted for resilience. Young adults who perceived domestic harmony were also high on resilience. Conversely, low levels of perceived domestic harmony predicted low levels of resilience in young adults. The significant and positive correlation between domestic harmony and resilience further cements the strength of the relationship between them.

Early resiliency researchers have found supportive family milieu (family cohesion and warmth) to be a major precursor of resilience (Kumpfer, 1999). The family plays the part of both protective as well as promotive factor in the resilience-building process. Conversely, it has also been found that resilience can also be based on a lack of close relational ties with family or other social support groups (Cicchetti & Rogosch, 1997). Similarly, Werner and Smith (1992) and Wyman (2003) found that interpersonal and affective distancing coupled with low parental expectations of support were related to later resilience, instead of to poor adjustment.

The results of the present research support the former assertion. Perceived domestic harmony has been found to significantly predict resilience in young adults. More specifically, characteristics of support, interpersonal concern, and openness in communication, which contribute to the perception of domestic harmony, significantly predict the development of resilience in the young adult. The reason could be that emotional distancing is associated with better outcomes for children coming from dysfunctional families (Werner & Smith, 1992), whereas in families where domestic harmony prevails, familial relationships act as both protective and promotive factors in the development of resilience.

Supportive family relations contribute to the development of resilience. It has been found that children who were able to build secure attachments and connections with other people, including family and non-family members, increased their likelihood of successfully bouncing back if they encountered adversity in their lives (Werner and Smith, 1982; Demos, 1989; Kumpfer, 1990; Wolin, 1991; Platt, Belding and Husband, 1999). In fact, if family members nurture the individuality of the child, it enhances the possibility of the development
of resilience in young adulthood (Gordon & Song, 1994) by providing them with the self-confidence and sense of self-efficacy to bounce back by. Autonomous children focus on goal-directed activities and become their own moral guardians (Gordon & Song, 1994; Jacob & Wolin, 1991). Furthermore, encouraging the young adult to participate in the family’s decision-making process encourages the young adult to take the responsibility of making decisions. This quality is likely to come in handy when the young adult needs to make choices and decisions to successfully bring himself out of crisis situations, whenever they arise. An internal locus of control is developed, and the young adult feels in control of his surrounding environment (Campbell, Converse & Rodgers, 1976; Luthar, 1991; Murphy & Moriarty, 1976; Parker, Cowen, Work & Wyman, 1990; Rotter, 1954; Werner & Smith, 1992). A family that provides an opportunity for the development of these characteristics, that is, a family in which domestic harmony prevails, ensures positive life outcomes for the young adults of the family.

In the second wave of resilience research, which focused on the role of developmental systems in the development and promotion of resilience, the development of attachment relationships with family, and peers, was brought into focus (Wright et. al., 2013). In addition, moral and ethical development; self-regulatory systems for modulating emotions, arousal and behavior; mastery and motivational systems were also studied. All of these adaptive systems were considered to be located within one’s family. In this regard, the family is considered as a developmental adaptive system that helps in the nurturing of personality characteristics, which consequently aid in the development of resilience, and positive life adaptation in general.

Resilience, as a form of positive life adaptation, is determined by complex interactions and transactions between the individual and the immediate environmental context (Wright et. al., 2013). The family and home environment form a crucial part of this interactional process from which the individual derives the resources to build resiliency. If the interpersonal relationships between family members and their patterns of interactions are healthy and harmonious, they gear the individual with feelings of self-assurance and confidence to fight potential adversities in life. The emotional support provided by parents and siblings assures the individual of the social support required to successfully bring himself or herself out of tough life situations.
A harmonious home and family life can, therefore, be understood as a strong protective factor that provides young adults with the resources necessary for developing resilience. It is a well-understood fact that family serves as the major building block in every individual’s personality development and attitude formation. A young adult, who is happy and in harmony with his family and home life, feels confident and self-assured enough to be able to overcome obstacles in life, if and when they present themselves.

**Gender and Resilience**

No gender differences were found in resilience. Although, previous research has found boys to be more resilient than girls (Stratta et al., 2013), no such trends were found in the present research. On the other hand, Morano (2010) found that although girls use different coping strategies than boys, there were limited differences between perceived resilience between girls and boys. In the present research’s finding, though girls do not significantly differ from boys in resilience, the trend indicates higher resilience in the girls than the boys. This can be explained by the findings of previous research that state that girls use the coping strategies of seeking support from others (Frydenberg & Lewis, 1993). Since girls have been found higher on perceived domestic harmony than boys, it can be deduced that the support girls derive from family relations and the corresponding harmonious home environment bolsters their resilience capacities enough to bring it at par with the boys’ resilience capacities. In fact, girls have been found to capitalize on their social resources more than boys (Hampel & Petermann, 2005), which is an indication of the use of an important resilience factor (Sun & Stewart, 2007).

**Father’s Profession and Resilience**

Children of fathers employed in government service were found to be more resilient than children of fathers employed in the private sector or fathers who are self-employed. There is a possibility that a relatively stress-free father, working in the government sector, may incite
confidence in his children to be able to resolve problems and obstacles in life and bravely bounce back from them. A father burdened with insurmountable work and unreasonable working hours in the private sector may not be able to bode confidence in his children to become capable of tackling life’s problems effectively and develop resilience in the face of challenges.

**Domestic Harmony and Empowerment**

Domestic harmony was also found to significantly predict empowerment. Young adults who perceived a harmonious home environment were more empowered than young adults whose home environment lacked perceived harmony. The significant positive correlation between domestic harmony and empowerment had already brought forth the association between the two: as domestic harmony increased the level of empowerment also increased, and vice versa.

