CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 SUMMARY

The present research was carried out to investigate character strengths, Locus Of Control and academic achievement in undergraduate college students of ARTS stream and SCIENCE streams of the colleges affiliated to Gauhati University, in Guwahati city, and to explore if any relationship exists between the variables of character strengths, locus of control with academic achievement of the undergraduate students.

In the present study, the sample comprised of 480 undergraduate college students of ARTS stream (120 males and 120 females) and SCIENCE stream (120 males and 120 females) falling around the age group of 18-21years, that is, the sample comprised of a total of 480 undergraduate college students from the city of Guwahati, Assam. A total of four Government undergraduate colleges of Guwahati city, were selected which offered Bachelor degree courses in Science as well as Arts.

The sample size was kept free and comprised of students from Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science second year students from the selected four renowned undergraduate colleges of Guwahati city. The sample consisted of students who had cleared all papers in the first attempt in the first year were included and none of the students were forced to participate in the responding to the questionnaires.

The 72-item Values in Action Inventory of Strengths Inventory of Strengths (VIA-IS; Peterson, Park, & Seligman, 2004) was used in the current study to measure the character strengths of the male and female students of the Arts and Science stream students. To measure the dimension of external locus of control of the students, the Indian adaptation of the Rotter’s Locus Of Control Scale, developed by Dr. Anand Kumar and Dr. S. N. Srivastava, was used. And finally a record of the Academic scores of the students was collected from the students themselves, as well as cross checked with the available college records, in order to assess the academic achievement dimension of the undergraduate students. The CGPA scores obtained by the students in
the previous examination was obtained, which was then converted to their equivalent percentage of marks.

The data obtained, thereafter was statistically analyzed with the help of the statistical software of SPSS 20. A 2x2 factorial design was adopted for the all the three variables, that is, the external Locus Of Control, academic achievement and each of the 24 character strengths. In the factorial design adopted for the three variables in the present study, the mean and SD values of each of them for Arts and Science and males and females was computed. In the factorial design adopted, it was proposed that ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) would be carried out, and followed by Tuckey’s test to find out the Honestly Significant Difference between the character strengths of the different groups. But before carrying out the ANOVA, Levene’s Test of Equality of Error Variances and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S), and the Shapiro-Wilk test, it was found that the assumption of normality required for applying ANOVA stood rejected, and therefore the Mann-Whitney U Test was applied on the scores of the VIA-72, the Rotter’s Locus Of Control Scale scores and the academic achievement scores. Thereafter Pearson Correlation was carried out to find the correlation between the variables under study and also the Multiple regression analysis was carried to find out which of the two variables, that is, character strengths or external locus of control, significantly predicts academic achievement of the male and female, Arts and Science stream undergraduate students.

After the data was analysed and interpreted, the following were the main findings that were obtained:

1. The female students scored higher in majority of the character strengths than the male students. The female students scored significantly higher in the strengths of Spirituality, humility, Honesty, gratitude, forgiveness, fairness, teamwork and love. The male students were not found to significantly score higher than the females on any of the strengths

2. The students of the Science stream reported significantly higher than the Arts stream students on the character strengths of Appreciation of Beauty & Excellence, Bravery, Teamwork, Fairness, Forgiveness, Perseverance, Kindness and Leadership, whereas in the strengths of Prudence, Social Intelligence and
Spirituality, the students of the Arts stream were significantly higher than the Science stream students.

3. There existed no significant difference in the mean rank values of the male and female students of the arts stream.

4. That female students of the Science stream significantly obtained higher on the strengths of Bravery, teamwork, Fairness, Forgiveness, Gratitude, Honesty, Kindness, Leadership, Humility and Spirituality, than the male students.

5. The male students of the Science stream significantly reported higher than the male students of the Arts stream, on the strengths of Appreciation of Beauty & Excellence, Love, Fairness, and Kindness, whereas the male students of the Arts stream obtained significantly higher mean rank values than the males of the Science stream, only on the strengths of Prudence and Spirituality.

6. It was also found that the female students of the Arts stream scored significantly higher than the females of the Science stream on the strength of Curiosity, whereas the female students of the Science stream significantly reported higher than the female students of the Arts stream on the strengths of Appreciation of Beauty & Excellence, Bravery, Teamwork, Fairness, Forgiveness, Kindness, Leadership and Humility.

7. There was no significant difference found in the external Locus Of Control dimension of the male and female students.

8. There was no significant difference found in the external Locus Of Control dimension of the student of Arts and Science streams.

9. It was found that the female students of the arts stream obtained significantly higher than the male students of the arts stream, in the external dimension of Locus Of Control.

10. No significant difference was found in the External Locus Of Control dimension between the male and female students of the Science stream.

11. No significant difference in the mean rank values of the male students of the Arts and Science streams was reported.

12. No significant difference in the mean rank values of the female students of the Arts and Science streams existed.
13. No significant difference in the academic achievement of the male and female students was reported.

