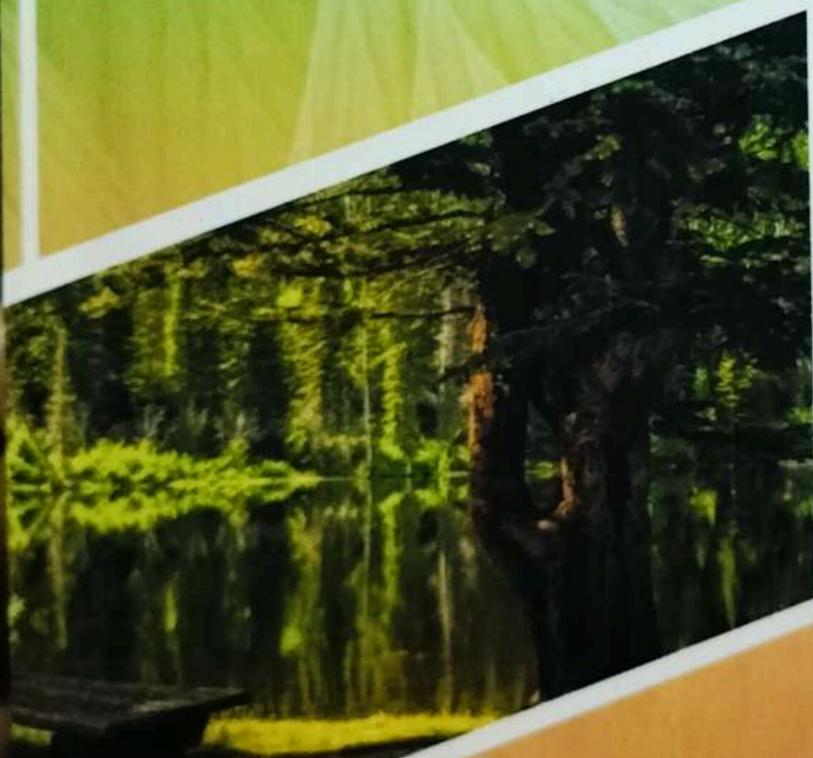


CONTEMPORARY DISCOURSES:  
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**Dr. M. Shanthi**

# From Behn to Burke: Feminism has come a long way!

Ashwini Kumar

Assistant Professor of English  
Carmel College of Arts, Science, and Commerce for Women

## Abstract

One may attribute this phenomenon to a lack of prudent awareness or excessive exposure to sensational journalism, but it is a heart-wrenching reality that an 'ism' that aimed to elevate women to a position of equity, on par with their dominating male counterparts, is being largely rejected by women themselves. Centuries of systematic male dominance, the marginalization of women, and the fragile but essential spark of Feminism, advocating for equal gender rights, have already garnered negative and hateful connotations among both men and women. It's understandable that men may criticize Feminism as an immediate defense mechanism when they feel threatened. However, it's disheartening that some women find it shameful to identify themselves with the label of Feminism, especially considering that it is what allows most women to voice their opinions in a patriarchal world. The world has witnessed multiple waves of Feminism, each credited with addressing crucial aspects of women's empowerment, beginning with political participation and extending to socio-cultural relationships between genders.

This research aims to delve into the minds of women who disassociate themselves from the term "Feminists" and to record and analyse the reasons behind this. While most women believe in gender equality and freedom of choice, it's astonishing that many of them hesitate to embrace the term 'Feminist.' This contradiction arises when empowered women enjoy the freedoms and rights that were initially denied to women, yet they refuse to acknowledge their connection to a movement that stands



