Character Strengths and Psychopathology among Adolescents of Matrilineal and Patrilineal Societies in Meghalaya

Abstract: *This study investigates the relationship between character strengths and psychopathology among adolescents in the matrilineal and patrilineal societies of Meghalaya. The research aims to elucidate how lineage practices in these societies influence character strengths and psychopathology among adolescents. The study examines the prevalence and expression of the 24 character strengths as defined by the VIA Classification of Character Strengths and Virtues and explores their association with various psychological disorders. The findings show that adolescents in matrilineal societies exhibit higher mean ranks in various character strengths, which act as protective factors against psychopathological issues. These results highlight the significant impact of lineage practices on the development of character strengths and psychopathology of adolescents in Meghalaya.*
Key words: *Character Strengths, Psychopathology, Matrilineal, Patrilineal, Adolescents*

I.   INTRODUCTION

Positive psychology, a field within psychology, emphasizes the positive aspects of human life. According to Peterson (2008), positive psychology is "the scientific study of what makes life most worth living." Over the past few years, the field of positive psychology has gained significant attention for its emphasis on identifying and nurturing the strengths and virtues that enable individuals and communities to truly thrive and prosper. Unlike traditional psychology, which often focuses on diagnosing and treating mental illnesses, positive psychology seeks to pinpoint and cultivate positive traits that contribute to overall well-being. At the core of this emerging field lies the enlightening concept of character strengths given by Peterson and Seligman.

Character Strengths
Character strengths are the positive traits within an individual that reflect his thoughts, emotions and behaviours. According to Seligman and Peterson (2004), there are 24 character strengths that can be broadly categorized under six virtues. A study by Park, Peterson, and Seligman (2006) has shown that character strengths are universally recognized across different cultures and contribute significantly to life satisfaction and well-being

1. **Wisdom and Knowledge:** Mental strengths related to obtaining and utilizing knowledge.
- Creativity: Generating novel and effective methods of achieving goals.
- Curiosity: Showing interest in ongoing experiences.
- Judgment: Carefully considering and examining all aspects of a situation.
- Love of Learning: Excelling in acquiring new skills, subjects, and bodies of knowledge.
- Perspective: Offering insightful advice and guidance to others.
2. **Courage:** Emotional strength shown through determination to achieve goals despite obstacles.
- Bravery: Confronting threats, challenges, and pain without backing down.
- Perseverance: Completing tasks and goals once started.
- Honesty: Truthfulness and authenticity in communication and self-representation.
- Zest: Embracing life with enthusiasm.
3. **Humanity:** Strengths involve building strong relationships and offering support to others.
- Love: Appreciating and nurturing close bonds with others.
- Kindness: Offering assistance and extending help to others.
- Social Intelligence: Recognizing and understanding the emotions and intentions of oneself and others.
4. **Justice:** The civic virtues that form the foundation of thriving community life.
- Teamwork: Working together effectively as a team for the betterment of the team.
- Fairness: Treating all individuals equally based on principles of justice and fairness.
- Leadership: Motivating a group to achieve goals while maintaining positive relationships within the group.
5. **Temperance:** Strengths to prevent excess.

- Forgiveness: Forgiving those who have committed wrongdoing.
- Humility: Allowing achievements to speak for themselves.
- Prudence: Exercising caution in decision-making and avoiding unnecessary risks.
- Self-Regulation: Managing and controlling one's emotions and behaviours.
6. **Transcendence:** Strengths that create connections to the wider universe.
- Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence: Recognizing and enjoying beauty, excellence, and skilled performance in different areas.
- Gratitude: Being mindful of and grateful for the things that occur.
- Hope: Anticipating the best in the future and striving to attain it.
- Humour: Enjoying laughter and playful teasing and bringing joy to others.
- Spirituality: Holding consistent beliefs about the greater purpose

Psychopathology

Adolescence is an important stage in human development characterized by substantial growth and change. This transformative stage involves profound physical, mental, and social developments that significantly impact adolescent's well-being. During this stage, individuals are particularly vulnerable to developing various psychological disorders, commonly referred to as psychopathology. A study by Casey, Jones, and Hare (2008) shows that changes in the structure and function of the brain during adolescence can affect emotional control and behaviors related to risk, potentially contributing to the development of psychopathology.