As Keiffer (1984) explains, individual empowerment is an interactive process between the individual and his or her environment. The immediate environment in which the individual exists, and the young adult spends most of his time in, is the family environment. Within the family environment lies the potential of changing the individual’s sense of worthlessness into an acceptance of the self as an assertive and proactive citizen with the ability to partake in sociopolitical affairs (Keiffer, 1984). The family can assist the individual into developing agency that ensures that the individual develops dynamism, practices self-sufficiency, has the freedom to make his own decisions, negotiates, and avails himself of choices. All of these are the characteristics of an empowered young adult, as conceptualized by the present research. There is an internal change involving an increase in the individual’s belief in his or her ability to make decisions and solve problems. Along with, there is also an external change that expresses itself in the ability to act and implement practical knowledge, information, skills, capabilities, and other resources acquired during the process of empowerment (Parsons, 1988).
The harmony prevalent in the family and home environment ensures the development of these characteristics. In particular, nurtured individuality instills in the young adult the competence to discover and practice own agency. The young adult develops a dynamic attitude that enables the young adult to practice the personal and social responsibility of bettering own life as well as doing social good. The sense of congeniality and cohesiveness expressed in the family environment further bolsters the individual and enables taking control of own life in a self-sufficient manner. Knowing that the family is behind the individual with support and concern encourages the individual to feel empowered enough to function as an independent individual in society. The participatory decision-making process within the family teaches the young adult to avail of the choices present and to make own decisions by choosing wisely. Choices are an important aspect of empowerment, since empowerment is the process by which the capacity of young adults to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes is enhanced (World Bank, 2012). In order to successfully make and exercise those choices, the young adult learns skills of negotiation through the communicative competence developed as a result of the openness in communication practiced between family members. The experience of domestic harmony, therefore, prepares the individual to grow up to become an empowered young adult in several ways.

An integration of self-acceptance and self-confidence is an important aspect of empowerment (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988). The support and concern by family members, in a family experiencing domestic harmony, lays the ground for self-acceptance. The cohesiveness of the family unit instills in the young adult a deep sense of belonging and responsibility towards himself as well as the family group. Finding acceptance of himself by his family members teaches him to be accepting of others as well. The young adult makes efforts to understand and get along with his family members. Once the young adult learns how to establish congenial relations with his family members, he is able to form similar connections with people from outside the family as well. The compatibility between family members, therefore, allows for the development of self-confidence in the young adult. The sense of security that the family provides further increases the self-confidence of the young adult. The giving and helping involved in congenial and supportive family relations allows the individual to gain control over his or her life (Zimmerman & Warschauisky, 1998). When the young adult, thus, feels valued by family members, and is able to reciprocate similarly, he or she gains the confidence to gain mastery of the outside environment, which is an important aspect of individual empowerment. All these factors make young adults empowered enough
to better influence the course of their lives and the decisions that affect them (World Bank, 2012).

It is to be noted that psychological empowerment is context-specific and needs to be understood with respect to the population under study. As has already been discussed, the University is considered an empowering setting. The young adults studied in the present are all undergraduate students enrolled in some of the best Universities of Lucknow city. Hence, it can be assumed that their University student status plays an influential role in the development of empowerment. Furthermore, it has been said that empowerment can only be achieved if individuals have a good understanding of the environment within which they are currently functioning (Berger & Neuhaus, 1977; Cornell Empowerment Group, 1989; Kieffer, 1984; Rappaport, 1984; Rappaport, 1987; Swift & Levin, 1987; Zimmerman, 1990). As is evident from the results of the present study, the young adults have a good understanding of their family and home environment, based on which they have determined the level of perceived domestic harmony. A harmonious family environment coupled with the University student status could have together contributed to the enhanced level of individual empowerment experienced by these young adults.

**Gender Differences in Empowerment**

Girls were also found to be significantly more empowered than boys. The reason for girls’ high empowerment can also be derived from Angelique et al.’s (2002) study of empowerment of University students. In this study, the University is considered an empowering setting, allowing for the intellectual development of students that increases their sense of self-efficacy. The sample of the present study consisted exclusively of University students undergoing an academic education. The data was collected in the Universities in which the students are currently enrolled, thereby providing saliency to contextual factors at the time of data collection. These situational factors might explain the high sense of empowerment experienced by these female students. The situational factor plays an even more salient role in the case of girls because of the opportunity for personal development and the freedom associated with free thinking supplied by University education that these girls may not be experiencing in an otherwise oppressive and discriminatory home environment. However, the
latter is not the case with this sample of girls since they were found high on the perceived experience of domestic harmony as well. Therefore, not only is the home environment conducive to the development of personal empowerment, but the University setting, and the opportunity of freedom through education that it provides, also plays a part in encouraging the development of a high sense of empowerment in these young girls. Why the boys were lower on empowerment than girls, despite being University students as well, can be a question of further enquiry. The only reason put forth by the results of the present research is that the high perceived domestic harmony, self-esteem, and PLO of the girls might have all together contributed to their higher empowerment than the boys.

**Domestic Harmony and Self-Esteem**

Domestic harmony also predicts self-esteem. Young adults coming from homes where domestic harmony prevails have high self-esteem. Conversely, the lack of harmony in the family and home is associated with lower levels of self-esteem in young adults. The role of the family in promoting self-esteem has already been established by previous research (Rosenberg et. al., 1995). As stated by Demo et. al. (1987), an important context for the development and sustenance of the individual’s self-esteem is the family and the interactions that take place between family members.

It has previously been found that children and adolescents who are low on self-esteem, are deeply dependent on their families, especially their parents (Willoughby and Polatajko, 1996). The self-esteem of these children and adolescents is, therefore, highly likely to be affected by inter-familial relationships and the corresponding home environment. However, no study has been done on describing the kind of family and home environment that such children need that will beneficially, or adversely, affect their self-esteem. The current research has made an attempt to fill in this gap in knowledge. And the results have been fruitful. A family and home in which domestic harmony prevails leads to higher self-esteem in young adults in comparison to young adults coming from families and homes where there is lower domestic harmony or none at all.
Cross-sectional studies have found a positive correlation between self-esteem and relationship satisfaction (Shackelford, 2001; Voss, Markiewicz, & Doyle, 1999). “This positive relation may arise because individuals with high self-esteem show more relationship-enhancing behaviors, whereas individuals with low self-esteem show more dysfunctional, relationship-damaging behaviors,” explain Orth et. al. (2012). On the other hand, relationship satisfaction may boost self-esteem. As Leary & Baumeister (2000) found, “satisfying relationships may increase one's perceived relational value of oneself and may thereby positively influence self-esteem.” As has already been established, family plays a major role in the development of self-esteem in their children. Relational satisfaction experienced with family members, as happens in families and homes where domestic harmony prevails, automatically leads to an enhancement in the self-esteem of all family members. Children of the family, whether they are adolescents or young adults in college, greatly benefit from these satisfactory familial relationships. The positive home environment thus created further boosts both the cognitive as well as affective components of self-esteem (Rosenberg et. al., 1995).