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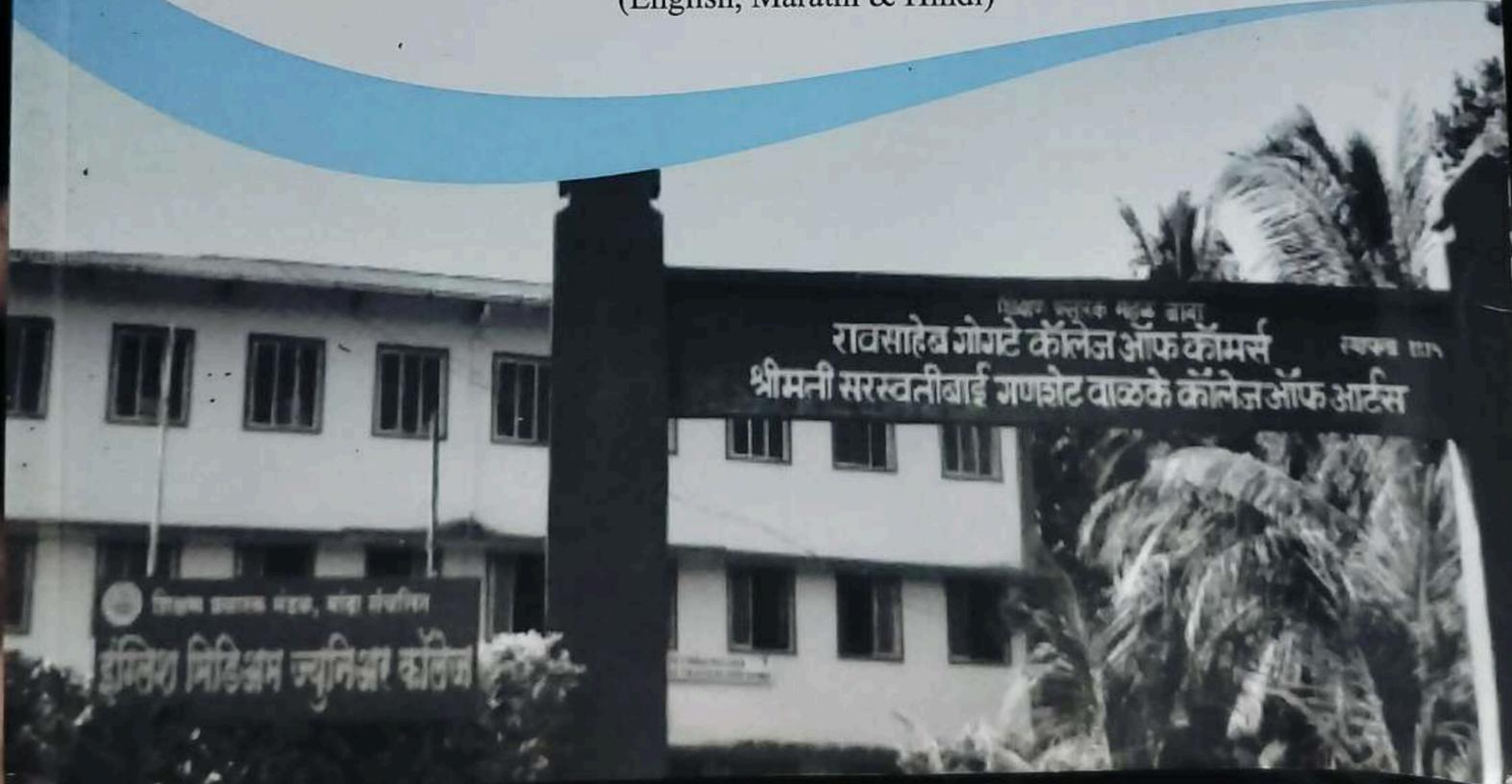
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Vaibhav Singavi  
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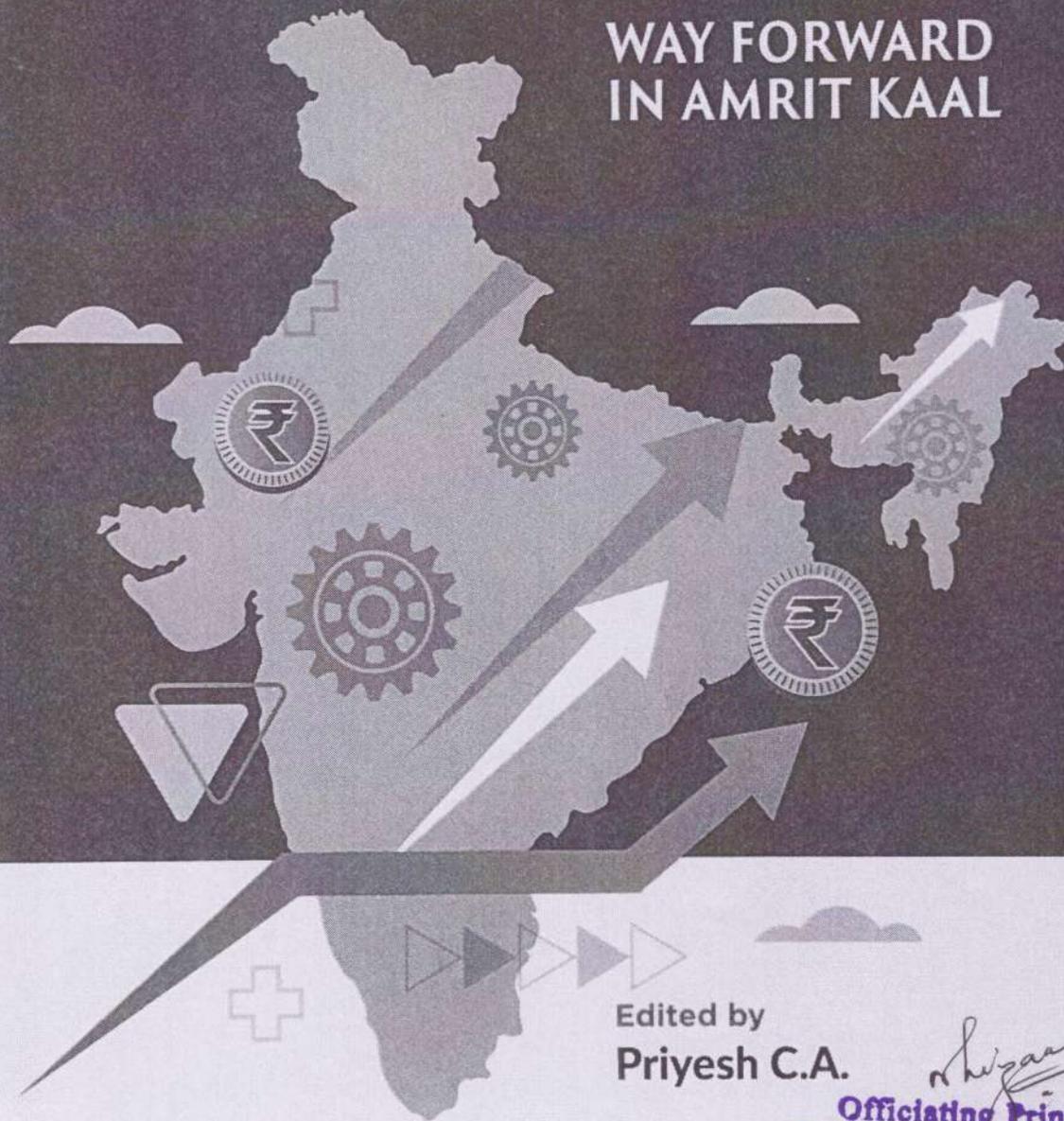
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**WAY FORWARD  
IN AMRIT KAAL**



Edited by  
**Priyesh C.A.**

*Shigamach*  
**Officiating Principal**  
Carmel College of Arts, Science &  
Commerce for Women  
Novers-Gos

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## WELLNESS TOURISM PRODUCTS AND SERVICES FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH - OPPORTUNITIES IN THE AMRIT KAAL WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KERALA

Manju T.K.

