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# An Investigation of the Relationship between Human Values and Psychological Capital: From the Perspective of Adolescents in Singapore

Simon QW LIM

Co-authors: Melvin CY CHAN, Michelle KL KWAN

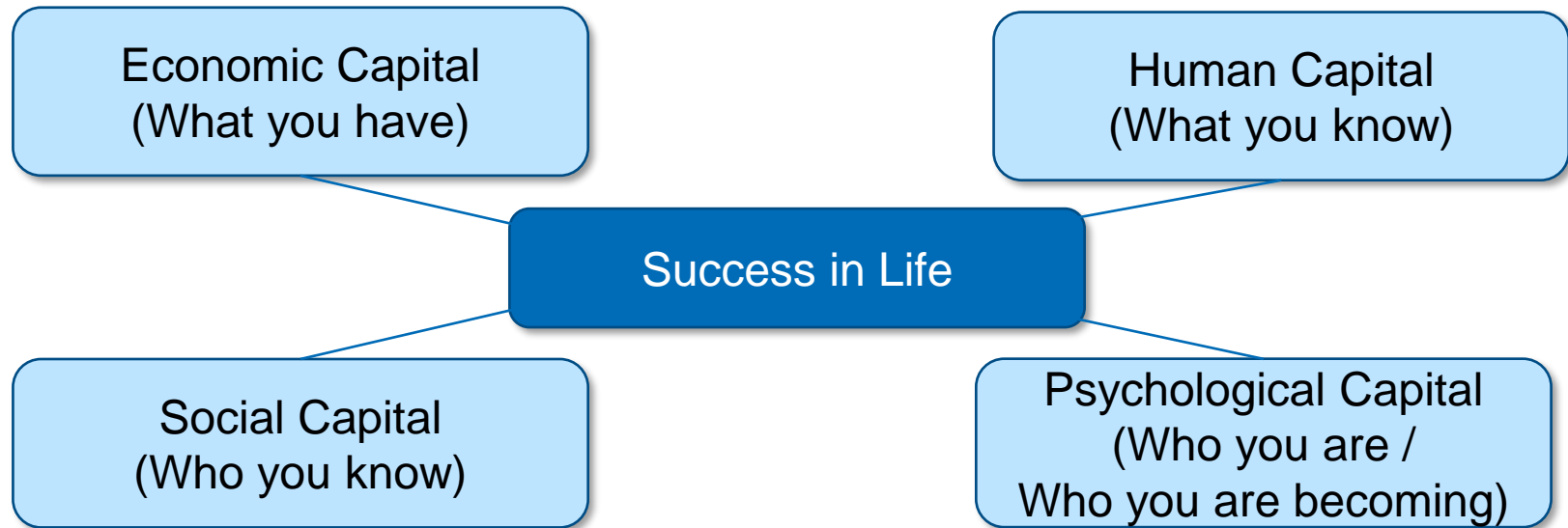
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# Presentation Outline

- Background of Study
- Statement of Problems
- Purpose of Study
- Research Methodology
- Key Findings
- Discussion
- Conclusion

# Background of Study

- In the contemporary society, several resources have been identified as important when considering one's success in life (Becker, 1994; Bourdieu, 1986; Luthans et al., 2004). They are:



# Importance of Psychological Capital

- Psychological capital is a central concept in positive psychology that reflects the capacity of individuals to overcome obstacles and achieve success.
- It is highly associated to students' academic achievement and their well-being (Snyder et al., 2003; Valle et al., 2006).
- It is a critical predictor of motivational outcomes (e.g., choice and effort), and self-regulated learning (Galla et al., 2014; Mercer et al., 2011).
- It has positive influence on school outcomes (e.g., enjoyment in school, and self-esteem) (Martin & Marsh, 2008), and transition to new environment (e.g., college) (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1992).

# Statement of Problems

Most studies on psychological capital were conducted to examine adult population within organizational settings

Limited understanding on the role of adolescents' psychological capital in Asian school context

# Purpose of Study

- To investigate the **relationship between Singapore adolescents' psychological capital and their human values**. More specifically, the focus of this study is placed on the perception of adolescents aged between 18 and 24 in post-secondary institutions in Singapore.
- The framework established in a seminal work on psychological capital conducted by Luthans et al. (2004) is used to examine the psychological capital of the adolescents in Singapore school context.
- As human values are positively associated to individual's psychological capital (Pirmoradi et al., 2019), Schwartz's (1992, 2012) human values framework which is grounded in the universal needs of human existence (i.e., biological needs, need for social interaction, and need for survival and welfare) is used to explicate the psychological capital of the adolescents in Singapore schools.