In regard to the quality of relationship with the parents, Rosenberg et. al. (1995) found closeness to father, closeness to mother, parents’ tendency to reason with the child in disciplinary situations, and parental punitiveness to significantly contribute to building high self-esteem. In addition, parental support and involvement with their children, along with parental consent and willingness to grant their children freedom and autonomy was positively associated with high self-esteem in children (Bachman, 1970; Coopersmith, 1967; Rosenberg, 1965; Thomas, Gecas, Weigert & Rooney, 1974). Similar findings have been obtained in the present research, as several of these above-mentioned characteristics constitute the experience of domestic harmony as well. In particular, when parents, along with the other family members, contribute to the building of the child’s strengths and positive qualities, and at the same time provide an environment of support, motivation, and security, the self-esteem of the children in the family is likely to increase. The support and interpersonal concern dimension of domestic harmony, which ensures stability in the home environment, can be understood to particularly contribute to the enhancement of self-esteem in the young adults. It can further be understood that the child’s self-esteem is increased because such behaviors “convey to the child information about his or her inherent
worth… [and] suggests to the child that the parent trusts the child and considers him or her to be a responsible person (Gecas & Schwalbe, 1986).

Family members who value one another contribute to building domestic harmony in their homes. When domestic harmony is thus built, it also leads to an increase in the self-esteem of family members, especially the children in the family. To explain, low self-esteem is likely to lead individuals to become more sensitive to rejection and develop a tendency to withdraw and reduce interpersonal closeness following conflicts, which undermines the level of satisfaction experienced in close family relationships (Murray, Holmes, & Griffin, 2000; Murray, Rose, Bellavia, Holmes, & Kusche, 2002). Leary & Baumeister (2000) further explain by stating that “satisfying relationships may increase one's perceived relational value of oneself and may thereby positively influence self-esteem.” Therefore, it can be said that self-esteem and domestic harmony share a bi-directional relationship. A positive family and home environment increases the individual’s self-esteem, and this high self-esteem further contributes to the building and sustenance of domestic harmony because individual’s who feel positively about their own selves also respond positively to other people and life situations and circumstances.

Participatory decision-making (factor 4) and openness in communication (factor 5) predict self-esteem. A link between decision-making and self-esteem has been found previously as well (Brown & Mann, 1991; Anthony, Wood & Holmes, 2007; Park & Park, 2012). In particular, Brown & Mann (1991) found parents’ decision-making to be related to the self-esteem of their children. When children participate in family decisions, along with their parents, it positively impacts their self-esteem. Especially, the decision-making competency of mothers’ positively affects the competency of their daughters through self-esteem enhancement (Park & Park, 2012). In the present research, working mothers who must be actively participating in the family decision-making process, and encouraging their children, especially daughters, are in all likelihood playing an important role in increasing their daughters’ self-esteem. Not only through encouragement, these working mothers may be providing motivation by setting an example, of an empowered woman with high self-esteem, for their
daughters to emulate. This further provides an explanation for why girls have been found more empowered than boys in the present research.

Closely related is the relationship between openness in communication and self-esteem. The patterns of interaction between family members, expressed through various forms of communication, are an important determinant of self-esteem, especially for children (Gecas & Schwalbe, 1986). Phee, Chang, and Rhee (2003) found that children who did not share an open and comfortable communication pattern with their parents had low self-esteem. The converse can be said to hold true as well. That is, openness in communication in the context of family relations helps in building the self-esteem of the children of the family. The significant prediction of self-esteem by the openness in communication factor of domestic harmony in the present research supports this claim. The perception of open communication, in particular, is an important factor in predicting the self-esteem of both parents and children (Demo, Small & Savin-Williams, 1987). Since the domestic harmony scale measures perceived harmony through openness in communication, this condition has been satisfied in the present research.

**Gender Differences in Self-Esteem**

Girls were found to be higher on self-esteem than boys. The high self-esteem of young adults is corroborated by research findings on the developmental trajectory of self-esteem (Trzesniewski, Donnellan & Robins, 2001; see also Twenge & Campbell, 2001; Robins, Trzesniewski, Tracy, Gosling & Potter, 2002; and Trzesniewski & Robins, 2004). Self-esteem, though low in adolescence, tends to increase in young adulthood, hence explaining the high self-esteem. Contrary to previous findings (Kling et. al., 1999; Robins et. al., 2002), the self-esteem of girls was found to be higher than the self-esteem of boys. A potential reason to explain this discrepant finding can be found in Demo et. al.’s (1987) finding that children’s self-esteem is highly influenced by the quality of parental interaction and investment in their children’s lives. Since girls were also found to be higher on measures of perceived domestic harmony than boys, it may be conjectured that girls perceive their
relationship with their parents to be more satisfying than boys, which thereby leads to higher self-esteem in girls.

To look at it from a different perspective, gender differences in self-esteem, especially the expectation of lower self-esteem in girls than boys, can be understood as a misnomer. The perception of low self-esteem in women can be understood as a characteristic of the situation rather than the personality and mental makeup of women. The widespread belief that girls have low self-esteem and flawed self-concepts serve as a self-fulfilling prophecy (Twenge & Campbell, 2001). Negative self-expectations held by women cause them to negatively interpret their self-concept when faced with unfavorable circumstances, which, in turn, further adversely affect their self-esteem. Protective factors are required that prevent girls from slipping down this spiral of negative perception of self-worth. The sample of girls in the present study appear to have not fallen into this trap, and instead emerged as higher on self-esteem than boys. The experience of domestic harmony may be seen as playing an important protective role in this context.

