

Parental Neglect, Emotional Regulation and Psychological Adjustment Among Queer and Heterosexual Young Adults

Ipshita Kandulna¹, Dr. Tamanna Saxena²

¹Student M.A. Clinical psychology, Amity Institute of Psychology and Allied Sciences, Amity University, Uttar Pradesh

²Assistant Professor, Amity Institute of Psychology and Allied Sciences, Amity University, Uttar Pradesh

ABSTRACT

This study explores the intricate dynamics of parental neglect, emotional regulation, and psychological adjustment among queer and straight young adults in India. Using a sample of 108 participants, including 56 from the queer (LGBTQ) group and 52 from the heterosexual (straight) group. Statistical analyses of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient and Independent Samples T-Test were conducted to test hypotheses. Results reveal a significant negative correlation between parental neglect and psychological adjustment. However, no significant relationship was found between parental neglect and emotional regulation, suggesting a complex interplay between these factors. Additionally, the study examines specific forms of neglect, including physical, emotional, cognitive, and supervisory neglect, highlighting their differential impact on psychological adjustment. Furthermore, analysis of emotional regulation strategies reveals that cognitive reappraisal shows a weak negative correlation with adjustment, expressive suppression demonstrates a weak positive correlation, underscoring the importance of adaptive regulation strategies in promoting well-being. Interestingly, the study finds a significant difference in parental neglect between queer and straight young adults, emphasizing the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ individuals. However, no significant differences are observed in emotional regulation or psychological adjustment between the two groups. Overall, these findings contribute to our understanding of the complex interplay between parental neglect, emotional regulation, and psychological adjustment among young adults in India. By identifying key factors influencing mental health outcomes, the study informs the development of targeted interventions to promote resilience and foster supportive environments for all young adults, irrespective of sexual orientation.

Keywords: Parental neglect, Emotional regulation, Psychological adjustment, Queer, LGBTQ, Heterosexual.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Parental neglect profoundly affects emotional coping and psychological well-being in both queer and

straight Indian youth. Drawing from attachment theory and emotional regulation models, it's clear neglect hampers healthy coping development. Adverse childhood experiences and societal discrimination intensify these challenges for LGBTQ individuals, necessitating interventions promoting resilience and supportive environments. By addressing parental neglect and enhancing emotional regulation, inclusive spaces can be fostered, enabling all young adults to thrive psychologically, regardless of sexual orientation.

Concept of Parental Neglect:

Bowlby (1969) developed the Attachment Theory, which propounded that children have an evolutionary drive to construct a meaningful relationship with parental figures, based off of which they tend to create internal working models of beliefs. Ainsworth's (1978) strange situation experiments identified three attachment styles: Secure, Insecure-resistant, and Insecure-avoidant. Secure attachments stem from meeting developmental needs, fostering self-reliance and emotional expression. Insecure-resistant attachments result from unpredictable caregiving, leading to negative self-image and rejection. Insecure-avoidant attachments, linked to unavailable parenting, manifest in adult individualism and difficulty with emotional intimacy. Parental neglect can be defined as the failure of a parent or a caregiver to provide for the basic developmental needs of a child (Rose and Meezan, 1993). Additionally, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are linked to risky health behaviours in young adults (Maurya & Maurya, 2023). Parental neglect can make it difficult for children to develop healthy coping mechanisms (Meghrajani et al., 2023). Parental rejection of a child's sexual orientation or gender identity can lead to depression, substance abuse, and suicidal ideation (Katz-Wise et al., 2016). An individual's identity and expression should be ideally free of societal norms; however, this is far from reality in India as increased parental pressures are seen in parents of queer (LGBTQ) young adults.