Psychopathology refers to a variety of mental health disorders that can have a substantial effect on an adolescent's functioning and overall well-being. According to William M Reynolds in the scale "The Adolescent Psychopathology Scale", there are twelve kinds of disorders that assess a broad spectrum of psychological disorders that commonly affect adolescents. The APS is designed to measure the presence and severity of symptoms across twelve distinct types of disorders. These disorders are closely aligned with DSM-IV criteria and include a variety of mental health issues that adolescents may face.

- Conduct Disorder: Evaluate a wide constellation of anti-social behaviour.
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder: Evaluate hostility and negative contrary behaviour.
- Major Depressive Disorder: Evaluate symptoms of depression as per DSM-IV like irritable mood, diminished pleasure, depressed mood, etc.
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder: Evaluate feelings of excessive anxiety and worry.
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: Evaluate the experience of negative events or traumatic events.
- Substance Abuse Disorders: Evaluate problems related to the use of substances such as alcohol and drugs.
- Eating Disorder: Evaluate symptoms of anorexia and bulimia nervosa.
- Suicide: Evaluate suicidal ideation and suicidal behaviour.
- Academic Difficulties: Evaluate Problems related to academics in school.
- Anger/Violence Propensity: Evaluate problems related to anger and violence against others.
- Self-Concept Problems: Evaluate basic aspects of self-concept and self-worth, like feelings of worthlessness.
- Interpersonal Issues: Evaluate interpersonal problems in the form of social isolation, social withdrawal and friendship problems.

Meghalaya

Meghalaya, a small hilly state in the northeast of India, is home to three matrilineal tribes: the Khasis, the Jaintias, and the Garos, who are the primary ethnic groups of the state. Each tribe has various divisions based on geographical regions, with their own distinct dialects. In a matrilineal system, lineage is traced through the mother. In addition to the Khasis, Jaintias, and Garos, there are non-tribal communities in Meghalaya, including Nepalis, Bengalis, Assamese, South Indian Tamils, Malayalees, and others. Most of these non-tribal groups follow a patriarchal system, where lineage is traced through the father. So, the present study aims to examine if there is any relationship between adolescents from the matrilineal system and patrilineal system on character strengths and psychopathology and also if there is any relation between character strengths and psychopathology.

II. METHODOLOGY

Research questions
1. Whether matrilineal and patrilineal lineages affect the character strengths, and Psychopathology in adolescents of Meghalaya?
2. Are strengths of character and psychopathology related in adolescents of Meghalaya?

Research objectives
1. To examine the character strengths and psychopathology of adolescents belonging to matrilineal and patrilineal societies.

2.   To examine whether Character Strengths is related to Psychopathology of adolescents in Meghalaya
Hypotheses
H0: There will be no significant difference in the Character Strengths of matrilineal and patrilineal societies
H0: There will be no significant difference in Psychopathology of matrilineal and patrilineal societies.
H0: There will be no significant correlation between the 24 Character Strengths and Psychopathology
Sample
In the study, data was collected from adolescents in Meghalaya using the Multi-Stage Sampling Method. In the first stage, districts of East Khasi Hills and West Jaintia Hills District were selected through purposive sampling, considering the location of the state capital, Shillong, in East Khasi Hills and the proximity of West Jaintia Hills as a bordering district. Eight schools were then randomly chosen from these two districts, and permission was obtained for the study from all eight schools. A total of 503 participants were selected, with 312 tracing their lineage through a matrilineal descent and 191 through a patrilineal descent.
Tools
The researcher used the VIA-IS (Values in Action- Inventory of strengths for Youth) to identify the character strengths of the adolescents and the Adolescents Psychopathology Scale- SF to assess their psychopathology.
Procedure
After selecting the topic and assessment scales, the researcher visited eight schools, all of which granted her permission. Students from classes 8, 9, and 10 who agreed to take part in the study were selected and given a set of questionnaires along with a consent form. After filling out the questionnaires, the students were thanked for their cooperation, and the questionnaires were then collected. Subsequently, the questionnaires were scored, and statistical analysis was applied to test the hypotheses.
Analysis of the data
The data was analyzed using Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS). The data was found to be non-parametric; hence, the following test has been applied.
1.   The Mann-Whitney U test was used to find out if there is any significant difference between adolescents from matrilineal and patrilineal societies on character strengths and Psychopathology
2.   Spearmen Rank Correlation was applied to see if there is any relationship between the 24 Character Strengths and Psychopathology.