During the data collection process, the self-report measure of perceived domestic harmony was filled prior to the measure of self-esteem. Filling out the domestic harmony measure may have primed the girls with positive feelings and high self-regard, and conditioned them to derive their self-esteem from their familial relationships by contextualizing their sense of self-worth in their family environment.

**Father’s Profession and Self-Esteem**

Both self-esteem and PLO were highest for children of fathers employed in government service and was statistically different from both private service and self-employed. Scores were lowest for fathers employed in private service. A father employed in the government sector promotes a sense of security and pride in the children, leading to an enhancement in their self-esteem. The job security, respect, and prestige of the government job also ensures positive thinking in the children, who evaluate their present lives and living conditions more
favorably in comparison to fathers employed in the private service or self-employment. The latter two, due to the nature of the industry of employment, have a sense of uncertainty associated with them, with the fear of losing the private sector job or the self-employment shutting down. This is particularly true for private sector employment that is prone to frequent layoffs, as occurred in the recent past when the economic depression struck. The memory of the depression is still recent, and may have contributed to the lack of faith in the private sector industry. Private sector jobs and self-employment may cause constant worry and concern to hang over the head, preventing either the father or his family to view their current life positively (PLO) or to develop sustained high self-esteem.

Domestic Harmony and PLO

Domestic harmony also significantly accounted for PLO. Perception of domestic harmony increased the experience of PLO in young adults. Conversely, low levels of perceived domestic harmony led to a lesser degree of experienced PLO as well. It can be said that experiencing a harmonious environment at home allows the individual to focus on the positive potentials that enhance the quality of life because it is an enriching human experience (Diener & Seligman, 2004; Seligman, 2003; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Sheldon & King, 2001). The impact of PLO on producing healthy outcomes is massive, as is evident by Agrawal et. al.’s (1995) study that found MI patients to recover sooner from their disease, and the associated crisis, when they were positively oriented towards life, that is, had a high PLO.

PLO is associated with the concept of positive orientation, propagated by Caprara, Steca, Alessandri, Abela, and McWhinnie (2010). The latter consists of judgments people hold about themselves, their life, and their future. Inclusive of the concepts of self-esteem, optimism, and life satisfaction, positive orientation enables people to lead rich and fulfilling lives. Similarly with PLO, if an individual is able to always look at the brighter side of every current life situation, it allows the individual to experience a state of subjective well-being and positive psychological functioning that is conducive to spreading positivity around him or her. Experience of high PLO would, therefore, lead to healthier interactions and consequent relationships with those around the individual. Especially in the home and family context, when the high PLO individual has positive interactions with family members, not only does it
lead to the prevalence of domestic harmony in the home, but it also ensures positive reciprocal reactions from family members. Positive reciprocity breeds positive feelings in the individual, hence further increasing his or her PLO. PLO and domestic harmony, therefore, quite possibly share a bidirectional relationship.

There were also significant correlations between the dimensions of domestic harmony and PLO. Family members sharing congenial relations with one another, which make for a cohesive family unit, ensure a positive appraisal of current life situation by the young adult. The young adult feels supported by his family members, and the concern between the family members further bolsters his sense of self-assurance derived from a healthy dependency on family members. Along with an optimum amount of interdependence, the independence and individuality of the young adult is also nurtured by the family members. This allows the young adult enough freedom and space to create an identity of his own and fulfill his need for independence. Along with granting the young adult respect for his own individuality, if he is included in the family’s decision-making process, the young adult’s self-confidence is increased, thereby also increasing positive self-evaluation. Lastly, communication plays a major role in transmitting positive feelings between the family members. The family can instill self-confidence and a sense of self-efficacy in the young adult through open communication practiced between them.

Gender Differences and PLO

Previous research has found girls to be lower on self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-efficacy than boys (Costa et. al., 2001; Feingold, 1994; Kling et. al., 1999; Lynn & Martin, 1997), the present research findings, however, reverse these gender differences. Girls, in fact, have been found to be higher on all measures of positive life outcomes than boys, including PLO. When girls are higher on positive life outcomes, such as empowerment and self-esteem, then their higher scores, as compared to boys, on PLO is a related finding. To further put it into the context of the present research, perceived domestic harmony could also be considered as a contributing factor for the higher PLO in girls. This is the first time that gender differences in PLO have been studied, since the conceptualization of the concept by Agrawal et. al (1995). The gender differences found in the experience of PLO in the current research
are, therefore, a novel contribution enhancing the understanding of the PLO concept as well. It should be noted, however, that the findings of the present research are context- and population-specific, and ought not to be generalized to the entire population without further investigation.

**Relationships among Positive Life Outcomes**

The relationship between the four positive life outcomes was investigated. Since these four variables have not together been studied before, it was important to establish a relationship between them. Once a strong association between them was established, it could safely be said that resilience, empowerment, self-esteem, and PLO together constituted an over-arching construct, which has been termed as ‘positive life outcomes’ in this research. For this purpose, correlations between resilience, empowerment, self-esteem, and PLO variables were calculated, all of which were positive and statistically significant. This is an important finding since these four variables have not been measured together before, and especially not in the field of positive psychology.

Resilience and empowerment are two closely related constructs. A resilient individual, in all likelihood, will possess a certain level of empowerment in order to bounce back from adversity. Since empowerment involves a belief in one’s own capabilities, resourcefulness, and self-efficacy, an empowered individual is likely to use these personal assets and raise oneself out of adverse conditions. In a related manner, resilience is understood as a product of the individual’s capacities (personal assets), coupled with environmental resources. The individual’s perceived control over those resources is, therefore, crucial in the development of resilience. As Ungar (2008) explains, environmental resources play a mandatory role in the development of resilience. Control over environmental resources is also an integral component of psychological empowerment. Both resilience and empowerment involve the individual’s capacity to navigate one’s way to those resources in order to improve well-being. In fact, an individual deprived of environmental resources, or who loses the battle of acquiring access to environmental resources, might not be considered either resilient or empowered.
Another similarity between resilience and empowerment is that both can be considered as processes as well as outcomes (Swift & Levin, 1987; Zimmerman, 1995; Schofield, 2001; Yates et. al., 2003). Taking into account this dual nature of resilience, Masten et. al. (1990) have defined resilience as “the process of, capacity for, or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances.” Empowerment, on the other hand, as a process involves actions, activities and structures, while as an outcome it is suggestive of an achieved level of empowerment by the individual (Zimmerman, 1995).