Strauss et.al (1997) developed The Multidimensional Neglectful Behaviour Scale (MNBS) which identified 4 types of neglect:

- 1. Physical Neglect:** This involves failing to meet a child's basic physical needs for food, shelter, clothing, and medical care. (Mulder et al., 2018) and (Cohen et al., 2017) show that parents with mental health problems, substance abuse issues, or a history of neglect themselves are more likely to neglect their children's physical needs.
- 2. Emotional Neglect:** This involves failing to provide a child with love, affection, and emotional support. Studies by (Khaleque, 2015) and (Majumdar et al., 2017) explore how emotional neglect can lead to mood disorders, low self-esteem, and difficulties forming close relationships in adulthood.
- 3. Cognitive Neglect:** The parents fail to stimulate the child's intellect and facilitating learning through interaction or educational toys. Studies by Clément et al. (2016) and Geoffroy et al. (2016) suggest neglect may delay the development of the prefrontal cortex, impacting functions like attention, decision-making, and problem-solving.
- 4. Supervisory Neglect:** This refers to failing to properly watch over a child, exposing them to potential harm or leaving them alone for long periods. (Yang and Maguire-Jack, 2016) found factors like unprotected neighbourhoods, lack of childcare support, and parental health issues can increase the risk. (Bérubé et al., 2021) point out how the COVID-19 lockdown exacerbated this by placing extra supervisory burdens on parents.

Concept of Emotional Regulation:

Emotions may instinctually be triggered for example, being scared of sudden movements or may be a response to meaning making of the world for example feeling sadness when hearing cruel statements about ourselves (Gross, 2002). Emotional Regulation is defined by Gross (1998) as the process of influencing emotions that are being experienced in regards to, when they occur, how intensely it is felt and how it is expressed. Gross (1998) developed The Process Model of Emotional Regulation according to which individuals employ different strategies of emotional regulation that can be applied at different points of the generation process of emotions. Preece et al. (2023) developed The Emotional Regulation Questionnaire-Short form which assessed two emotional regulation strategies antecedent-focused Cognitive reappraisal and response-focused Expressive Suppression.

- 1) **Cognitive reappraisal**- the process of changing the thought about an event in order to change the impact of the emotion behind it. People who reported using reappraisal strategies experienced more positive emotions and wellbeing (Gross, 2002).
- 2) **Expressive Suppression**- the process of inhibiting the behavioural expression of the emotion. People who reported using suppressive strategies experienced lesser positive emotion and wellbeing (Gross, 2002).

Indian adolescents have a tendency to use Expressive Suppression which may be linked to cultural stigma and the need to maintain social harmony instead of true expression of feelings (Hapunda et al., 2019). There is an increased need to use positive emotional regulation strategies rather than negative ones to foster better psychological connection and mental health (Lavanya and Manjula, 2017). Parental neglect can negatively impact emotional regulation in young adults, with a potentially stronger effect on boys in the Indian context (Vijayabanu et al., 2022). There was higher use of negative emotion regulation strategies among transgenders, bisexuals, and gays, while lesbians exhibited higher positive cognitive strategies (Podder and Mukherjee, 2016). Emotional regulation is also an important factor of parental acceptance of LGBTQ individuals, greater cognitive flexibility and parental sanctification is linked to more parental acceptance (Rosenkrantz, 2018). Emotional suppression is followed by most LGBTQ young adults in the Indian context which can lead to mood disorders and substance abuse (Singh et al., 2022). Mental health interventions for sexual minority women should target internalised homophobia and maladaptive coping mechanisms (Kaysen et al., 2014).

Concept of Psychological Adjustment:

Psychological adjustment can be viewed as the ability to adapt thoughts, emotions, and behaviours in response to stressors while maintaining a sense of well-being (Kim et al., 2006). It can be seen as a balance which involves managing emotions, fulfilling needs, and meeting external expectations in a healthy way (Santor & Avison, 2001). For experiencing psychological adjustment positive emotions and having healthy relationships are crucial (Friedman & Wong, 2010). Those who employ adaptive coping mechanisms are typically better equipped to deal with stressors and may exhibit greater psychological adjustment compared to those who use maladaptive coping strategies, such as expressive suppression (Brewer et al., 2016). Adverse childhood experiences, such as abuse and neglect, can lead to maladaptive coping mechanisms, resulting in risky health behaviors and impaired psychological adjustment (Maurya & Maurya, 2023). Individuals with a higher emotional complexity often exhibit