III.   RESULT AND DISCUSSION
The present study aimed to examine the character strengths and psychopathology of adolescents belonging to matrilineal and patrilineal societies and whether Character Strengths is related to Psychopathology of adolescents in Meghalaya.

Results on character strengths
Table 1: Mann Whitney U test for Character Strengths based on societies

	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann Whitney U	z	Asymp.Sig (2 tailed)
Creativity	Matrilineal	312	253.65	79139.50	29280.500	-.327	0.7430
	Patrilineal	191	249.30	47616.50			
Curiosity	Matrilineal	312	268.64	83815.50	24604.500	-3.298	**0.0010**
	Patrilineal	191	224.82	42940.50			
Love of Learning	Matrilineal	312	286.10	89263.50	19156.500	-6.784	**<0.001**
	Patrilineal	191	196.30	37492.50			
Perspective	Matrilineal	312	255.81	79813.00	28607.000	-.755	0.4500
	Patrilineal	191	245.77	46943.00			
Open Mindedness	Matrilineal	312	268.18	83671.00	24749.000	-3.208	**0.0010**
	Patrilineal	191	225.58	43085.00			
Authenticity	Matrilineal	312	262.61	81933.50	26486.500	-2.103	**0.0360**
	Patrilineal	191	234.67	44822.50			
Bravery	Matrilineal	312	268.86	83885.50	24534.500	-3.343	**0.0010**
	Patrilineal	191	224.45	42870.50			
Persistence	Matrilineal	312	273.81	85428.00	22992.000	-4.321	**<0.001**
	Patrilineal	191	216.38	41328.00			
Zest	Matrilineal	312	271.44	84689.50	23730.500	-3.853	**<0.001**
	Patrilineal	191	220.24	42066.50			
Kindness	Matrilineal	312	268.80	83866.00	24554.000	-3.337	**0.0010**
	Patrilineal	191	224.55	42890.00			
Love	Matrilineal	312	293.71	91638.50	16781.500	-8.273	**<0.001**
	Patrilineal	191	183.86	35117.50			
Social Intelligence	Matrilineal	312	261.96	81731.00	26689.000	-1.976	**0.0480**
	Patrilineal	191	235.73	45025.00			
Fairness	Matrilineal	312	274.53	85652.00	22768.000	-4.465	**<0.001**