To elaborate on the similarities between resilience and empowerment, as a process, empowerment involves channeling human activity in the direction of change from a passive state to an active one, during which there is an integration of self-acceptance and self-confidence (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988). Resilience also involves change, where the individual gathers agency to overcome the stressful environmental and/or situational events and transforms from being a passive recipient into an active agent of their subjective well-being. As an outcome, empowerment would involve increased skill for resource mobilization. Resilience, as an outcome, involves successfully bouncing back from adverse life conditions by manipulating environmental resources in the individual’s favor in order to gain control over them.

Resilience and self-esteem are also inter-related constructs. In order to be resilient, an individual would possibly require a higher level of self-esteem (Schunk & Carbonari, 1984). Resilience involves an element of self-efficacy, which is only possible if the individual positively evaluates his self-worth and capabilities (Bandura, 1977; Bandura, 1989; Kumpfer, 1999). Even if high self-esteem is not a prerequisite for developing resiliency, self-esteem will automatically increase as the resilient attitude of the individual bears fruit and the individual successfully manages to get extricated out of an adverse condition. The thriving that follows also possibility allows the self-esteem of the individual to rise. This association between self-esteem and resilience has been proven by the significant positive correlation between the two constructs in the present study.
Low self-esteem is associated with several negative states of psychological functioning, such as depression and anxiety (Harter, 1986; Rosenberg, 1986). These negative emotions and mental states are likely to hinder the individual’s ability to bounce back from adversity. Low self-esteem can, possibly, be understood to hinder the development of resilience.

The self-esteem scale used in the present study measured global self-esteem, as opposed to specific self-esteem. There is, therefore, a high positive correlation between global self-esteem and resilience in young adults. Specific self-esteem might bring forth similar correlations with resilience, in particular regarding skills and capabilities salient to this age group, for example academic success and vocational skills.

Resilience was also found positively correlated with PLO. Highly resilient young adults also held a high positive orientation toward their current life. A positive assessment is current life condition is likely to be an inherent characteristic of a resilient individual, especially one who has weathered the storm of the adverse life condition and successfully emerged from it. In comparison, the present life condition is likely to be evaluated more positively than the previous life condition. For young adults who have not necessarily faced adversity in the lives, yet, but still possess the characteristic of resiliency, it is this positive orientation of current life that is likely to sustain their resiliency if adversity arises. It has previously been found that people’s cognitive and affective evaluations of themselves, their life and their future play a vital role in their well-being and success across a variety of domains of positive functioning (Diener & Suh, 2000; Kahneman, Diener, & Schwartz, 1999). The proneness for evaluating life favorably and positively is what will spur resilient individuals to withstand adverse conditions and make the effort to successfully bounce back to a more healthy state of well-being. In fact, PLO has also been found to be an influential factor in experiencing, or regaining, subjective well-being, especially following a crisis in life (Agrawal et. al., 1995). This understanding cements the contribution of PLO in determining a resilient attitude, especially in instances of crisis situations from which bouncing back is required to ensure positive subjective well-being.

Self-efficacy, in particular, has been found to play a definitive role in the development of a positive orientation toward life (Caprara, 2009). Although not established as an inherent characteristic of resilience by previous research, self-efficacy can be understood to play an
important part in the ability to effectively bounce back from adversity. A resilient individual will, in all likelihood, require self-efficacy in order to successfully traverse adverse events and situations. Self-efficacy would, possibly, be a common underlying factor in both resilience and PLO, an association that future research could probe.

In fact, self-efficacy is also a common factor uniting empowerment and self-esteem. Furthermore, empowerment involves dynamism, self-sufficiency, freedom of choice, and negotiation, all factors that are likely to increase the self-esteem of the young adult as well. In addition, according to the developmental trajectory, self-esteem is high during the stage of young adulthood (Trzesniewski et. al., 2001; see also Twenge & Campbell, 2001; Robins et. al., 2002; Trzesniewski & Robins, 2004). These young adults spend a considerable amount of time in University, which has been found to be an empowering setting for young adults (Angeliq et. al., 2002). Hence, it is no surprise that self-esteem and empowerment share a high and positive correlation.

PLO was positively correlated with both empowerment and self-esteem. A person who evaluates current life in a positive light is also likely to positively evaluate oneself, thereby having high self-esteem. Although evaluation of oneself and the life conditions one is facing can be different, they both derive validation from one another. So, if the individual has a high sense of self-worth, and consequently high self-esteem, the individual is likely to assess the current life in a correspondingly positive manner as well. Conversely, if negativity creeps into the assessment of one’s current life condition, then self-esteem will also plunge. In fact, self-esteem and positive orientation towards life, along with optimism, are together considered to account for subjective well-being and positive thinking (Alicke, 1985; Brown, 1998; Campbell, 1981; Diener & Diener, 1985; Gable & Nezleck, 1998; Lucas, Diener, & Suh, 1996; Scheier, Matthews, Owens, Magovern, & Carver, 1990; Schimmack &Diener, 2003). Positive thinking, or positive orientation as it was later renamed, is defined as “the general tendency to evaluate self, life, and future in a positive way” (Caprara et. al., 2009). As can be seen, this definition of positive orientation includes aspects of both self-esteem and PLO.

Both these sets of evaluations, about oneself (self-esteem) and current life conditions (PLO), contribute to the experience of empowerment. Hence, empowerment is positively correlated
with both self-esteem and PLO. An empowered individual is likely to not only view oneself in a positive light but will also look at the brighter side of any life situation experienced. The self-efficacy element comes into play here as well.

Factors Affecting Domestic Harmony

Significant trends were found in the perception of domestic harmony by young adults. In particular, domestic harmony was differently distributed across mother’s working status, father’s profession, and gender.