14. The students of the Science stream significantly obtained higher academic achievement than the Arts stream students.

15. No significant difference in the academic achievement of the male and female students of the arts stream was reported.

16. No significant difference in the academic achievement of the male and female students of the science stream was reported.

17. The male students of the science stream significantly reported higher academic achievement than the male students of the arts stream.

18. The female students of the science stream significantly reported higher academic achievement than the male students of the science stream.

19. An insignificant negative correlation between External Locus of Control and Academic achievement was found.

20. A significant positive correlation between academic achievement and the character strengths of Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence, Bravery, Teamwork, Fairness, Forgiveness, Humor, Perseverance, Kindness, Leadership, Humility was found; whereas a significant negative association with Self regulation was found.

21. For the students of the Arts stream a significant positive association of academic achievement with the strengths of Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence, Bravery, Curiosity, Fairness, Forgiveness, Gratitude, Humor, Kindness, Leadership, Social Intelligence and Spirituality; and a significant negative association with the strength of Self regulation was found.

22. For the Science stream academic achievement was significantly positively associated with the strengths of with Prudence, Fairness, Love of Learning, Humility and Perspective.

23. When gender was taken into consideration, a significant positive relationship of academic achievement with the strengths of Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence, Bravery, Fairness, Forgiveness, Humor, Kindness and Leadership were found for the females and in case of the male students the strengths academic achievement was found to be significantly positively associated with
Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence, Bravery, Teamwork, Fairness, Forgiveness, Gratitude, Honesty, Perseverance, Kindness, Leadership and Humility. Self regulation was found to significantly negatively correlated with academic achievement for the males.

24. A significant negative correlation between the strengths of Teamwork, Curiosity, Fairness, Forgiveness, Gratitude, Honesty, Hope, Leadership, Love of Learning and Zest and External Locus of Control was reported. For the students in the Arts stream, External Locus of Control was found to be significantly negatively associated with the strengths of Fairness, Gratitude and Leadership, whereas for the Science stream students, a significant negative relation was reported between External Locus of Control and the strengths of Teamwork, Curiosity and Zest. In case of the males a significant negative correlation was found for the strengths of Bravery, Prudence, Teamwork, Fairness, Forgiveness, Leadership, Love of Learning; and for the females a significant negative association between External Locus of Control and the strengths of Teamwork, Curiosity, Gratitude and Zest was found.

25. When Regression analysis was carried out to find if External Locus of Control and the 24 character strengths predicted academic achievement, it was found that the strengths of Forgiveness, Leadership and Self regulation out of the 24 strengths predicted academic achievement, whereas, External Locus of Control was not found to predict academic achievement.

26. Also when the undergraduate students were divided into categories of high, low and average academic achievers and their signature strengths were computed, it was found that the top five strengths of the low academic achievers group were Honesty, Hope, Kindness, Fairness and Love; with Love being the most unique strength of this group; for the average academic achievers group the top five character strengths, that is, the signature strengths were Fairness, Kindness, Leadership, Hope and Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence; and for the group of students with high academic achievement the signature strengths were found to be Fairness, Kindness, Honesty, Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence and Love of Learning.
5.2 LIMITATIONS

1. One of the major limitations of the present study was the sample size, which is considerably small for greater generalization of the findings.
2. In the present study only students from four undergraduate colleges were undertaken, and therefore it has a limited generalizability due to the purposive nature of the sample.
3. The students from different ethnic backgrounds were not taken into consideration and also the ethnic origin of the students who participated in the study was not identified.
4. The area covered for the purpose of data collection was only limited to Guwahati city of Assam, and therefore a wider coverage could have yielded a more detailed finding of the present objectives.

5.3 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

1. The present study was quantitative in nature and presents an empirical picture of the context. A detailed qualitative analysis of character strengths and locus of control in relation to academic achievement of students can be taken into consideration for future research.
2. The study can be replicated on a larger sample and there could be inclusion of other psychosocial variables as well.
3. The environment of the college campus also plays a crucial role in the academic achievement of the college students; therefore the contribution of various stakeholders in an educational setting can be taken into consideration.
4. There should be attempts to introduce awareness workshops or seminars of positive psychology interventions in colleges, so that the students could themselves understand the value of internalizing their strengths, acknowledging their traits and building up their positive characteristics.
5. The colleges from where the data was collected did not have a counsellor appointed to cater to the psychological, social or emotional needs of the students as well as the college staff. Therefore there could be appointment of counsellors trained on the strengths-based approach or to provide such
training to the counsellors after their appointment, so that they could help the students to more efficiently reach their goals.

5.4 CONCLUSION

- Thus the findings of this research work are in line with the Martin Seligman’s proposal of PERMA.
- Findings of this research work indicate that internal characteristics i.e. many of the character strengths (which are internal) do play an important role in enhancing academic performance of the students.
- On the other hand, External Locus of Control, which is external to an individual, was not found to influence academic achievement of the students to a great extent, as there was no significant positive correlation found between External Locus of Control and Academic achievement.