	Patrilineal	191	215.20	41104.00			
Leadership	Matrilineal	312	257.43	80318.00	28102.000	-1.075	0.2820
	Patrilineal	191	243.13	46438.00			
Teamwork	Matrilineal	312	260.14	81164.00	27256.000	-1.614	0.1060
	Patrilineal	191	238.70	45592.00			
Forgiveness	Matrilineal	312	286.48	89381.50	19038.500	-6.858	**<0.001**
	Patrilineal	191	195.68	37374.50			
Modesty	Matrilineal	312	262.67	81953.00	26467.000	-2.111	**0.0350**
	Patrilineal	191	234.57	44803.00			
Prudence	Matrilineal	312	291.87	91064.50	17355.500	-7.909	**<0.001**
	Patrilineal	191	186.87	35691.50			
Self-Regulation	Matrilineal	312	294.04	91739.00	16681.000	-8.330	**<0.001**
	Patrilineal	191	183.34	35017.00			
Appreciation of Beauty	Matrilineal	312	283.95	88592.50	19827.500	-6.349	
	Patrilineal	191	199.81	38163.50			**<0.001**
Gratitude	Matrilineal	312	274.60	85674.00	22746.000	-4.490	**<0.001**
	Patrilineal	191	215.09	41082.00			
Hope	Matrilineal	312	287.25	89622.00	18798.000	-7.004	**<0.001**
	Patrilineal	191	194.42	37134.00			
Humour	Matrilineal	312	257.29	80276.00	28144.000	-1.049	
	Patrilineal	191	243.35	46480.00			0.2940
Spirituality	Matrilineal	312	289.78	90411.00	18009.000	-7.513	
	Patrilineal	191	190.29	36345.00			**<0.001**

Table 1 displays the Mean Rank and Mann-Whitney U value for matrilineal and patrilineal society in relation to the 24 character strengths. The above table indicates that the mean rank of adolescents belonging to the matrilineal system is higher than the mean rank of adolescents belonging to patrilineal system on all the 24 character strengths, but significant difference was found for the character strengths of Curiosity, Love of Learning, Open-mindedness, Authenticity, Bravery, Persistence, Zest, Kindness, Love, Social Intelligence, Fairness, Forgiveness, Modesty, Prudence, Self-Regulation, Appreciation of Beauty, Gratitude, Hope and Spirituality but no significant difference was found for the character strength of Creativity, Perspective, Leadership, Teamwork and Humour. Hence, the hypothesis that there will be no significant difference in the Character Strengths of matrilineal and patrilineal societies is partially accepted.

In matrilineal system, men and women are assigned different societal roles and responsibilities (Sile, Suwena, & Arjani, 2020). This distribution of roles may contribute to reduced stress through shared responsibilities, potentially enhancing physical and emotional support for children, which in turn could foster the development of stronger character strengths in matrilineal adolescents. Furthermore, children in matrilineal societies are raised with strong kinship bonds and extended family support, especially from maternal relatives. Such familial structures provide substantial emotional and mental support, which may contribute to the development of strong character strengths. A study by Taylor and Robert (2013) shows that kinship support, particularly from maternal figures, has been linked to positive psychological well-being in economically disadvantaged African American adolescents, highlighting the importance of maternal well-being and parenting practices in fostering adolescent adjustment and development.

In addition to kinship support, the cultural and religious environment in Meghalaya perhaps impacts the development of character strengths. Most of the state's population practices Christianity, where church attendance is customary and followed by most people. Regular church attendance significantly shapes character strengths like kindness, humility, forgiveness, gratitude, spirituality and love. Regular visits to friends and family are widely practiced in Meghalaya, creating a sense of community connectedness and belongingness. The church and community often serve as a focal point for community activities, providing opportunities for adolescents to engage in acts of kindness, fairness, and forgiveness through community service and outreach programs. The emphasis on spirituality and gratitude within the church context encourages adolescents to reflect on their values and practice self-regulation and prudence in their daily lives.

On the other hand, the patrilineal system typically emphasizes male authority and inheritance through the male line, which can lead to a more rigid family structure where responsibilities and support systems are segregated strictly between genders. In such a system, the pressure to conform to traditional gender roles may limit opportunities for adolescents, particularly girls, to explore a wide range of experiences and develop diverse character strengths. Boys may face pressure to assume patriarchy roles early, such as preparing to be the earning member of the family, taking responsibility for the well-being of the family, etc., leading to stress and limiting the development of traits like empathy and emotional intelligence. This focus on hierarchical family structures can sometimes lead to a more competitive and less collaborative environment, which might hinder the

development of character strengths such as kindness, teamwork, and humility (Gupta, 2023)

The study also found that there is no significant difference between matrilineal societies and patrilineal societies in terms of the character strengths of Creativity, Perspective, Leadership, Teamwork, and Humour. The lack of differences in these strengths between the two societies may be attributed to the fact that adolescents, despite their cultural differences, were studied in the same school and exposed to the same school environment. Schools provide a standardized curriculum, common extracurricular activities, and equal opportunities that foster these strengths uniformly across students. Additionally, peer interactions, and the influence of teachers and school leadership create a consistent environment in which societal differences are minimized, resulting in similar development of these character strengths in both groups.