### Abstract

India, a diverse tourism destination with a rich cultural heritage, is an important tourist attraction in the world, significantly contributing to economic development in terms of employment, income generation, forex earnings, and livelihoods for many rural and urban populations. Tourism motivations vary according to individual, source, and destination-based attributes, necessitating the emergence of diverse niche tourism segments. Wellness tourism is an important form of tourism as it provides holistic experiences that promote tourists' well-being. Ayurveda promotes wellness by providing complete care to the body, mind, and soul, through a holistic approach. Ayurvedic health tourists spend a reasonably long time at the center to complete the therapy process, leading to longer occupancy. The first part provides a conceptual understanding of wellness and the distinction between health, medicine, and wellness tourism.

Dr. Manju T.K. is Associate Professor of Commerce at Carmel College of Arts, Science and Commerce for Women, Nuvem, Goa.

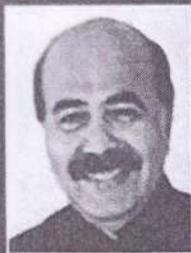
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"The concept of "Amrit Kaal" emerges as a fundamental story of transformation, aspiration, and strategic reimagining of our country. The papers in this volume reflect an inclusive approach for understanding India's contemporary challenges and opportunities. What distinguishes this volume from its forward-looking perspective is the interdisciplinary nature of these studies. Researchers have discussed various domains, such as economic policy, environmental sustainability, agricultural innovation, tourism, healthcare, and institutional frameworks, demonstrating the interconnected nature of India's developmental challenges. This approach reflects an advanced understanding that requires all-inclusive, integrated strategies.

Moreover, the papers stress India's potential to emerge as a global leader by leveraging its demographic dividends, technological innovations, and deep-rooted cultural resilience. It is proof of intellectual rigor and futuristic thinking that will be instrumental in shaping India's journey through Amrit Kaal. Amrit Kaal represents more than a landmark; it represents a strategic moment in which historical momentum intersects with visionary potential. The compiled research demonstrates this through a systematic exploration across multiple sectors, revealing pathways for sustainable and inclusive development. The volume serves both as a reference for aspiring scholars and as a strategic roadmap for policymakers. It provides a comprehensive view of the emerging economic landscape that navigates complex global challenges. The authors capture the complex balance between historical context and future possibilities. As India continues to emerge on a global stage, this volume stands as evidence of intellectual excellence and innovative thinking driving the nation forward. It captures a moment of transformation, offering both reflection and direction for the journey ahead."

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## The Mediatory Role of Emotional Intelligence in Resilience

Dr. Michelle Fernandes\* & Mrs. Lynette Da Silva Fortes\*\*

### ABSTRACT

*Emotional intelligence (EI) plays a vital role in human functioning. EI is associated with better mental health outcomes, adaptive coping strategies, and enhanced interpersonal relationships. Resilience also plays a crucial role in enhancing an individual's well-being by enabling them to effectively manage challenges and maintain an overall positive outlook on life. This chapter delves into the nexus between emotional intelligence and resilience, exploring how emotional intelligence can serve as a catalyst for transforming adversity into strength. Through a review of empirical research and theoretical frameworks, this chapter aims to elucidate the profound impact of emotional intelligence on resilience.*

**Keywords:** *Emotional Intelligence, Managing Emotions, Problem Solving Skills, Resilience, Well-Being.*

### THE MEDIATORY ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN RESILIENCE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EI)

Emotions have been an essential component in human functioning since birth. At birth, an infant has a fully developed amygdala that facilitates the experience of emotions (Power & Dalgleish, 2015). Some theorists consider emotions as signs of an individual's relation to their changing environment (Lazarus, 1991). On the other hand, Power & Dalgleish (2015) regard emotions as lying on a continuum ranging from positive to negative affect. Although there are different and diverse viewpoints about the concept of emotion, it can generally be interpreted as an individual's 'experience and expression of affective information' (Greenberg & Safran, 1987).

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The term Emotional Intelligence was coined by Peter Salovey and John Mayer (1990) and defined EI as “the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions.” Since then, several theories have come up. and currently there is no consensus on a single definition of the concept.

Goleman (1998), another pioneer in the field of EI, defines emotional intelligence as “a person’s ability to recognize personal feelings and those of others, along with the ability to manage emotions within themselves and in their relationships with others.”

Mayer and Salovey (1990) divided emotional intelligence abilities into four areas in their four-branch model: (i) perceiving and expressing emotions; (ii) assimilating emotions in thought; (iii) understanding emotions; (iv) reflectively regulating emotions. On the other hand, Goleman (1998) divided emotional intelligence into five emotional competencies: (i) self-awareness, (ii) mood management, (iii) self-motivation, (iv) empathy, and (v) managing relationships. Thus, EI encompasses the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and utilise emotions effectively. It consists of several components, including emotional awareness, empathy, self-regulation, and interpersonal skills.

EI as a behavioural model was raised to prominence with Daniel Goleman's 1995 book called 'Emotional Intelligence'. Emotional intelligence has been operationalised in a multitude of different ways in the literature. In fact, researchers posit that the term ‘emotional intelligence’ is frequently confused, hence mandating a proper conceptualisation and explanation of the construct (Mayer et al., 2008).