greater mindfulness of their emotions, which can contribute to enhanced subjective well-being (Mandal et al., 2022). Studies show that young people who receive support from their families are less likely to experience depressive thoughts and suicidal tendencies (Sahoo et al., 2023). This highlights the urgency for intervention strategies that prioritize creating safe environments where LGBTQ youth feel comfortable disclosing their sexual orientation and gender identity, especially if there's a risk of family rejection (Katz-Wise et al., 2016). Hence, fostering an inclusive and accepting social environment is crucial for their well-being (Singh et al., 2022). Given the high prevalence of mental health disorders in India, urgent action is needed to improve access to effective interventions. This includes initiatives such as increasing the number of mental health professionals, decentralizing services, integrating mental health into primary care, and encouraging community participation (Meghrajani et al., 2023). Community-based interventions, particularly digital interventions in urban areas, hold promise for addressing mental health challenges (Mehra et al., 2022). A comprehensive review of research conducted from 2009 to 2019 on the mental health of LGBTQIA+ individuals in India revealed common struggles with mood disorders, stigma, limited access to healthcare, marginalization, and discrimination. However, it also highlighted the importance of resilience and social support as protective factors (Wandrekar et al., 2020).

Emmy Werner et al. (1950) developed The Resilience Theory suggested that despite adversities like stigma and discrimination, individuals can adapt and thrive. Protective factors such as supportive families and communities play a crucial role. Understanding individual contexts, including cultural norms, enhances comprehension of resilience. By applying resilience theory, we gain a nuanced understanding of how parental neglect shapes the psychological adjustment of young adults in India, offering avenues for interventions to promote their well-being. Cruz, R. A., et al (2019) introduced The Brief Adjustment Scale to promote measurement-based care which enhances quality of healthcare by ensuring that treatment is informed by assessments of patients' psychological adjustment. It measures key dimensions of psychological adjustment, such as emotional stability, social functioning, and overall well-being. This short assessment tool is highly beneficial as it can retract valuable information about the individual's psychological wellbeing in a short duration.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study addresses a significant research gap by exploring the intricate dynamics of parental neglect, emotional regulation, and psychological adjustment among queer and straight young adults in India. Existing literature lacks focused studies on these intersecting factors within the Indian context, hindering understanding and intervention efforts. By delving into these dynamics, the research aims to provide valuable insights into the nuanced experiences of young adults, irrespective of sexual orientation. Through comprehensive statistical analyses and exploration of various forms of neglect and emotional regulation strategies, the study seeks to uncover key factors influencing mental health outcomes. By bridging this gap, the research contributes to the development of targeted interventions aimed at promoting resilience and fostering supportive environments for all young adults in India, regardless of sexual orientation.

PARTICIPANTS

A total number of 108 young adults residing in India, within the age range of 18-29 years participated in this study. Accordingly, 79.6% were in the 18-24 age range and were in the 25-29 age range. Of the 108 participants, 56 participants identified as Queer and 52 participants identified as Straight (Heterosexual). The Queer comparative group consisted of LGBTQ+ individuals who identified with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (including all other sexual orientations like Asexual, Pansexual, Non-binary) sexual orientations. The Straight comparative group consisted of individuals who identified as Heterosexual. Out of 108 participants, 83% were assigned female at birth, 15.7% were assigned male at birth and 0.9% were assigned intersex at birth. The educational background of the participants included 57.4% pursuing Bachelor's degree, 26.9% pursuing Master's degree, 13.9% pursuing High School and 1.9% pursuing higher education. Considering the type of residence, 95.4% stayed in the Urban setting, 2.8% in the Suburban setting and 1.9% in the Rural setting. In the study, 61.1% participants were currently living with parents or caregivers and 38.9% were not currently living with parents or caregivers. Regarding the participant's household situation growing up, 70.4% were brought up in a nuclear family, 24.1% in joint family, 1.9% in adoptive/ foster family, 0.9% by mother and grandparents, 0.9% in nuclear family with grandparents, 0.9% in both joint and nuclear family systems and 0.9% by a single parent.