# Research Methodology

- Survey design was used to collect students' perception of their psychological capital and human values.
- 783 students (comprising 368 males and 415 females) aged between 18 and 24, studying in a major tertiary institution in Singapore.
- Hierarchical linear regression was performed on the survey data.
- Key variables include:

<b>Human Values (Schwartz, 1992, 2012)</b>	
○ Conformity	○ Stimulation
○ Tradition	○ Hedonism
○ Benevolence	○ Achievement
○ Universalism	○ Power
○ Self-direction	○ Security

<b>Psychological Capital (Luthans et al., 2004)</b>
○ Resilience
○ Hope
○ Self-efficacy
○ Optimism

- Gender was included in the analysis given its important background characteristics to examine inter-individual differences (Cecilia & Anthony, 2017; Gitay et al., 2019; Mano et al., 2017) and its influence on values (Schwartz, 2006).

# Research Methodology

## Human Values (Schwartz, 1992, 2012)

- Conformity – restraint of actions likely to upset social norms, responsible, self-discipline
- Tradition – respect for tradition, humble, accepting my portion of life/fate
- Benevolence – preserving and enhancing welfare of in-group (frequent in contact), helpful, honest, loyal
- Universalism – understanding, tolerance, broadminded, social justice, equality
- Self-direction – independent thought, curious, choosing own goals, need for control and mastery
- Stimulation – excitement, challenge in life, daring, need for variety and stimulation to maintain optimal and positive
- Hedonism – pleasure, gratification, enjoying life, self-indulgent
- Achievement – personal success through competence according to social standards, ambitious, social recognition
- Power – social status, control over resources and people, preserve public image, social power
- Security – harmony, stability of society and of relationships, reciprocation of favours, having personal interests



## Psychological Capital (Luthans et al., 2004)

- Resilience – “bounce back” from adversities; keeping calm and flexibility at the problems to achieve success
- Hope – the ability to identify, clarify, and pursue the way to success; having the will to succeed
- Self-efficacy – belief in and assurance of person’s ability to reach success for the task, personal efficacy to overcome impediments to success
- Optimism – positive outlook, success in the present and future

# Findings – Hierarchical Linear Regression

Model Summary<sup>c</sup>

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.619 <sup>a</sup>	.384	.376	.51740	.384	48.066	10	772	<.001
2	.624 <sup>b</sup>	.390	.381	.51520	.006	7.597	1	771	.006

a. Predictors: All dimensions of Human Values

b. Predictors: All dimensions of Human Values, Gender

c. Dependent Variable: Psychological Capital

# Findings – Hierarchical Linear Regression

**Model Summary<sup>c</sup>**

Gender	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
Male	.595 <sup>a</sup>	.354	.336	.51882	.354	19.561	10	357	<.001
Female	.644 <sup>b</sup>	.414	.400	.51416	.414	28.579	10	404	<.001

a. Predictors: All dimensions of Human Values

b. Predictors: All dimensions of Human Values

c. Dependent Variable: Psychological Capital

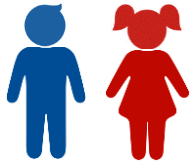
# Findings – Hierarchical Linear Regression

		Psychological Capital										
		Resilience		Hope		Self-Efficacy		Optimism				
		$\beta$	<i>p</i> -value		$\beta$	<i>p</i> -value		$\beta$	<i>p</i> -value		$\beta$	<i>p</i> -value
<b>Male</b>	Self-Direction	.129	.031	Tradition	.117	.035	Benevolence	.214	<.001	Achievement	.209	<.001
	Achievement	.249	<.001	Self-Direction	.132	.030	Self-Direction	.180	.001	Power	.144	.005
	Power	.146	.006	Achievement	.190	<.001	Stimulation	.125	.041			
				Power	.147	.006	Hedonism	-.127	.012			
						Achievement	.146	.006				
						Power	.265	<.001				
<b>Female</b>	Conformity	.137	.005	Self-Direction	.219	<.001	Benevolence	.132	.008	Universalism	.136	.006
	Benevolence	.112	.030	Power	.170	<.001	Self-Direction	.153	.002	Self-Direction	.172	.001
	Self-Direction	.144	.004	Security	.119	.010	Stimulation	.202	<.001	Achievement	.151	.005
	Achievement	.194	<.001				Power	.381	<.001	Power	.103	.032
	Power	.217	<.001							Security	.132	.004

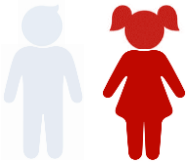
Note: Significant Human Values are shown. Significant at the 0.05 level.

# Discussion

# Facing the Giant: The Ability to Recover from Setbacks

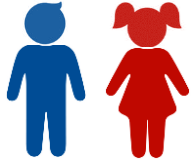


- **Both male and female students seem to be strong-minded (Self-Direction), and when they had clear goals / aspirations in mind, they could overcome the adversities to achieve success.** To some extent, they might even explore alternatives or constructive actions in dealing with difficulties, exhibiting the 'never-give-up' attitude.
- The extent of how students perceived personal success and social recognition (Achievement) could also be a strong predictor to the degree of their resilience. To them, the **determination to get ahead of others might have positive influence in overcoming adversities.**
- The desire to be leaders and the longing for having decision-making power seems to predict students' resilience level (Power). **To maintain social recognition and to save their 'face'** (or preserve public image) especially in Asian context rooted in Confucian values, students might practice resilience and bounce back from setbacks in times of difficulties or failures