Research has consistently shown that high levels of EI are associated with better mental health outcomes, adaptive coping strategies, and enhanced interpersonal relationships. In fact, EI is a significant predictor of subjective well-being (Andrei et al., 2016), interpersonal relationships with romantic partners (Malouff et al., 2013), social support (Goldenberg et al., 2006), and health (Mikolajczak et al., 2015; Martins et al., 2010)

## RESILIENCE

Resilience refers to the ability to cope with adversity and adapt to challenges or changes. It is the ability to show positive adaptation in spite of significant life adversities and the ability to adapt to difficult and challenging life experiences. Resilience not only allows the individual to cope and recover but also to prepare for and face the next stressful event. It is the ability to bounce back, take on difficult challenges and still find meaning in life, rise above adversity, cope when things look bleak, tap into hope, and transform unfavourable situations into wisdom and insight.

Resilience acts as a protective mechanism, helping individuals maintain psychological well-being and cope with difficulties, contributing to increased levels of happiness and overall well-being (Beri & Dorji, 2021). Resilience is not just about bouncing back from setbacks; it also emphasises the importance of fostering supportive relationships and environments. Resilience also plays a crucial role in enhancing individuals’ well-being by enabling effective

management of challenges and maintaining a positive outlook on life. (Beri & Dorji, 2021; Stewart-Brown & Sarah, 2018)

Resilience therefore the capacity of a dynamic system to adapt successfully in the context of significant threats to system function, viability, or development (Masten, 2013).

Resilience has also been associated with well-being, satisfaction with life, affect, self-concept, and engagement (Sagone & Caroli, 2014; Bajaj & Pande, 2016; Rodríguez-Fernández et al., 2016). Likewise, resilience has been found to be related to personal competence, high standards, and tenacity; trust in one's instincts; tolerance of negative affect; and strengthening effects of stress; positive acceptance of change, and secure relationships; control; and spiritual influences (Connor & Davidson, 2003).

## CHARACTERISTICS OF RESILIENT PEOPLE

Characteristics of resilient people include awareness, self-control, problem-solving skills, and social support. Resilient people are aware of situations, their emotional reactions, and the behavior of those around them.

By remaining aware, they can maintain control of a situation and think of new ways to tackle problems. In many cases, resilient people emerge stronger after such difficulties. While people vary dramatically in the coping skills they use when confronting a crisis, researchers have identified some key characteristics of resilience. The basic characteristics of resilient people are (Cherry, 2024):

1. **Problem-Solving Skills:** Problem-solving skills are essential for resilience. (Ertekin Pinar et al., 2018). When a crisis emerges, resilient people are able to spot the solution that will lead to a safe outcome. In dangerous situations, less resilient people sometimes develop tunnel vision. They fail to note important details or take advantage of opportunities. Resilient individuals are able to calmly and rationally look at a problem and envision a successful solution.
2. **Strong Social Connections:** Resilient people have a network of friends, family members, co-workers, and online support groups to keep them socially connected. (Somasundaram & Devamani, 2016)
3. **Survivor Mentality:** Resilient people avoid thinking like victim of circumstance and instead look for ways to resolve the problem. While the situation may be unavoidable, they stay focused on a positive outcome.
4. **Emotional Regulation:** Resilient people have the ability to recognize that they are having an emotional response and to understand what is causing the response. This helps them better handle emotions and cope with the situation at hand.
5. **Self-Compassion:** Resilient people are also compassionate toward themselves. They tend to notice when they need to take a break and can accept their emotions. Self-compassion can also help boost overall health and resilience.

## THE LINK BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND RESILIENCE

An individual's ability to effectively confront and cope with a problem depends on their ability to regulate their emotions (Aldea & Rice, 2006). This relationship is further supported by research indicating that emotional intelligence is a key protective factor for psychological resilience (Shuo et al., 2022). Greater emotional intelligence is associated with higher levels of effective problem-solving, such as allowing individuals to create a multitude of problem-solving perspectives (Salovey et al., 2000). In addition, individuals who demonstrate high EI also seem to be more adaptable at stress management, decision-making, and faster mood recovery after disturbing and stressful experiences (Bar-On, 2001; Bar-On & Parker, 2000; Mayer et al., 2000).

Research has also demonstrated that EI facilitates stress resilience (Schneider et al., 2013). In the same vein, Armstrong et al. (2011) revealed that EI was related to psychological resilience. Salovey et al. (2002) confirm that people with better EI fare better with the emotional requests of stressful situations as they are able to accurately perceive and appraise their emotions, know how and when to express their feelings, and can effectively regulate their mood states. Cejudo et al. (2016) confirm that people with a high level of EI show a greater degree of resilience.

Having increased emotional intelligence affords individuals more resources, allowing them to utilize the most adaptive problem-solving coping strategy for that particular situation (Bar-On, 1997; Saklofske et al., 2007; Salovey et al., 2002). Research indicates that individuals with high emotional awareness can accurately identify and label their emotions, which is crucial for coping with adversity. Such individuals are more likely to engage in emotion-focused coping strategies, leading to better psychological adjustment and resilience.

Thus, the ability to regulate one's emotions and impulses is a hallmark of emotional intelligence. Resilient individuals exhibit effective self-regulation, managing stressors without being overwhelmed. They can modulate their emotional responses, maintain focus amidst distractions, and make sound decisions even in adverse circumstances.

Strong interpersonal skills, such as communication, conflict resolution, and collaboration, contribute significantly to resilience. Building and nurturing supportive relationships fosters a sense of belonging and security, enhancing an individual's capacity to cope with trauma and bounce back from setbacks.