Mother’s Working Status

The mother’s working condition was divided into three categories, working outside home (WOH), working from home (WFH), and working for home (WforH). Significant differences across the mother’s working conditions were found for perceived domestic harmony.

The perceived domestic harmony was found to be higher in children of mother’s WOH than children of mothers WforH. Young adults, whose mothers were employed in a structured outside-the-home work environment perceived more harmony in their family and home life than young adults whose mothers were constantly present at home. This result is corroborated by previous research that found that there was better overall home environment in families in which the mothers were employed (Vandell & Ramanan, 2008). Similarly, Youngblut et. al. (1998) found that working mothers had more positive perceptions and provided enriching home environments for their children. Working women are able to create a balance in work and family life, as stated by Poduval and Poduval (2009), by enjoying the stimulation provided by a job and career and through the working process, developing the ability of raising children who turn out to be useful members of society. These women have better mental health, and together with the positive emotional climate of the family, the mothers’ employment positively affects the family as a unit (Poduval & Poduval, 2009).
The finding that children of professionally employed mothers perceive more harmony in their family life than home-maker mothers breaks the widely held myth that a mother who invests all her time and energy in her children’s upbringing is the best mother. Motherhood in India tends to demand women to sacrifice their individual needs and choices, especially related to career, when they become mothers. Instead, mothers are expected to devote their entire lifetime to raising their children and keeping the household to ensure the proper and positive development of their children. The findings of the present research negate this expectation by proving that young adults prefer to see their mothers gainfully employed in occupations in order to experience a harmonious home environment.

Since nurtured individuality have been found to be a factor of domestic harmony, mothers employed in occupations outside the home not only serve as role models for their young adult children, but they also motivate and encourage their children to develop a positive sense of self. These young adults learn independence, responsibility, and resourcefulness because they see their mothers managing both her career and household and family responsibilities at the same time. A mother with a professional identity, separate from the identity she shares as a family member, develops respect and admiration in her children, along with a need in the children to establish an independent identity of their own. In addition, the mother may provide support borne out of interpersonal concern (2nd dimension of domestic harmony) that results in congenial inter-familial relationships and a cohesive family unit (1st dimension of domestic harmony). Such a mother also allows her children to participate in the decision-making process (4th dimension of domestic harmony) involving the whole family, through the practice of open communication (5th dimension of domestic harmony). All these factors together contribute toward the perception of domestic harmony in young adults whose mothers are WOH.

Through the creation of an atmosphere of domestic harmony, the employed mother also influences the development of positive outcomes for her children. In previous research as well, even though non-working mothers have been found to spend more time with their children than working mothers, the amount of time spent with children was not found to enhance or hamper the positive development of children (Mihailescu, 2004). Instead,
mothers’ employment outside the home has been found to be responsible for the development of positive thinking and positive evaluation of the young adults’ current lives. In fact, in India itself, Muthusamy (2006) found that working mothers spend as much time in child-care as non-working mothers, except playing with them, thereby proving to play as significant a role in their children’s positive development as non-working mothers. In addition, Hangal and Aminabhavi (2007) found that children of employed mothers are higher on emotional maturity and achievement orientation than children of home-maker mothers. These mothers, it can therefore be said, possess adequate emotional intelligence to create a harmonious home environment, along with providing their children with motivation to successfully enhance their life outcomes.

**Father’s Profession**

Father’s employment has been found to have a positive effect on children’s emotional well-being, both in children and young adulthood (Joshi & Verropoulou, 2000). In the present research, the perception of domestic harmony was found highest in children of fathers working in the government sector, followed by self-employed, and lowest for fathers working in the private sector. The job security associated with a government job, and the relatively easier work pace and fixed working hours, compared to the private sector, appear to contribute to a pleasanter working father who can come home and help create a harmonious family environment for his children. Not only can the father be assumed to contribute in the creation of domestic harmony owing to the satisfactory nature of his employment, the sense of satisfaction extends to his children as well. The negative effects of father’s job insecurity on psychological and physical outcomes have been previously established (Ashford, Lee & Bobko, 1989; Roskies & Louis-Guerin, 1990). How these negative outcomes on fathers affect their children though remains to be studied. Instead, the results of the current research point towards the positive outcomes of the father’s employment in the perception of domestic harmony for their children. The job satisfaction gained from a government job increases the father’s high psychological well-being (Broadbent, 1985; Warr, 1990), which then, directly or indirectly, positively influences the children, especially through parenting behavior (Stewart & Barling, 1996). Children of fathers employed in government service may experience higher levels of domestic harmony because of their encounter with a relaxed and involved father who is able to give them time and attention, satisfactorily meet their demands and requirements, be
actively involved in household and parenting activities, and who shares a happy relationship with his wife and children.

It is a well-understood fact that the stress associated with employment often times seeps into the father’s marital and parental relationships by adversely affecting both. If the job is unreasonably demanding and time-consuming, then the fathers are unable to adequately invest in their familial relationships, thereby ruining the quality of their relationships with their wives and children. Consequently, the overall home environment also suffers due to a physically and emotionally absentee father. Disharmony may prevail in such a household, either due to conflict and tension, or due to the father’s absenteeism. A government job may prevent the father from being physically or emotionally absent from his family’s life by allowing him the time as well as the mind space to qualitatively invest in his family life. A private sector job may prevent the father from doing so due to the untimely and extremely demanding work and time expectations that the private industry usually places upon its employees. Self-employed fathers may face the same problem, since the onus of furthering the career is on the father himself. He may be so engrossed in building his career that he may end up neglecting his family. All these reasons lead to dissatisfaction in the family members, who may consequently perceive their families as lacking in domestic harmony.

**Gender Differences**

Gender comparisons across the five variables have yielded interesting results. Girls have scored higher than boys on measures of domestic harmony, empowerment, self-esteem, and PLO. Resilience did not yield significant gender differences.

Several reasons account for the high perception of domestic harmony by girls compared to boys. The structure of self of women is considered to be more relational and interdependent than that of men (Cross & Madson, 1997). In fact, even in the individualistic culture of the United States, the social, institutional, and cultural conditions of the country create autonomy and independence in men and interdependence and relatedness in women (Bakan, 1966;
Maccoby, 1990; Markus, Mullally, & Kitayama, 1997; Markus & Oyserman, 1989). Keeping this understanding in mind, it is no wonder that girls were found to hold a higher perception of domestic harmony in their families and households, as compared to boys.