MEASURES

Parental Neglect- The Multidimensional Neglectful Behaviour Scale (MNBS) Form A8. Developed by Murray A. Straus, E. Milling Kinard, Linda Meyer Williams in 1990. With number of items 8 form version of Form A with high correlation. On a Likert scale- 4 point (strongly agree-strongly disagree). Which intended to measure neglect of four basic developmental needs: (1) physical needs such as food, clothing, shelter, medical care; (2) emotional needs such as affection, companionship; (3) supervisory needs such as setting limits, attending to misbehaviour; and (4) cognitive needs such as reading to the child, and explaining things. With internal consistency reliability High Alpha coefficient = .89 and Construct Validity: Same as the Form A.

Emotional Regulation- Emotional Regulation Questionnaire- Short Form (ERQ-S). Developed by: Preece, Petrova, Mehta, & Gross in 2023. With number of items: 6 items short form of original. On Likert Scale- 7 point (Strongly disagree-neutral- strongly agree). To assess habitual use of two common emotion regulation strategies, cognitive reappraisal (i.e., changing the way one is thinking about a situation in order to change its emotional impact) and expressive suppression (i.e., suppressing behavioural expression of emotion). With Internal consistency reliability: Acceptable level Cronbach's coefficients ($\geq .70$) and Concurrent validity: Performed well on every marker tested.

Psychological Adjustment: Brief Adjustment Scale- 6 (BASE-6). Developed by: Cruz, R. A., Peterson, A. P., Fagan, C., Black, W., & Cooper, L. in 2019 with number of items: 6 item short form of the Outcome Questionnaire. On Likert Scale: 7-point (Not at all-Somewhat-Extremely). To assess the of General Psychological Adjustment of an individual for Measurement-Based Care. With Internal consistency reliability: Good (.87-.93), Test-retest Reliability: Good (intraclass correlation .77) and Convergent validity: Moderate to high with the Outcome Questionnaire -45.2 total score ($r .66 -.81, p .001$).

PROCEDURE

Participants were selected via random and purposive sampling, approached in-person or online. A survey format gathered demographic details and measures via Google Forms or printouts. Informed consent was ensured. Participants were encouraged to share the survey. Measures included parental neglect (MNBS), emotional regulation (ERQ-S), and psychological adjustment (BASE-6). Data were entered into Excel, scored, and analyzed using SPSS. Independent T-tests compared queer and straight groups on all scales. Correlation analysis compared the variables. Results were discussed alongside limitations and implications.

RESULTS

Statistical analysis was conducted on 108 participants, 56 were from the Queer (LGBTQ) group and 52 were from the Straight (Heterosexual) group. To prove the underlying hypotheses of this study, Pearson's Correlation Coefficient and Independent Samples T- test were employed.

Pearson's bivariate correlation was conducted at 95% confidence interval. Descriptive statistics of the variables Parental neglect which uses the Multidimensional Parental Neglectful Behaviour Scale (MNBS), Emotional Regulation which uses the Emotional Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ) and Psychological Adjustment which uses the Brief Adjustment Scale (BASE) along with the mean, standard deviation and sample size was generated. The Descriptive Statistics is seen on Table 1.

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>N</i>
MNBS	25.636	3.7603	107
ERQ	28.5234	6.61380	107
BASE	26.215	9.2257	107

Note: MNBS is Multidimensional Parental Neglectful Behaviour Scale used to measure Parental Neglect, ERQ is Emotional Regulation Questionnaire used to measure Emotional regulation and BASE is Brief Adjustment Scale used to measure Psychological Adjustment.