In terms of the relationship between EI and stress, the literature confirms that emotionally intelligent people show less perceived stress. According to Zysberg et al. (2017), stress levels mediate the association between EI and burnout. Likewise, Jung et al. (2016) found an inverse correlation between EI and self-reported stress. Similarly, Urquijo et al. (2016) suggested that EI enhances well-being, diminishing the experience of stress.

## PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Emotional intelligence plays a significant role in enhancing resilience (Šimunjak, 2023; Sharma & Tiwari, 2023). Studies also suggest that emotional intelligence measures directly impact career success and employee resilience, with

adaptability being a key predictor of success. Furthermore, the development of positive adaptation skills and effective decision-making is linked to emotional intelligence and resilience.

1. **Enhanced self-awareness:** EI training often starts with developing self-awareness, which helps individuals recognize their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors. This awareness enables a better understanding of personal strengths and areas for improvement, leading to increased resilience.
2. **Improved self-regulation:** EI training focuses on teaching skills related to managing emotions and behaviors effectively. This includes strategies like impulse control, stress management, and adaptability, all of which are crucial for building resilience in the face of challenges.
3. **Better interpersonal relationships:** EI training emphasizes empathy, communication skills, and conflict resolution, which contribute to building and maintaining positive relationships. Strong social support networks are an important factor in enhancing resilience.
4. **Cognitive Flexibility:** EI training often involves exercises to enhance cognitive flexibility, which is the ability to adapt thinking patterns and perspectives. This skill helps individuals approach problems and setbacks with a more open and adaptable mindset, enhancing resilience.
5. **Reduced negative impact of stress:** By developing emotional awareness and regulation skills, individuals undergoing EI training may experience a reduced negative impact of stress on their mental and emotional well-being. This can contribute to greater resilience in handling stressful situations.
6. **Long-term benefits:** Research suggests that the benefits of EI training on resilience can be long-lasting, as individuals continue to apply and refine these skills in various life situations.

Thus, in conclusion, it can be noted that people who have high levels of emotional intelligence perceive themselves to be more resilient, that is, more capable of coping with adversity and dealing with negative experiences. High levels of emotional perception and facilitation lead to individuals being aware of their emotions in stressful situations and adapting their behavior and thoughts to communicate in a prosocial manner. Understanding emotions will help improve empathy, which in turn will help strengthen social relations and support. Finally, people with good emotional regulation and control are more likely to respond to personal distress with a more positive attitude and helpful coping skills, thus, improving resilience and helping people respond to life stresses without succumbing to them. Conversely, it has also been found that highly resilient people actively enhance their positive emotionality through altruism, humor, relaxation, and optimism, thus showing that emotional intelligence and resilience have a reciprocal relationship with each other.

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**Title: Navigating the digital age: Unmasking its impact on adolescent development**

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**ABSTRACT**

Social media in the last two decades has invaded and intruded almost all aspects of human life. Its impact has been more so on the life of adolescents, with its prevalence reaching unprecedented heights shaping their identity, relationships and behaviour. While social media undoubtedly offers many benefits, such as promoting communication, expanding social networks, and facilitating access to information, it also presents unique challenges and potential risks to adolescent development. This chapter attempts to explore the complex relationship between social media and adolescent psychosocial development along with a review of the benefits and risks of social media in adolescents' development and discusses the challenges and opportunities arising from social media. The chapter also explores the possible ways of regulating the use of social media to the optimum advantage for adolescents to ensure a healthy balance between online and offline activities.

**Key words:** *Adolescents, social media, psychological development, cyberbullying*

## **Introduction**

The digital revolution has altered how we live, work and even interact with each other. The availability of social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter and TikTok to name a few has made it possible to lead a life of constant connection and easy access to any information around the clock. This unparalleled access to technology has resulted in a huge change in the way adolescents socialize, communicate and relate with each other.

### **Adolescence: A period of profound change**

According to Xu (2019), adolescents are in a phase of transition that can last anywhere from 10 to 22 years old, depending on the cultural setting. This is a period marked by rapid physical development, as well as extensive learning, especially in social and emotional areas. The hormonal changes that lead to the onset of puberty and subsequently sexual maturity results in significant changes in the brains' structure and function. These changes in the brain play an important role in an adolescent's behaviour especially in their emotions, perception of rewards, engaging in risk taking behaviour and most importantly in their social relationships.

Although the changes are biological, they do not change on their own accord, but through the interaction with the immediate socio-cultural world. This results in complex behaviours born out of the confluence of neurobiological, behavioural, psychosocial, emotional and developmental processes. At this critical stage of growth and self-discovery, when adolescents are forming their identities, building relationships, and exploring their interests, the digital era has introduced an entirely novel aspect to this developmental period. Adolescents use social media platforms as virtual playgrounds to express themselves, interact with others and grow (Baglari et al., 2020).

The digital world increases the pressure to conform to standardised ideals of physical attractiveness, popularity and success. Such pressure is usually associated with adverse self-image and mental health issues. Furthermore, the addictive nature of social media might affect an adolescent's ability to sustain concentration, engage in meaningful offline interactions, and develop healthy coping mechanisms. They may seek validation through likes, comments and shares. All this blurs the distinction between online and offline hindering the development of essential life skills and personal relationships.

## **The prevalence of social media use among adolescents**

An adolescent's life is almost incomplete without social media, it is nearly impossible to meet a young person who is not on social media. In fact, for some adolescents, using social media is the primary way to interact with others socially (McBride, 2011).