Results on psychopathology

Table 2 Mann Whitney U test for Psychopathology based on societies

	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann Whitney U	Z	Asymp.Sig (2 tailed)
CND (Conduct Disorder)	Matrilineal	312	221.29	69044.00	20216.000	-6.131	**<0.001**
	Patrilineal	191	302.16	57712.00			
OPD (Oppositional Defiant Disorder)	Matrilineal	312	221.79	69197.00	20369.000	-5.994	
	Patrilineal	191	301.36	57559.00			**<0.001**
SUB (Substance Abuse Disorder)	Matrilineal	312	258.16	80544.50	27875.500	-1.652	0.0990
	Patrilineal	191	241.95	46211.50			
AVP (Anger/Violence Proneness)	Matrilineal	312	215.25	67158.50	18330.500	-7.284	**<0.001**
	Patrilineal	191	312.03	59597.50			
ADP (Academic Problems)	Matrilineal	312	229.72	71674.00	22846.000	-4.424	**<0.001**
	Patrilineal	191	288.39	55082.00			
GAD (Generalized Anxiety Disorder)	Matrilineal	312	242.15	75551.00	26723.000	-1.955	0.0510
	Patrilineal	191	268.09	51205.00			
PTS (posttraumatic stress disorder)	Matrilineal	312	233.74	72927.00	24099.000	-3.623	**<0.001**
	Patrilineal	191	281.83	53829.00			
DEP (Major Depression)	Matrilineal	312	231.26	72154.50	23326.500	-4.100	**<0.001**
	Patrilineal	191	285.87	54601.50			
EAT (Eating Disturbance)	Matrilineal	312	243.92	76104.50	27276.500	-1.602	0.1090
	Patrilineal	191	265.19	50651.50			
SUI (Suicide)	Matrilineal	312	213.14	66499.00	17671.000	-7.772	**<0.001**
	Patrilineal	191	315.48	60257.00			
SCP (Self- Concept)	Matrilineal	312	245.09	76468.50	27640.500	-1.371	0.1700
	Patrilineal	191	263.29	50287.50			
IPP (Interpersonal Problems)	Matrilineal	312	240.19	74938.50	26110.500	-2.340	
	Patrilineal	191	271.30	51817.50			**0.0190**

Table 2 displays the Mean Rank and Mann-Whitney U value for matrilineal and patrilineal society on Psychopathology. The above table indicates that the adolescents belonging to patrilineal system scored higher than adolescents belonging to matrilineal system on Conduct Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Anger/Violence Proneness, Academic Problems, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, Major Depression, Eating Disturbance, Suicide, Self- Concept and Interpersonal Problems except on substance abuse disorder. Significant difference was found on Conduct Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Anger/Violence Proneness, Academic Problems, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, Major Depression, Suicide, and Interpersonal Problems but no significant difference was found for Substance Abuse Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Eating Disturbance and Self-concept. Hence the hypothesis that there will be no significant difference between matrilineal and patrilineal societies on Psychopathology is partially accepted.

In patrilineal societies, rigid gender roles are usually prescribed for both men and women (Hiwarkhedka & Sharma, 2024), which might hinder adolescent's personal growth. To live up to family and societal expectations, adolescents might experience depression, anger, and suicidal thoughts. Expectations from the family to uphold family honour and continue the lineage, especially for male adolescents, might create high academic pressure, diminish their personal ambitions, and focus more on family expectations, all of which can lead to higher psychopathology in patrilineal adolescents compared to matrilineal adolescents. This is supported by a study conducted by Worell and Goodheart (2006), which indicates that rigid gender roles can negatively impact mental health by limiting personal growth and increasing stress.