Pearson's bivariate correlation was conducted at 95% confidence interval, to study the association among all the three variables (see table 2). Firstly, it was hypothesised that there will be significant association between Parental neglect and psychological adjustment in both the queer and the straight young adults' group. The findings showed a moderate negative correlation between parental neglect and psychosocial adjustment, with a coefficient value $r=-0.323$, $P<0.01$. The second hypothesis stated that there will be a relationship between Parental neglect and Emotional regulation. However, the results indicate a non-significant relationship between the two variables ($r=-0.116$, $P<0.001$). The third hypothesis of attempted to prove a significant relationship between psychological adjustment and Emotional regulation amongst queer and straight young adults' group, The coefficients of the correlation between psychological adjustment and Emotional regulation were $r= 0.073$, $P<0.01$, indicating a non-significant relationship. Refer to Table 2.

Table 2: Correlations

	<i>MNBS</i>	<i>ERQ</i>	<i>BASE</i>
<i>MNBS</i>	1	-.116	-.323**
<i>ERQ</i>	-.116	1	.073
<i>BASE</i>	-.323**	.073	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
 Note: *MNBS* is Multidimensional Parental Neglectful Behaviour Scale, *ERQ* is Emotional Regulation Questionnaire and *BASE* is Brief Adjustment Scale.

Pearson’s correlation was also employed on the sub-sections of the Multidimensional Neglectful Behaviour Scale- FormA8 which included Cognitive Needs (CN), Supervisory needs (SN), Emotional needs (EN) and Physical needs (PN); the Emotional Regulation Questionnaire-Short Form subsections which included Cognitive Reappraisal (CR) and Expressive Suppression (ES); and the Brief Adjustment Scale-6 (BASE).

Results indicated that there is weak negative correlation between Cognitive needs and Psychological Adjustment ($r = -0.310, P < 0.01$); and between Emotional needs and Psychological adjustment ($r = -0.353, P < 0.01$). There was also a weak positive correlation between Expressive Suppression and Psychological adjustment ($r = 0.262, P < 0.01$). Physical needs did not show correlation with Psychological adjustment. Statistically weak negative correlation was observed between Supervisory needs and Psychological adjustment ($r = -0.215, P < 0.05$) and between Cognitive reappraisal and Psychological adjustment ($r = -0.191, P < 0.05$) but it was at 0.05 level of significance, it may not be seen as highly reliable. Refer to Table 3 for correlation between subsections.

Table 3: Correlations between subsections

		CN	SN	EN	PN	CR	ES	BASE
CN	Pearson Correlation	1	.342**	.674**	.243*	.042	-.183	-.310**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.012	.665	.059	.001
	N	107	107	107	107	107	107	107
SN	Pearson Correlation	.342**	1	.304**	.484**	.162	-.133	-.215*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.001	.000	.095	.172	.026
	N	107	107	107	107	107	107	107
EN	Pearson Correlation	.674**	.304**	1	.184	-.038	-.191*	-.353**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001		.058	.699	.048	.000
	N	107	107	107	107	107	107	107
PN	Pearson Correlation	.243*	.484**	.184	1	-.035	-.058	-.011
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.012	.000	.058		.719	.556	.910
	N	107	107	107	107	107	107	107
CR	Pearson Correlation	.042	.162	-.038	-.035	1	.224*	-.191*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.665	.095	.699	.719		.021	.048
	N	107	107	107	107	107	107	107

ES	Pearson Correlation	-.183	-.133	-.191*	-.058	.224*	1	.262**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.059	.172	.048	.556	.021		.006
	N	107	107	107	107	107	107	107
BASE	Pearson Correlation	-.310**	-.215*	-.353**	-.011	-.191*	.262**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.026	.000	.910	.048	.006	
	N	107	107	107	107	107	107	107
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).								
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).								
Note: all the abbreviation are mentioned in the paragraph above.								

Independent Samples T-test was employed to determine the difference between the means of the queer and straight group in the context of the three variables parental neglect, emotional regulation and emotional regulation. Parental neglect was experienced more by straight group (26.36) than the queer group (24.94), with a mean difference value of -1.41. Emotional regulation strategies were adopted more by queer group (29.32) than the straight group (27.67), with a mean difference of 1.65. Psychological adjustment was seen more in queer group (27.50) than in the straight group (24.84), which a mean difference value of 2.66. See table 4 for group statistics.