The appeal of social media for adolescents' is that, it allows them to connect with friends, share experiences, and express themselves in a digital environment. What makes social media platforms so attractive to adolescents is that it provides them with a sense of community and validation. Adolescents can create and personalize their digital identities and share aspects of their life that they believe deserve attention and appreciation. Online social platforms like Facebook, Instagram, discussion forums like Reddit and even gaming platforms like Steam or Epic Games and so on all serve the purpose as an online community.

## **Impact of social media on development**

Barth (2015) noted that social media can affect adolescent development. An overview of the possible effects of social media can be inferred by investigating cognitive, emotional and social development individually.

### **I. Cognitive Development**

Unlike any other generation of adolescents, today's adolescents are barraged with unlimited amounts of all kinds of information, ranging from newspaper stories and viral videos to TV commercials and online advertising. Thus, the ability to process information critically and effectively is very important in the modern digital age.

When adolescents are exposed to excessive information on social media, it can lead to cognitive overload which affects their ability to process information effectively (Rideout & Robb, 2018). With the abundance of information competing for attention, the ability on focusing and comprehending one piece of information at a time may become difficult. Research has revealed that though this can stimulate critical thinking it can also lead to filter bubbles that limit exposure to diverse viewpoints (Pennycook & Rand, 2019).

Multitasking is another trait associated with adolescents and their use of social media; they seem to be born multi-taskers who can participate in several platforms at once. However, this

constant switching between tasks can hinder their capacity to concentrate. Research suggests that continuous multi-taking on social media, can cause reduced productivity and the inability to concentrate on a single task for an extended period of time.

## **II. Emotional Development**

Social media offers an opportunity for individuals to create and present idealised versions of themselves. These idealised identities may trigger in adolescents the need to fit in and gain validation. The comparative culture created by curated comparison on social media is a common phenomenon and may lead to damaged self-esteem, a feeling of being inadequate as compared to peers. The "liking" and "sharing" culture on social media can also significantly impact their self-identity and choices (Valkenburg & Peter, 2011).

Many adolescents are also exposed to the likelihood that they will be victims of cyberbullying or online harassment. The anonymity and distance that online interactions provide, allows for individuals to engage in hurtful behaviour which consequently affects their emotional well-being. Cyberbullying and online harassment may have dire consequences, including nervousness, suicidal ideation, anxiety, depression and social isolation.

## **III. Social Development**

Self-discovery and expression are the hallmarks of adolescent life, made possible by social media. Social media does not produce the same effects as a real-life experience with regards to identity building, however, identity can be explored through social media, enabling young users to experiment with different behaviours and interactional styles (Wood et al., 2016). Adolescents often create carefully curated online identities that differ from their real-life personas. This disparity between the virtual and the actual worlds may make it hard for adolescents to establish genuine relationships in reality. An adolescent should understand the importance of maintaining a genuine sense of self, both online and offline which is imperative to foster healthy interpersonal relationships.

Although social networking can be an excellent platform through which adolescents communicate, it can however, hinder the development of useful social skills and may adversely affect interpersonal communication among adolescents. Face-to-face communications have implicit social cues which are absent in social media interactions. This absence may also hinder

adolescents from correctly understanding as well as adequately expressing emotions that they experience, as well as reading and interpreting others' emotions.

## **Social media and adolescent development – Its effects**

### **1. Benefits of social media on adolescent development**

Today, social media is an integral part of an adolescent's life. A huge advantage of social media is that it assists them to connect with friends and family and peers all over the world, helping them to expand on their social circles. This is especially beneficial for adolescents not having many friends and for those who have limited social opportunities in their immediate environment.

Social media also allows for adolescents to unleash their creativity and self-expression, where they can demonstrate their talents, share their thoughts, exchange views and receive feedback from others. This can also aid in boosting their confidence, encourage them in their interests and hobbies and in turn, aid in their identity development, enabling social media to promote crucial aspects of adolescent development (Bryant, 2018).

Social media also provides a platform for learning and sharing information. Social media has the potential to transform education through the provision of diverse resources including materials for learning. The numerous educational avenues available include joining communities and groups focused on their area of interest and engage in discussions on various topics. This exposure to these diverse perspectives and knowledge can help to broaden their horizon and enhance their critical thinking skills.

Social media may also help to inculcate empathy and increased social awareness. Social media helps adolescents discover other cultures, social challenges and personal stories. This could also lead to development of empathy, thereby helping them cultivate better social skills and social values.

It is however important to note that social media effects are not universal and can vary depending on individual experience and circumstances. It is crucial for parents, and educators to guide adolescents on how to use social media responsibly and reap the positive effects it can have on their lives.

## **2. The negative effects of social media on adolescent development**

With the growing accessibility to various social media platforms, adolescents have been increasingly exposed to a multitude of potential risks. One of the biggest drawbacks of social media is that it could contribute to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem among adolescents. Most adolescents often compare their lives to those of their friends and family, thus leading them to develop a feeling of inadequacy and insecurity. Unhealthy feelings of FOMO (fear of missing out), can have a negative impact on their mental health (Iwanicka, A. 2022).

Research has also reviewed the impact of social media usage on mental health among adolescents. (Alammar, et al., 2021). Research indicates that excessive use of social media was associated with increased symptoms of depression and anxiety (Thorisdottir, I. E., et al., 2019). According to another study, excessive social media use among adolescents resulted in poor quality sleep which was linked to mental health problems (Wojdan et al., 2021), the blue light emitted by the screens, interferes with the production of melatonin, a hormone that regulates sleep. Excessive use of social media can also have a negative effect on physical health (Odgers et al., 2020). Due to social media use, adolescents become sedentary and surf the internet, leading to obesity and other health-related issues.

