CHAPTER – 1
INTRODUCTION

A Positive perspective and approach is becoming increasingly recognized as making a valuable contribution to today. Positive psychology is a new effort to redefine and readjust the existing disparity or imbalance to encourage and support psychologists to try and attempt to contribution to positive aspects of human life, not only just perform something about negative things. Being a new branch of psychology, this field is still in its infant stage and is passionately competing for its veracity and advantage by both detractors and supporters. Some of them tend to neglect this new theory, while others vouch for its authenticity. Many of them never believe in the concept of joy, love, positive talk, optimism, while others see a broad day light in professing the techniques of all good human behavior to cure any psychology malady.

The new and rapidly growing field of positive psychology is shedding light on what makes us happy. The pursuit of happiness and how we can lead more fulfilling satisfying lives, for many years the fields of psychology concentrated on mental illness. Since “Martin Seligman” landmark book, authentic happiness, this new and exciting branch of psychology is focusing on the good life, happiness and well-being. Positive psychology is a recent branch of psychology whose purpose was summed up in 1998 by Seligman and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi: "We believe that a psychology of positive human functioning will arise, which achieves a scientific understanding and effective interventions to build thriving individuals, families, and communities." Positive psychologists seek "to find and nurture genius and
talent", and "to make normal life more fulfilling", not simply to treat mental illness.

The branch is intended to complement and focus, not to replace or ignore the rest of psychology. It does not seek to deny the importance of studying how things go wrong, but rather to emphasize the importance of using the scientific method to determine how things go right. This field brings attention to the possibility that focusing only on the disorder itself would result in only a partial understanding of a patient's condition.

Researchers in the field analyze things like states of pleasure or flow, values, strengths, virtues, talents, as well as the ways that social systems and institutions can promote them.[4] Positive psychologists are concerned with four topics: (1) positive experiences, (2) enduring psychological traits, (3) positive relationships and (4) positive institutions.[5]

DEFINITIONS OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY: -

Positive Psychology is a scientific study of ordinary human strength and virtues. positive psychology revisits "the average person" with an interest in finding out what works, what is right and what is improving Sheldon & king 2001. It asks, "What is the nature of effectively function human being, who successfully applies evolved adaptations and learned skill? And how can psychologists explain the fact that despite all the difficulties the majority of people manage to live of dignity and purpose?"

The field of positive psychology at the subjective level is about valued subjective experiences: well being contentment and satisfaction (in the past); hope and optimism (for the future); and flow and happiness (in the present).at the
individual level, it is about positive individual traits; the capacity for love and vocation, courage interpersonal skill aesthetic sensibility, forgiveness, originally, future mindedness, spiritually high talent and wisdom. At the group level, it is about the civic virtues and the institutions’ that move individual toward better citizenship: responsibility nurturance, altruism, civility, moderation, tolerance and work ethic. (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000)

“Positive Psychology is the study of conditions and processes that contribute to the flourishing or optimal functioning of people, group and institutions”. (Gable & Haidt, 2005).

“Positive Psychologists seek to find and nurture genius and talent” and “to make normal life more fulfilling” (Copton, William, 2005).

Positive Psychology is about scientifically informed perspectives on what makes life worth living. It focuses on aspects of human condition that lead to happiness, fulfillment and flourishing. Thus the main goal of Positive Psychology is to focus on strength as on weakness, as much interest in building the best things in life and make people happier by understanding and building positive emotions, gratification and meaning. The subject of universal interest and utility is that “what makes a good life?” the scientists who are engaged in the study of human behavior believe that an indispensable ingredient of the good life is that the person himself likes his life. Because of prevailing stress in day-to-day life, the need for subjective well-being is being increasingly recognized now a day. So because of the hectic lifestyle and intense work pressure under which we live today. Every one experiences as much confusion about his/her identity so it is necessary to understanding the ‘True nature of self.’
We humans spend a lot of time and effort thinking about ourselves. To some extent, we tend literally to be self-centered. The self is the center of each person's social universe. Your self-identity is acquired primarily through social interactions that begin with your immediate family and continue with often people you meet throughout life.

The philosophy of self defines the essential qualities that make one person distinct from all others. There have been numerous approaches to defining these qualities. The self is the idea of unified being which the source of consciousness is more. This self is the agent responsible for the thought action of an individual to which they are described. It is a substance, which therefore endures through time; thus, the thoughts and action at different movement may pertain to the same self.

Psychology of self is the study of either the cognition and affection representation of one's identity or the subject of experience. The earliest formulation of the self in modern psychology derived from the distinction between the self as the subjective knower and the self as me. The object that is knower. Current of self in psychology position the self as playing an integral part in human motivation, cognition affection and social identity. It may be the cause that we now use fully attempt to ground experience of self in a neural process with cognition, consequences which will give us insight into the element of which the complex multiply situated selves of modern identity are composed.