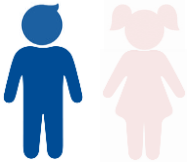


- Unlike the male students, **female students seem to be more reluctant in taking risk and would abide to social norms to avoid failure (Conformity).** Such practices could possibly develop their resilience **especially if they exhibit positive self-concept**, i.e., self-perception of behaviours, and abilities.
- To the female students, **developing mutual interdependence with their friends whom they considered as their in-group could possibly boost their inner resources (Benevolence)** to overcome adversities. Hence, **female students seem to place greater value on building supportive relationships with others and were more considerate as compared to male students.**

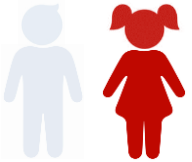
# The Pathways to Anticipated Success



- When both male and female students have clear goals or direction in mind (Self-Direction), **they tended to identify different pathways to pursue success. When necessary, they would also think of alternatives to overcome the challenges.**
- The desire to have **control over decisions, maintaining social recognition, and preserving public image (Power)** could possibly act as an impetus for students to anticipate success in their lives (Hope).

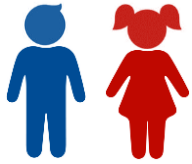


- For male students, the way they perceived traditions and customs (Tradition) could significantly predicts their outlook for success. In other words, **if the male students were positive about their lives or learning abilities, they tended to be more hopeful about their future.**
- Similarly, **if the male students had the desire to achieve personal success (Achievement), they would possess the will to succeed** and would strive to do better than others.

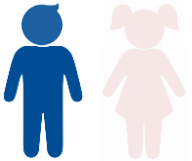


- For female students, they would remain hopeful and would **make every effort to do better when they had personal interest in doing what they were doing** (Security).

# I Can Do It! – Personal Efficacy to Reach Success



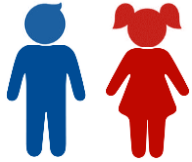
- For both male and female students, they would show their confidence in sharing and presenting their ideas to others (Efficacy) especially **when they believed that their views could possibly enhance or help those who were part of their in-groups** (Benevolence).
- The type of personal goals that the students choose (Self-direction) could suggest their perceived efficacy in reaching the planned goals. In other words, **if students set goals that were achievable, they might feel more assured in attaining success for the tasks.**
- The students' perception of the changes and challenges in life (Stimulation) could predict their efficacy in dealing with impediments to reach success. **If students were positive about the changes and challenges, they might be able to handle the situations better** and overcome them.
- Students' desire to assume the decision-making power (Power) could indicate the extent of belief in their ability to achieve success for the tasks. In other words, **if the students desire to take on the decision-making power, they might be confident in fulfilling the specific tasks.**



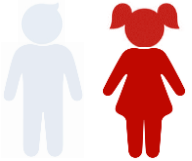
- **When male students sought fun at every opportunity and preferred to do things that gave pleasure (Hedonism), it could possibly have a negative prediction on their belief in achieving success for the tasks** (i.e., if male students looked for fun and only preferred to work on things that gave pleasure, the possibility of them achieving success in life could be lower as indicated by the negative loading).
- However, the **desire to achieve personal success and get ahead in life (Achievement) could perhaps provide male students a positive belief in their ability** to achieve success as they worked on the tasks.



# Maintaining a Positive Outlook in the Present and Future



- When **students want to get ahead in life (Achievement)**, they tended to have more **positive outlook** in their present situations (even amid the challenges) and for their future endeavours.
- **The desire to be leaders and be in control (Power)** seems to act as an impetus for students to **maintain optimistic** about the present and future even as they were facing various challenges.



- **Female students seem to be more broadminded about the opportunities given to the individuals** in life and in school (Universalism). With such perception, they were likely to be more optimistic towards their life and education.
- **Female students might be more innovative, thinking of new ideas of doing things** (Self-direction). These could possibly show their personal interest and motivation, signaling their positive outlook about life and school.
- Having said that, female students might still **prefer some form of stability in their lives such as their relationships with others and being organized** in their daily living (Security). With such perception, it could possibly provide a sense of positive outlook in their lives.

# Conclusion

# Conclusion

- Based on the findings and the discussion, it is clear that the confluence of various human values espoused by the students could potentially predict the different aspects of their psychological capital (i.e., Resilience, Hope, Self-efficacy, and Optimism).
- What is interesting from the findings is that while students' human values could predict their psychological capital, the cultural underpinnings could possibly influence their espoused human values. For example, the notion of collectivism exhibited by the students in how they protected their 'face', conformed to social norms, and developed mutual interdependency with others, could be an indication of cultural values.
- The findings suggest that students' human values could provide nuanced understanding on how they could better manage their educational transitions and life situations in the rapidly evolving context. With these nuanced insights, schools could organize programs to equip students with life skills such as goal setting with constructive planning, and relationship building to prepare them for transitions in life.

# Questions and Answers

Thank you