Another concerning aspect of social media is the impact on interpersonal relationships. On one hand, social media platforms provide a means for maintaining relationships and connecting with friends, on the other hand, social media can lead to a decrease in face-to-face interaction, which is essential for the development of social skills. Further, the use of social media is associated with increased feeling of loneliness, social comparison and jealousy, which may negatively impact social relationships (Tandoc et al., 2015)

Social media can also have a negative impact on adolescents' academic performance. For example, one study found that adolescents using social media during studying were more likely to have decreased academic performance (Bozzola, et al., 2022; Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010). Another study showed that adolescents who used social media more often had lower grades, particularly those who spent more time on the platform in comparison to those who did not (Junco, 2012). Social media may lead to distractions, poor concentration, and procrastination, which can negatively impact academic performance.

Social media also affects the self-esteem of adolescents greatly. Using carefully constructed profiles and filtered images that portray a perfect and idealistic representation of the world around them, social media can create an environment where comparison with peers and self-induced doubts arise. This is likely to result in a negative impact on self-esteem, resulting in social comparison and an unrealistic self-image (Perloff 2014). Social media could lead to heightened instances of social comparison which can negatively impact self-esteem (Vogel et al., 2014). Adolescents feel pressured to portray an idyllic self-image, thereby contributing to additional anxiety and stress.

Adolescents are extremely affected by photoshopped images which they find on social media. They then develop unrealistic beauty standards leading to twisted and unattainable notions of beauty. This ultimately results in negative body images and dangerous behaviours such as extreme dieting, excessive exercises and even eating disorders.

Nevertheless, social media is not the only reason for these negative effects. The way adolescents interact on these platforms and their interpretation of the content has a major impact on how they view their bodies. Adolescents have to be encouraged to examine critically all the content they watch on social media in a healthy and productive manner and not to take things at face value just because it is viral on the internet.

Social media has redefined the definition of friendship. Adolescents tend to prioritize quantity over quality when it comes to their friends or followers on social media platforms. This can sometimes lead to shallow connections and feelings of isolation or loneliness between real life contacts and virtual contacts.

Adopting healthy habits for accessing and using information through the available modern technologies, supporting alternative and off-the screen interest and hobbies, involving parents in an open communication about online issues can reduce the negative impact of the digital world on adolescents.

It is important for parents, educators and society as a whole to help adolescents navigate the impact of social media in their social relationships. Open discussions about online interactions, promoting digital literacy, teaching empathy and resilience can empower adolescents to form authentic connections and maintain a healthy balance between their online and offline lives.

## **Balancing the benefits and risk factors of social media in adolescent development**

It is evident that social media has a significant impact on adolescent development. On one hand, it offers numerous benefits, such as enhanced connectivity, self-expression, and access to a wealth of information. It provides a space for adolescents to explore their identities, connect with peers, and discover new interests.

However, it is essential to recognize and address the potential risks associated with social media use. Adolescents may face challenges such as cyberbullying, social comparison, and negative mental health effects. The pressure to conform to societal expectations and the constant exposure to curated online personas can create feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem. For one to succeed in a world that is digitally based, it is vital to strike a balance between the benefits and risks of social media. Adolescents should be educated about responsible online behaviours, digital literacy, and the importance of privacy and consent.

Given the significant impact of social media on adolescent development, it is essential for parents, educators, and policymakers to be proactive in addressing these issues. Educational institutions can implement interventions and digital citizenship education programs to promote responsible social media use and teach critical thinking skills. Policymakers can establish regulations and policies that protect adolescents from potential harm and promote safer social media environments. Additionally, mental health support and intervention strategies should be prioritized to address the emotional and psychological challenges arising from social media usage

## **Parental guidance and support in navigating social media**

Information technology has been evolving rapidly in recent times and hence there is a generational gap between digital natives (who grew in technological era) and digital immigrants who never lived in a technologically advanced society but became a part of it in their adulthood. Adolescents represent the former group, while older adults often fall into the latter category. Such a generational gap may translate to “a language barrier” separating the two populations which makes the act of setting rules on responsible media usage difficult between parents and children.

As adolescents navigate the virtual world, it is crucial for parents to provide guidance and support to help them make informed choices and develop healthy habits. The first step should entail open and honest communication between parents and their adolescent. Initiating conversations about social media can help build trust and create a safe space for discussions. Parents themselves should take the time to understand the platforms their children are using, including their features, privacy settings, and potential risks.

Another important element of parental guidance involves setting clear boundaries and guidelines. Establishing guidelines regarding screen time, appropriate content, and online behaviours can help adolescents understand their responsibilities and ensure their safety. Regularly revisiting and updating these guidelines as new platforms emerge is crucial to staying informed and keeping up with evolving digital landscapes.

Parents should actively monitor their child's social media activities. This can involve following their accounts, being aware of their online connections, and monitoring their content. However, it is important to strike a balance between respecting their privacy and ensuring their well-being. Facilitating conversations on their online experiences and addressing any concerns or red flags can help adolescents develop critical thinking skills and foster responsible digital citizenship.

Furthermore, parents should educate themselves about the potential risks and challenges of social media, such as cyberbullying, online predators, and the impact of excessive screen time on mental health. Parents should also stay informed with current issues related to the internet, so that they effectively guide and support their adolescents.

Finally, leading by example is crucial. Adolescents often observe and mimic their parents' behaviours, including their digital habits. Demonstrating a healthy relationship with social media, such as practicing mindful usage, setting boundaries, and prioritizing offline activities, can positively influence adolescents' own behaviours.

## Strategies to promote responsible social media use

Social media has become an essential part of adolescents' lives (Susanty et al., 2020). It is essential to empower adolescents with the necessary skills to navigate the digital landscape safely and positively, ensuring their overall well-being and healthy development in the digital age.