However, in matrilineal adolescents, extensive support systems, particularly from maternal relatives, play an important role in reducing stress and promoting emotional well-being among adolescents. A study by Hartati, Minza, and Yuniarti (2021) stated that in matrilineal societies, the child's welfare falls under the responsibility of maternal kinship; also, children who receive maternal relative's support are shielded from the detrimental effects of parental divorce. Cultural and religious practices in Meghalaya, particularly those associated with Christianity, contribute to the mental well-being of adolescents. Regular community activities and church

involvement provide opportunities for social interaction, support, and the reinforcement of positive values such as kindness, forgiveness, and gratitude.

The study found no significant difference between matrilineal and patrilineal societies regarding substance abuse disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, eating disturbances, and self-concept. Adolescence is a stage where individuals are curious about new experiences, which might lead adolescents from both societies to experiment with substance use. A study by Attila et al. (2023) stated that curiosity is one of the reasons that drives adolescents to engage in substance use. Additionally, the workload that adolescents face at school, from meeting deadlines to exams, can create anxiety for students from both societies. This is consistent with the findings of Suldo et al. (2009), which highlight the significant impact of academic stress on adolescent anxiety levels. Also, Substance use disorders, eating disturbance, Self- concept and anxiety might not be due to lineage differences, but can be due to peer influence, family relationships, and body image. A study Panjaitan & Salim (2024) found that the most dominant factors that influence eating disorders in teens are body image and peer influences. Additionally, a study by Henneberger, Mushonga & Preston (2021) stated that peer influence is one of the intermediate predictors of teenage substance abuse.

Table 3 Correlation between the 24 Character Strengths and Psychopathology.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS	CND	OPD	SUB	AVP	ADP	GAD	PTS	DEP	EAT	SUI	SCP	IPP
Creativity	-0.055	-0.044	0.021	-0.061	-0.047	-0.033	-0.026	-0.029	-0.082	-0.071	-0.084	-0.058
Curiosity	-0.014	-0.046	0.006	0.025	-0.035	0.044	0.072	0.055	0.056	-.093*	0.012	0.024
Love Of Learning	-.164**	-.136**	-0.047	-.204**	-.132**	-0.082	-0.039	-.110*	0.053	-.202**	-.091*	-.098*
Perspective	0.004	-0.05	0.046	-0.022	-0.01	-0.026	-0.019	-0.023	0.001	-0.033	-0.071	-0.041
Open Mindedness	-.108*	-.092*	0.046	-0.038	-0.015	0.033	0.048	0.002	0.05	-0.047	0.009	0.025
Authencity	-.141**	-.111*	0.053	-0.083	-0.077	-.103*	-.106*	-.092*	-0.036	-.115**	-0.05	-.111*
Bravery	-.105*	-.095*	.096*	-0.041	0.013	0.032	0.044	0.026	0.062	-0.069	-0.063	0.029
Persistence	-0.079	-.183**	-0.027	-.142**	-.194**	-.107*	-0.066	-.114*	-0.068	-.126**	-0.068	-0.031
Zest	-0.014	-.109*	-0.012	-.116**	-0.087	-.099*	-0.052	-.162**	-0.079	-.164**	-0.085	-.107*
Kindness	-.134**	-0.034	0.029	-0.058	0.033	0.054	.098*	0.038	0.028	-0.083	-0.023	0.02
Love	-.120**	-.192**	0.042	-.163**	-.178**	-.111*	-.132**	-.146**	-0.026	-.232**	-0.086	-.166**
Social Intelligence	-.096*	-0.055	.096*	-0.074	-0.055	-0.038	0.007	-0.012	.092*	-0.075	-0.022	-0.011
Fairness	-.140**	-.110*	0.07	-.117**	-0.017	0.061	0.027	-0.013	0.025	-0.038	-0.029	0.041
Leadership	0.038	0.006	0.033	0.013	0.047	-0.005	0	-0.001	-0.019	0.004	-0.047	-0.018
Teamwork	-0.058	0.005	0.056	0.004	0.023	0.052	0.013	0.056	.135**	-0.024	-0.026	0.059
Forgiveness	-.246**	-.123**	0.046	-.124**	-.094*	0.011	-0.06	-0.036	0.002	-.127**	-.100*	-0.013
Humility	0.07	-0.015	0.072	0.082	0.003	0.011	0.052	.129**	-0.008	0.033	0.071	0.064
Prudence	-.220**	-.189**	-0.06	-.252**	-.109*	-0.068	-.148**	-.151**	0.001	-.230**	-.152**	-.089*
Self-Regulation	-.280**	-.266**	0.028	-.322**	-.175**	-.119**	-.212**	-.194**	-0.065	-.291**	-.144**	-.150**
Appreciation Of Beauty	-.130**	-.148**	0.049	-0.084	-.138**	-0.025	-0.054	0.01	-0.036	-.151**	-0.054	-0.052
Gratitude	-.211**	-.103*	-0.007	-.120**	-.094*	-0.068	-0.087	-.108*	-0.078	-.241**	-.192**	-.151**
Hope	-.112*	-0.035	0.007	-0.015	-0.016	0.052	0.02	0.028	-0.033	-0.084	0.027	0.034
Humour	-0.034	-0.018	0.085	0.028	0.039	0.038	0.007	-0.012	-0.019	-0.005	-0.084	-0.014
Spirituality	-.147**	-.113*	.088*	-.109*	-0.043	0.042	0.019	-0.025	0.029	-.119**	-0.056	-0.018