Generally, in Asian cultures, “self-definition is to a large degree based on one’s relationships and group memberships and on the importance of one’s pursuit of harmony with others” (Cross & Madson, 1997). Markus and Kitayama (1991) termed such a conceptualization of the self as the interdependent self-construal. In India, the onus of maintaining traditions, values, and overall family stability is placed on the shoulders of the women in the family. Women, thereby, get conditioned into derive their sense of self through identification with the role they are required to play in the family structure. Sustaining a positive sense of self therefore gets associated with the perceived family stability and happiness of all family members for women. This could be a reason why girls tend to perceive more harmony in their families than boys, even in the face of widespread gender discrimination existing in Indian families.

Girls’ tendency to interpret situations and experiences in a positive light could also be a reason for their perception of harmony in their families and homes. There is a possibility that even if they encounter unpleasant and discriminatory attitudes, subtle or overt, they may be disregarding their negative connotations and focusing on the positive aspects of their family experiences. In addition to a high positive orientation towards life, these girls also have high self-esteem and are highly empowered. All these three qualities must be contributing to strengthening the ability to perceive harmony in the family. Girls must also be strong contributors to the creation of domestic harmony. This conjecture is based on the understanding that the creation and sustenance of domestic harmony is a bi-directional process in which all the family members are actively involved. Domestic harmony is the responsibility of each member of the family.

It can be understood that high self-esteem, PLO, and empowerment enable girls to extract positive meaning out of their family experiences and environment and hence perceive domestic harmony. In the same manner, experiencing a harmonious family life and home environment contributes to the development of high self-esteem, empowerment, and a
positive orientation towards life in general. Family is considered the basic building block of every person’s personality and mental and emotional makeup. Domestic harmony therefore enables the girls to have a positive opinion of themselves and their self-worth, leading to high self-esteem. Domestic harmony also provides the girls with an encouraging and motivating environment in which to develop the capabilities of achieving their potential and inculcating the belief and confidence for fighting for the attainment of their rights, thereby strengthening their personal sense of empowerment. And finally, the positive experience of domestic harmony gets spilled into other life experiences and expectations as well, developing in the girls a positive orientation towards life (PLO).

Overall Model
The model of domestic harmony, and its relationship with positive life outcomes, developed in this research postulates that firstly, the mother’s working status, and the father’s profession contribute toward the perception of harmony in family and at home; and secondly, the perception of domestic harmony predicts the development of resilience, empowerment, self-esteem, and PLO in young adults.

Mothers who are professionally employed in a salaried job outside of home and fathers who are employed in government service create the perception of a harmonious family life and home environment in their young adult children. The perception of domestic harmony thus created ensures the development of resilience, empowerment, self-esteem, and PLO in young adults. Additionally, the children of fathers working in government service also have high resilience, self-esteem, and PLO. Children of working mothers also have high PLO.

**Differences from other family functioning models**

One major difference between the Domestic Harmony model and other models of family functioning is the intent and approach with which it has been developed. As has been stated before, the Domestic Harmony model is based on the growth model of Positive Psychology as opposed to the clinical model of the Clinical Psychology on which the other models of family functioning are based. The McMaster Model of Family Functioning, for example, covers only those dimensions of family functioning that were considered important and relevant in dealing with clinically presenting families (Miller et. al., 2000). The Domestic Harmony model, on the other hand, is applicable to both clinical and non-clinical families, as it provides some of the basic dimensions required for positive family functioning. The dimensions of the McMaster Model can be used to assess the functioning of families. The Domestic Harmony model, on the other hand, provides characteristics and qualities that a family can adopt to function positively and build an effective and efficient overall home environment. For example, both the models have the communication dimension. In the McMaster Model, the communication dimension deals with how communication is exchanged in a family to identify patterns that may be causing communicative dysfunctionality. In the Domestic Harmony model, the communication dimension focuses on how openness in communication
and participation in decision-making can be practiced between family members in order to achieve communicative competence.

The FAD developed by the McMaster Approach has largely been used as an assessment device in clinical settings, such as multiple diagnostic conditions (Friedmann et al., 1997; Miller et al., 1986); substance abuse (Liepman et al., 1989); eating disorder (North et al., 1997; Waller et al., 1990); and, obsessive-compulsive disorder (Livingston et al., 1988). Even when the FAD has been used on families and children, it has focused on issues causing dysfunctionality and maladjustment (Akister & Stevenson-Hinde, 1991; Saayman & Saayman, 1988; Sawyer et al., 1988). The use of the Domestic Harmony Scale, on the other hand, is not limited to groups with clinically-presenting problems. Since it is based on the growth model, it need not be limited as an assessment device either. Instead, it can be considered as an example of what kinds of attitudes and behaviors to adopt to ensure positive and healthy family functioning.

Similarly for the Circumplex Model, which uses the FACES scales to measure the degree of flexibility and cohesion in families. These are the two main constructs of the Circumplex Model, with the communication serving as a facilitating dimension between the two. Based on the clinical model, the Circumplex Model and the FACES instrument, are used both in clinical practice and research. The purpose is to classify families into one of 16 types of families, falling into three categories: balanced, midrange, or unbalanced. Based on the diagnostic properties of the model and its associated measurement device, families can be clinically treated accordingly. The Domestic Harmony model, on the other hand, paints the picture of a family in which harmony prevails. It can seen as going one step ahead of both the McMaster Model and the Circumplex Model, and present the model of a family functioning that clinical families, as identified by their respective assessment devices FAD and FACES, can aspire to. The therapeutic value of the Domestic Harmony model, therefore, lies in its application and practice. In this regard, this model is an important and significant contribution to the fields of Psychology and Family Studies, as well as to the feminist movement to stop violence against women.