Nonetheless, adolescents need to use social media responsibly. Here are some strategies to promote responsible media use among adolescents:

1. **Educate about online etiquette and digital citizenship:** Adolescents need to be educated on the importance of being respectful and courteous in cyberspace, just like they would be in person. They should be taught to think before posting, commenting, or sharing, and to be aware of how their words and actions may affect others.
2. **Set clear boundaries and time limits:** Adolescents should be taught to set boundaries and limit their time on social media, allowing them to focus on other parts of their lives such as schoolwork, hobbies, and face-to-face interactions.
3. **Encourage critical thinking and media literacy:** Adolescents should learn to question the accuracy and authenticity of what they see on social media, and to use critical thinking to identify false information, false news, and malicious content. They should be encouraged to look for reliable sources and verify information before believing it.
4. **Foster open communication:** Creating a safe and non-judgmental environment where adolescents feel comfortable discussing their experiences and concerns related to social media. Adolescents need to be encouraged to report any incidents of cyberbullying or harassment they experience, as well as any inappropriate content they find on social media. Adolescents need to be provided with guidance and support to manage these situations.
5. **Promote healthy self-esteem and body image:** Social comparison is a common practice among adolescents who engage in social media and such comparisons tend to affect the body image of many adolescents. It is important to encourage adolescents to focus on their strengths and what makes them unique, rather than looking for validation through likes or followers. Adolescents need to understand how important it is to remember that social media is just a way for people to share the highlights of their lives.

By implementing these strategies, adolescents can develop a responsible and mindful approach to social media use.

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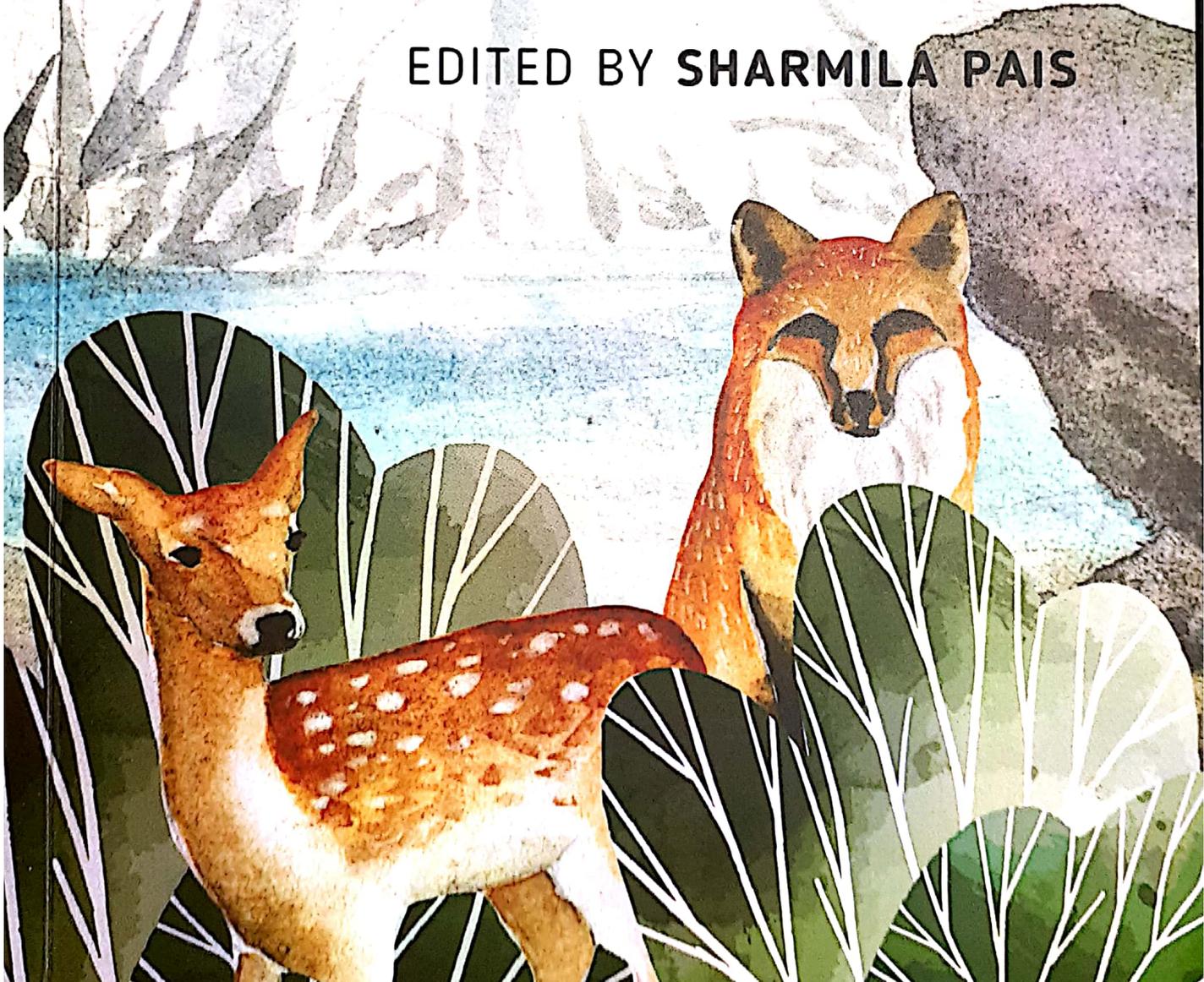
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Whispers and Reflections

# *Folk Tales from Goa*

EDITED BY SHARMILA PAIS



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