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PN	Queer	55	24.9455	2.89583	.39047
	Straight	52	26.3654	4.41045	.61162
PsyAdj	Queer	55	27.5091	8.73663	1.17805
	Straight	52	24.8462	9.61083	1.33278
ER	Queer	55	29.3273	6.21842	.83849
	Straight	52	27.6731	6.96693	.96614

Note: PN is Parental neglect, PsyAdj is Psychological Adjustment and ER is Emotional regulation.

The Independent Samples T-test revealed that there is a statistically significant difference in Parental neglect between Queer and Straight young adults ($t = -1.979$, $p = 0.050$). It also did not find a statistically significant difference in emotional regulation between Queer and Straight young adults ($t = 1.501$, $p = 0.136$). There was no statistically significant difference in psychological adjustment between Queer and Straight young adults ($t = 1.297$, $p = 0.197$). See table 5 for results of Independent Samples T-test.

Table 5: Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
PN	Equal variances assumed	3.285	.073	-1.979	105	.050	-1.41993	.71752	-2.84263	.00277
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.957	87.343	.054	-1.41993	.72564	-2.86213	.02227
PsyAdj	Equal variances assumed	.584	.447	1.501	105	.136	2.66294	1.77401	-.85460	6.18047
	Equal variances not assumed			1.497	102.646	.137	2.66294	1.77879	-.86502	6.19090
ER	Equal variances assumed	1.917	.169	1.297	105	.197	1.65420	1.27516	-.87422	4.18261
	Equal variances not assumed			1.293	102.071	.199	1.65420	1.27925	-.88318	4.19157

Note: PN is Parental neglect, PsyAdj is Psychological Adjustment and ER is Emotional regulation.

DISCUSSION

Exploring the multifaceted interrelationship between parental interactions with children, their subsequent development of emotional coping mechanisms in later stages of life and the affect it has on overall psychological well-being, is a crucial step in understanding the state of mental health in the youth population. Self-expression in the Indian society is applauded only to the extent that it does not challenge cultural norms. The minority group of the Indian Queer (LGBTQIA+) population largely struggle with self-expression as finding an accepting, safe and comfortable environment is very rare, whereas, for the majority Straight (Heteronormative) population it is relatively easier to be accommodated by society. Understanding differences in experiences of parental neglect between the

queer group and straight group of young adults, along with the emotional regulation strategies used to cope can lead to a better understanding of the state of mental health of these populations in the Indian context.

Viewed from the perspectives of Attachment theory, Model of Emotional Regulation and Resilience theory, it is evident that the effects of parental neglect manifests differently in the queer and straight group which leads to development of varied emotional regulation strategies and subsequently add to a broader understanding of psychological adjustment of young adults in India. In this context, the study explores the intersectionality of sexual orientation, family dynamics, emotional development and psychological wellbeing; which remains underexplored within the Indian subcontinent.

There is a significant research gap in focused studies on parental and emotional neglect, and emotional regulation among queer and straight young adults in India. Existing literature largely overlooks this intersectionality within the Indian context, despite the cultural nuances and societal attitudes towards LGBTQ+ individuals. A lack of empirical investigation into how familial dynamics affect emotional well-being and regulation among young adults of diverse sexual orientations hinders understanding and intervention efforts. Addressing this gap is crucial for developing targeted support services and interventions to promote the mental health and resilience of LGBTQ+ youth population in India.

The current research aims to investigate the complex dynamics between parental neglect, emotional regulation and psychological adjustment in the queer and the straight young adults' group, within the Indian context. It is an attempt to identify and compare parental neglect behaviours experienced by young adults, investigating differences between queer and straight individuals. It also examines the diverse emotional regulation strategies used by young adults and their impact on psychological well-being. It explores how experiences of parental neglect and the chosen emotional regulation strategy contribute to overall psychological adjustment, discerning any disparities between queer and straight individuals. It shed light on the distinct challenges young adults face in navigating familial dynamics and emotional regulation within diverse sexual orientations.