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The above table illustrates several key correlations between various character strengths and psychological disorders. Curiosity shows a negative correlation with suicide. There is a negative correlation between the love of learning and conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, anger/ violence proneness, academic problems, depression, suicide, self-concept, and interpersonal problems. Open-mindedness is negatively correlated with both conduct disorder and oppositional defiant disorder. Authenticity shows a negative correlation with conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, suicide, and interpersonal problems. Bravery is negatively correlated with conduct disorder and oppositional defiant disorder but positively correlated with substance abuse disorder. Persistence shows a negative correlation with oppositional defiant disorder, anger/violence proneness, academic problems, generalized anxiety disorder, depression, and suicide. Zest is negatively correlated with oppositional defiant disorder, anger/violence proneness, generalized anxiety disorder, depression, suicide, and interpersonal problems. Kindness shows a negative correlation with conduct disorder and a positive correlation with PTSD. Love is negatively correlated with conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, anger/violence proneness, academic problems, generalized anxiety disorder, PTS, major depression, suicide, and interpersonal problems. Social intelligence shows a negative correlation with conduct disorder and a positive correlation with substance abuse and eating disorder. Fairness has a negative correlation with conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, and anger/violence proneness. Teamwork is positively correlated with eating disorders. Forgiveness shows a negative correlation with conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, anger/violence proneness, academic problems, suicide, and self-concept. Humility demonstrates a positive correlation with major depression. Prudence has a negative correlation with conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, anger/violence proneness, academic problems, PTSD, major depression, suicide, self-concept issues, and interpersonal problems. Self-regulation shows a negative correlation with conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, anger/violence proneness, academic problems, generalized anxiety disorder, PTSD, major depression, suicide, self-concept issues, and interpersonal problems. Gratitude is negatively correlated with conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, anger/violence proneness, academic problems, major depression, suicide, self-concept issues, and interpersonal problems. Hope is negatively correlated with conduct disorder. Spirituality shows a negative correlation with conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, anger/violence proneness, and suicide, while demonstrating a positive correlation with substance abuse disorder.