Carl Rogers was a clinical psychologist, his theorizing about self became an integral part of the field of personality. Rogers (1951) emphasized that the self is the most important aspect of each person's world. He believed that in addition to
maintaining and enhancing the self. Every one needs to receive positive regard, that is, from infancy on, we need love and parents are most often the original source of affection. From the beginning, each person needs love so strongly. In fact, that a child's self-concept is more dependent on what the parents and others declare it to be than on the child's actual feelings and perceptions.

Rogers was very much interested in conducting research on self-theory. The investigations carried out by his research group focused on the difference between a person's self and the person's ideal self- a difference known as self-ideal discrepancy-as an indicator of maladjustment. The higher the discrepancy (and hence the lower the person's self-esteem) the less well adjusted, more unhappy and more defensive the individual.

Positive is the best way to lead a fulfilled life and to overcome the obstacles maintaining a positive outlook on life and its promises help to rejuvenate the general health and well-being of the body sure, every one has problem that life throws one's way every now and then, but facing these problems, solving them in positive way, creative way and moving forward is the right set of actions.

**POSITIVE SELF:**
Positive self can help you achieve success if you listen to the things you say to your self inside your head. You might agree that you would be offended of those same remarks come from a friend or stranger. Many people that find it hard to achieve success find they do not have a good self. In fact they often find that most of the words they say to themselves are not only negative they are completely degrading and detrimental to success. Positive self is a personal reaffirmation indicating you are doing a good job, you are competent, you
socialize well or you are good looking. It can be about any fact of your life. Of course, in most cases those spewing negative self truly believe the garbage they tell themselves, which is even sadder. If there is any one on the face of the global important to be friend, it is you. You spend the most time with yourself and you are constantly whispering in your own ear so you have the most influence. After all, if you do not like you are self or treat yourself with respect, which will?'

Have you ever heard the saying "only you can make your self happy "? Well as trait as it seems, it may be true. A surprising survey of adults by the American Psychological Association has shown that the most important factor of happiness and well-being is self-esteem. Also important were feeling of independent and competency, often brought about by high self-esteem surprisingly common traits like popularly, power money or luxury were rated the lowest. Having a positive self-image can be difficult, especially if one is affected by life’s hardships such as a disability poor be healthy or financial or other major problem. However, there are things you can do to improve your self-image and self-esteem. These things can in turn improve other aspects of your life like academic or financial success, relationship and even health.

The Positive aspect of self: - The probable aspect of positive self is

(I) satisfaction with life (Reflection of past).
(II) Happiness (An outlook of present life)
(III) Optimism
(IV)Self-esteem
(V) Self-confidence

(I) Satisfaction with life (Reflection of past) - satisfaction is a Latin word that means to make or do enough. Satisfaction with one’s life implies
contentment with or acceptance of one’s life. Circumstances or the fulfillment of one’s wants and need for one’s life as a whole. In essence, life satisfaction is a subjective assessment of the quality of one has lived life because it is inherently an evaluation of judgments of life satisfaction having a large cognitive component. Subjective life satisfaction is a measure of an individual’s perceived level of well-being and happiness.

(II) Happiness (An outlook of present life)- Happiness is a mental state of well-being characterized by positive emotion ranging from contentment to intense joy. A variety of biological, psychological, religious and philosophical approaches have striven to define happiness and identify its sources. Philosophers and religious thinkers often define happiness in terms of living a good life, or flourishing rather than simply as and emotions.

(III) Optimism (futuristic perspective)- A cheerful heart is Optimists good medicine a wise Israelite King wrote some 3000 years ago, optimism is an outlook on life such that one maintains a view of the world as a positive place. The word is originally derived from the Latin optimum, meaning “best” Being optimistic in the typical sense of the world, ultimately means are expects the best possible out come from given situations. It is the opposite of pessimism. Optimists generally believe that people and events are inherently good, so that most situations work out in the end for the best.

(IV) Self-esteem- Self-esteem is a more or less phenomenal process in which the person perceives characteristics of her self/ him self and reacts to those characteristics emotionally or behaviorally. Self-Esteem is a fundamental need of
humans and is one of the most important variables affecting the lives of individuals at all stages of development (Bradburn, 1969). Self-esteem is a fundamental personality construct and be defined as, respect for or a favorable impression of oneself, good opinion of oneself.

(V) Self-confidence- Self-confidence is one such personality trait. The self is a composite of a person's thoughts and feelings, strivings and hope, fears and fantasies, his view of what he is, what he has been, what he might become, and his attitudes pertaining to his worth, self-confidence is a positive attitude of oneself to wards one's self-concept.

**SELF-IMAGE:**

Self-image is how you perceive yourself. It is a number of self impressions that have built up over time; what are your hope and dreams/ what do you thinks and feel/ what have you done through out your life and what did you want to do? This self-image can be very positive, giving a person confidence in their thoughts and action or negative making a person doubtful of their capabilities and ides.