Bowen’s Model mainly focuses on the emotional interdependence within families and how this emotional connectedness, or lack of it, leads to psychopathology in individuals. The
scope of this model is, therefore, limited to a specific purpose. The model of domestic harmony, though limited to the population under study, that is young adults, covers more aspects of family functioning, of which interdependence is a part. The focus on emotionality, and its transmission through generations resulting in varying degrees of differentiated or undifferentiated selves, is the main concern of Bowen’s model. The Domestic Harmony Model, on the other hand, focuses on how perceived harmony throughout the developmental period results in the emergence of positive outcomes for the children in the family when they reach young adulthood. These positive outcomes can be expected to be projected into the future lives of the young adults as well, depending on the life circumstances faced by the young adults.

Applications of the Present Research

The present research, which conceptualizes domestic harmony, adds significantly to the content of Positive Psychology. The need to supply Positive Psychology with a conceptualization of harmony has been expressed by several Positive Psychology researchers. This research fulfills that need, by contextualizing harmony within the family and domestic arena. In this regard the Domestic Harmony Scale is an important theoretical contribution to the field of Positive Psychology, as well as the conceptualization of the concept. The Empowerment Scale is also an important contribution of the present research, especially as it measures empowerment among youth. Apart from Positive Psychology, the concept of domestic harmony has social relevance in various other domains and can be applied in various sub-disciplines of psychology other than positive psychology, such as clinical psychology, school psychology, social psychology, child psychology, occupational psychology, to name a few.

Domestic harmony is of particularly important relevance to Indian society, where patterns of family functioning, playing an important role in a person’s life, are more salient than in Western countries. In India, many times couples continue to stay together for the sake of their children despite severely discordant relationships. Previous research has established the harmful effects of marital discord on children. The present research, on the other hand, establishes that positive outcomes among young adults are a direct outcome of a harmonious home environment. This relationship is cut across several demographic variables. The value
of domestic harmony has been established over and above several other considerations, which may make discordant couples rethink their decision to continue the disturbed marital relationship for the sake of their children.

In fact, to ensure a harmonious home environment, pre-marital interventions can be planned based on the dimensions of domestic harmony. The dimensions of domestic harmony provide indicators that can be adopted by families to increase their harmony. The items of the Domestic Harmony Scale are examples of particular behaviors that can be practiced to ensure harmony in family relationships as well as an overall harmonious atmosphere at home. Young couples and young parents may therefore be trained on how to establish harmony in their homes for positive outcomes for themselves as well as their children.

This research also breaks the myth that the overall development of children of mothers working outside the home will be hampered. On the contrary, it has been found that children of mothers working outside home perceive more domestic harmony than do children of stay-at-home mothers. This finding has important implications for working mothers in India, who several times have to face criticism for being employed instead of solely focusing on child-rearing and housekeeping.

The model of a harmonious home presented in this research can be propagated as an alternative to "stopping domestic violence." Stopping domestic violence may not be enough, it needs to be augmented by behaviors that can replace violence. The model of domestic harmony presents such behaviors that can be adopted to create a positive environment at home. This model can, therefore, be used for social work and social activism in the fight against domestic violence, as an alternative replacement as well.

**Limitations of the Present Research**
The concept of domestic harmony, as has been operationalized for the present research and the scale constructed for its measurement, is based on the interviews taken from young and old adults from Lucknow city. The Domestic Harmony Scale, in its present form, is specific to the urban population, as data was gathered on English-speaking young adults enrolled in academic institutions in Lucknow city. Hence, cross-cultural validity of the scale needs to be established. A translation of the scale into Hindi is also required.

The Domestic Harmony Scale is from the perspective of young adults only. Even though domestic harmony was conceptualized taking into account both young and older adults, the concept was operationalized on young adults only. This was the requirement of the present research. It, however, limits the scope of the measurement of domestic harmony across different age groups. Similarly for the Empowerment Scale.

**Suggestions for Future Research**

The norms of both the Domestic Harmony Scale and the Empowerment Scale need to be established, to make the scales ready for publication and use by other interested researchers. Further, the Domestic Harmony Scale can be adapted for adults too, in order to spread its use across age groups.

The mother’s working status was found to be a significant predictor variable of domestic harmony but not a moderating variable in its relationship with positive life outcomes. This relationship can be further probed. The relationship of domestic harmony with other Positive Psychology variables, such as emotional intelligence, and Clinical Psychology variables, such as anxiety, depression, stress etc. can also be studied. Furthermore, the relationship between the different dimensions of domestic harmony with demographic variables can be further explored. For example, how the dimensions of domestic harmony are spread across mother’s working status and father’s profession, or social-economic status, can be measured in more probing analyses.
Once the concept of domestic harmony has been made, more or less, generalizable to the Indian population, a therapeutic intervention can be developed based on the dimensions of domestic harmony and its model. Not limited to being remedial intervention aimed at dysfunctional families, it can be applied to non-clinical families also to enhance their family functioning and further better the quality of their family life and home environment. The latter, in particular, is an aim of positive psychology, that is, to further make better what is already good. The therapeutic model of domestic harmony could also be an agent of primary prevention, which ensures the family problems that could prop up in the future are averted through the practice of the principles of domestic harmony.

With increasing divorce rates in India and lack of understanding among partners on how to maintain harmony at home, family coaching programs can developed based on the dimensions of domestic harmony. This will give young couples skills to prevent family discord and enhance healthy interactions and harmony in the family set-up after marriage.

Looking at the importance of the joint family system and inter-connectedness with members of the extended family, the role of the extended family in domestic harmony can be included in further revisions of the concept and the Domestic Harmony Scale. If required, separate scales for joint and nuclear families can also be developed.

The overall model developed in the present research could be further probed. In particular, the role of the parents’ employment could be further tested. It has been said that not the status of the parents’ employment but parents’ work experiences affect children’s behavior (Stewart & Barling, 1996). This assumption could be further probed in respect to the Indian population. What work experiences of mothers’ and fathers’ employment help in the creation of domestic harmony? An answer to this question would help parents develop an understanding of how their work life is affecting their family life and home environment, in order to take remedial steps to ensure domestic harmony. How each dimension of domestic harmony is influenced by work experience can also be explored.