Accordingly, the study hypothesises significant differences and relationships among parental neglect, emotional regulation, and psychological adjustment within queer and straight young adult groups. It anticipates that parental neglect will differ significantly between these groups, alongside emotional regulation and psychological adjustment. Significant relationships are also expected to emerge between parental neglect and emotional regulation, parental neglect and psychological adjustment, as well as psychological adjustment and emotional regulation among both queer and straight young adults.

Through comprehensive statistical analyses, by using IBM SPSS Pearson's Correlation Coefficient and Independent Samples T-test, several key findings emerged which highlight the nuanced experiences of these populations. These findings serve as a beacon, guiding future research endeavours and informing the development of tailored interventions aimed at fostering the well-being of LGBTQ+ youth in India.

The findings reveal that straight young adults reported higher levels of parental neglect compared to their queer counterparts, contrary to common beliefs. This challenges the idea that queer individuals are more prone to parental neglect due to societal stigma. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the diverse experiences of young adults from different sexual orientations in India.

Interestingly, the study found no significant difference in how queer and straight young adults regulate their emotions. This suggests that both groups may rely on similar strategies to manage their feelings,

regardless of sexual orientation. It's possible that individual coping mechanisms and support networks play a significant role in shaping emotional regulation practices among young adults in India.

Moreover, the study uncovered that there was no notable difference in psychological adjustment between queer and straight young adults. This challenges the assumption that queer individuals are inherently less psychologically resilient due to societal discrimination or family dynamics. Instead, it highlights the strength and resilience of young adults in overcoming adversity.

In terms of relationships between variables, the study showed a clear link between parental neglect and psychological adjustment, indicating the harmful impact of neglect on mental health outcomes for both queer and straight individuals. However, it did not find significant connections between parental neglect and emotional regulation, nor between emotional regulation and psychological adjustment. This suggests that while parental neglect directly affects psychological adjustment, its influence on emotional regulation may be more intricate and multifaceted.

Overall, this study provides valuable insights into the nuanced experiences of parental neglect, emotional regulation, and psychological adjustment among young adults in India, regardless of sexual orientation. By challenging stereotypes and highlighting the resilience of young people, these findings underscore the importance of tailored mental health interventions and support services for diverse populations. Further research is needed to delve deeper into the underlying mechanisms and contextual factors shaping these relationships.

LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The study challenges assumptions about parental neglect among queer and straight young adults in India, with straight individuals reporting higher neglect levels. This highlights the need for nuanced interventions addressing parental neglect's impact on mental health, regardless of sexual orientation. Despite no significant differences in emotional regulation and psychological adjustment between groups, universal support for emotional regulation skills is crucial. Cultural sensitivity in interventions promoting familial acceptance and emotional regulation is essential for young adults' mental well-being in India. Limitations include potential biases from self-report measures, a cross-sectional design limiting causal conclusions, and oversimplified cultural interactions with emotional regulation. Comprehensive methodologies and diverse samples are necessary for future research.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the complex interplay between parental neglect, emotional regulation, and psychological adjustment among queer and straight young adults in India. It underscores the importance of understanding how familial dynamics impact emotional well-being and coping strategies, particularly within the context of diverse sexual orientations. Despite valuable insights, the study faces several limitations. The complexity of emotional regulation may not have been fully captured by the study measures, and the heterogeneity within the sample could have obscured true relationships between variables. Reliance on self-report measures introduces potential biases, and the cross-sectional design limits causal conclusions. Furthermore, cultural nuances and individual differences may have oversimplified the intricacies of emotional regulation, while limitations in measurement tools could have affected the study's outcomes. Despite these limitations, the findings

provide valuable implications for intervention efforts aimed at promoting mental well-being among young adults in India, emphasizing the need for culturally sensitive approaches addressing parental neglect, enhancing emotional regulation skills, and fostering familial acceptance. Moving forward, comprehensive methodologies and diverse samples are essential to deepen our understanding of the complex dynamics at play and develop more effective interventions tailored to the needs of diverse populations.

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