The negative associations between character strengths and psychological disorders can be explained by strengths contributing to emotional resilience and coping. The strengths of one's character play a significant role in building resilience and can help prevent various psychological disorders by fostering positive outcomes after facing challenging situations. Blanchard et al. (2021) show that higher scores on specific character strengths predicted resilience by consistently leading to lower levels of depression.

The strengths of self-regulation, prudence, gratitude, love, love of learning and authenticity demonstrate a stronger negative correlation with psychopathologies. Nurturing these strengths in adolescents can be very beneficial, as it can help prevent the development of mental health disorders in the future. Positive psychological interventions to enhance these strengths through workshops and activities can help adolescents understand the importance of these strengths and how to apply them in their daily lives. Engaging adolescents in community service projects can foster empathy and a sense of responsibility toward others, developing strengths like gratitude and love. Sports or team activities can enable adolescents to manage emotions, make strategic decisions, and collaborate effectively with others, leading to the development of strengths such as forgiveness, prudence, and teamwork. Additionally, activities such as drama, music, and visual arts can aid adolescents in exploring and expressing their authentic selves, promoting authenticity and self-regulation.

The table also shows the positive correlations of various character strengths with psychopathologies. The positive correlation between kindness and post-traumatic stress disorder may be because adolescents who have experienced trauma and difficult situations may develop increased empathy and compassion, leading to more acts of kindness. This aligns with the Altruism Born Suffering (ABS) theory (Staub and Vollhardt, 2008). The positive correlations between spirituality and substance abuse disorder; social intelligence and substance abuse disorder; social intelligence and eating disorders; teamwork and eating disorders; and bravery and substance abuse disorder could be attributed to the unique challenges during adolescence. This period is marked by exploration and identity formation, including the development of spiritual beliefs. Adolescents may simultaneously explore spirituality and substance use as ways to find meaning or cope with existential questions. Additionally, the daily stresses of academic pressure and peer influence might lead even spiritually inclined adolescents to experiment with substances like alcohol and drugs. A study conducted by Brechting and Giancola ,(2007) found that adolescents who experience internal conflicts between their religious beliefs and personal behaviors may turn to substances as a coping strategy. The positive correlation between teamwork and eating disorders might arise because adolescents who are highly involved in group activities or sports may face pressure to conform to certain body standards or behaviours to fit in with their peers. This pressure could lead to disordered eating to align with group norms or expectations. Also, the positive correlation between bravery and substance abuse disorder may be

explained by the fact that brave adolescents are often willing to take risks and explore new experiences. This willingness to push boundaries might make them more inclined to experiment with substances, despite the potential dangers.

The study found no correlation between creativity, perspective, leadership, and humor with psychopathology, suggesting that these character strengths may not be directly linked to psychopathological conditions but might fulfil other psychological functions. For example, creativity and humor could serve as coping strategies or means of self-expression, helping individuals manage stress and improve well-being. Similarly, Martín and Corbalan (2016) found no overall correlation between creativity and psychopathology in the general population, though they did observe a positive correlation when considering gender differences.

IV.   CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

The results of this study highlight the significant impact of societal systems on the character strengths and psychopathology of adolescents in Meghalaya. The research compares character strengths and psychopathology between matrilineal and patrilineal societies and demonstrates that different lineage practices play a crucial role in shaping and developing these strengths, which in turn influence mental health outcomes. Additionally, psycho-social factors such as community connectedness, religion, social interactions, child-rearing practices, family dynamics, and natural environment may impact strengths and psychopathology as well (Jose, Ryan & Pryor, 2012; Koenig and Larson, 2001).

Results showed that adolescents in matrilineal societies exhibit higher mean ranks in various character strengths, which appear to serve as protective factors against psychopathological issues. This suggests that the emphasis on community support, female empowerment, and shared responsibilities inherent in matrilineal lineage practices may foster a more supportive environment for nurturing positive psychological traits.

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