Surprisingly your self-image can be very different from have the word see you. Same people who outwardly seem to have it all [intelligence, looks, personal & financial success] may have a bed self-image. Conversely, other who has had a very difficult life and multiple, hardships may also have a very positive self-image. However, it is important that your self-image be both positive and realistic. Having a self-image that is unrealistic can be a draw back. Whether that self-image is negative or positive. Some times having an occasional negative thoughts or criticism about oneself can encourage change, hard work, growth and success. Some time having too positive an image of one can encourage
complacency, under achievement and arrogance. Finding the balance between feeling positive about oneself and having realistic goals is important.

Positive self is very important because all your actions depend on it, if it is high your output increase indirect proportion. Positive self-lead to the confident, action and right decisions. Negative self-lead to the lack of self-confidence, timidity and procrastination during making decision. These positive and negative thinking arise in a person due to his gender because in nearly all societies men and women, boys and girls have different status and play or perform different roles. Men and women dress differently, behave and interest, they also do different amounts of work and have different leisure activities and time or such activities.

**GENDER**: English dictionary defined gender as “male or female”. Another usage to term gender is that it is applied when classifying noun as masculine and feminine. The word gender cannot be used to refer to biological difference is best described by the word “sex”. In other word, the term sex refers to biological characteristics by which human being are classified as males and females. Genders on the other hand refer to the social, cultural and psychological characteristics by which human behavior is categorized as masculine and feminine. Gender is not determined by an individual’s biological characteristics but by how society looks at the roles of men and women. In other word, gender is socially constructed.

All observed difference in the behavior of men and women were long assumed biological givens, it seems increasingly likely that many “typical” masculine and feminine characteristics are in fact required (Bem 1984). Gender schema theory
was formulated by Bem (1981, 83) she suggested that children have a "generalized readiness" to organize information about the self in a way that is based on cultural definitions of what is appropriate behavior for each sex. Once a young child learns to apply the label "girl" or "boy" to herself, the stage is set for the child to learn the "appropriate" roles that accompany these labels. Recent studies provide some evidence of widely held stereotypes'. [For example, compared to men, women are perceived as more sociable and happier] such effects are small and often different for male and female observes. (Feingold 1995). In contrast, gender schema theory, Spence (1993) favors a multifactor gender identity theory in which the gender-relevant aspects of self are composed of many factors rather than a simple division in to male and female.

Many investigators assume that these male-female differences are based on learned expectancies associated with gender role (major and Adams, 1983). It should come as no surprise that woman whose lives have been spent experiencing social pressure to accept second place in assertive and aggressive situations may deal with people in a way different from men (Nadkarni, lundgren, and Burlew, 1991).Perhaps women have better social skills than men. (Margalit and Eysenck, 1990). The role of men and women in India have since long been clearly defined. The accompanying social statuses of men and women have also been different. Men are consider intelligent and superior to women while women are consider emotional and inferior. A female child is perceived as an economic, liability to the family and is, therefore, not wanted. Unfortunately, it still is the scenario in most of the rural India as well as else where in the urban parts of the India poised. This unfavorableness of attitudes also get translated in life's situations which are often less than for women.
Traditional psychology with men at center is sometimes at a loss to explain women's behaviors be it in the realm of education, entering or leaving labor market, owning and managing their movable and immovable assets, keeping fasts for their sons and husband well-being, leisure and recreation, or else viewing their own personal competencies and capabilities. We, therefore, need to look at women in unique ways.

**WOMEN**

Whether out of convenience, conviction or tradition Indian society over the centuries has been "unfair" to the fair sex. Women have not been allowed to develop self-confidence and it is so because before marriage the fair sex is under the thumb of patriarch and after wedding in awe of her husband and father-in-law. Position of women has undergone a lot of change from the pre-Vedic to the modern times. There has been in fact two phase in the life of women—period of subjection and the period of liberalization. While the former stretched for a longer period, the latter has just begun for centuries, the woman has been deliberately deprived of all ancient socio-cultural practices. At personal social level, women were victims of widespread illiteracy, feeble health and segregation. At the economic structural plane. They were prey to economic dependence, absence of carrier and mobility and non-recognition of their economic contribution. At the social political plane, women suffered from denial of freedom even in their home, repression as well as prejudice everywhere. From time immemorial the role of man has always been regarded as that of a provide in the social unit of home where as females were taught to regard marriage as the only things needful i.e. the only avenue of distinction. Therefore, the women had been directing all their energies in adopting or developing positive qualities, which were most liked by their spouses and down playing their
intelligence, independence and assertiveness. Lately the processes of urbanization and secularization have speeded up the modernization process and have brought about political, economic, social, psychological and cultural change in the pattern and attitudes in our country. The profound social changes, which have been witnessed in recent years, have affected women much more than men. The social, political, legal, administrative and economic privileges created for the women in the soil of Indian culture however, can contribute to family happiness significantly only when there is desirable change in the roles of man. Society is passing through a peculiar situation. On one hand, women are demanded for developing a new “Identity” reflecting self-assertion, self-image and good self-esteem, sense of economic independence, empowerment, and power of decision-making.

With this, much background, we may pass on to next chapter dealing with review of pertinent literature