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Evolving perspectives of youth on LGBTQ+ identities: a study of Noida

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ABSTRACT:

The present study explores the evolving perceptions of youth in Noida toward the LGBTQ+ community, aiming to understand their attitudes, biases, and levels of acceptance. In recent years, India has witnessed significant socio-legal developments concerning LGBTQ+ rights, yet societal attitudes, particularly among youth, remain mixed and often influenced by cultural norms and misinformation. This research uses a quantitative approach through a structured Google Form questionnaire to collect data from 84 participants aged primarily between 18–25 years. The study investigates how gender, education level, and social exposure impact beliefs and behaviors toward LGBTQ+ individuals. The analysis reveals that while a majority of youth exhibit positive and inclusive attitudes—disagreeing with homophobic statements and expressing comfort with LGBTQ+ peers—some elements of bias and confusion persist. A considerable portion of respondents remained neutral or unsure on several critical issues, indicating a lack of awareness or exposure. The findings emphasize the need for education, open dialogue, and representation to promote inclusivity. The study concludes with recommendations for curriculum reforms, community outreach, and media advocacy to foster broader societal acceptance of LGBTQ+ identities.

Keywords: LGBTQ+ youth, societal attitudes, gender identity, inclusion, Noida, youth perception, LGBTQ+ rights, homophobia, acceptance, diversity awareness, India.

CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

The perspective of LGBTQ+ identities has significantly evolved in recent decades, especially among the younger population. This transition is shaped by globalisation, digital media, evolving legislative frameworks, and heightened activism for inclusion and equal rights. In India, where conventional societal conventions have long influenced perceptions about gender and sexuality, the younger generation is exhibiting a more progressive and embracing perspective. Noida, a rapidly urbanising metropolis inside the National Capital Region (NCR), offers a compelling context for examining these shifting viewpoints.

Noida, as a centre of education, business culture, and digital innovation, hosts a broad and dynamic young demographic, making it an ideal site for examining the impact of modern influences on views towards LGBTQ+ identities. This research aims to comprehend how adolescents in Noida see and interact with LGBTQ+ identities, analysing the effect of education, social media, peer dynamics, and legislative advancements on their viewpoints. The decriminalisation of Section 377 in 2018 was a pivotal milestone in India's LGBTQ+ rights movement, catalysing extensive discourse on gender and sexuality. Although metropolitan areas such as Noida have seen heightened awareness and advocacy, public acceptability remains markedly disparate across various social, cultural, and economic contexts. This study seeks to elucidate the awareness, acceptance, and obstacles encountered by LGBTQ+ persons among the young populations of Noida.

The research examines the convergence of social conditioning and progressive ideologies, assessing the influence of numerous narratives on the views of young persons. The significance of digital platforms in information distribution renders the impact of social media on forming opinions undeniable. Do young people in Noida exhibit more acceptance owing to internet exposure, or do traditional values still have considerable influence? This research will use surveys, interviews, and case studies to assess the range of ideas and attitudes, providing a thorough understanding of the changing mentality of Noida's young.

This study enhances current dialogues on inclusion, policy formulation, and social change by illuminating these viewpoints. Comprehending the shifting perspectives of youth around LGBTQ+ identities is essential for cultivating a more inclusive and tolerant society. This study's results will reflect the evolving social fabric of Noida and provide insights that may impact educational institutions, business diversity programs, and comprehensive legislative frameworks designed to advance LGBTQ+ rights and inclusion.

CHAPTER-2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Every day, LGBTQ+ kids have access to a larger societal conversation via social media, which has the potential to influence the formation of their narrative identities. Eleven LGBTQ+ students (ranging in age from 19 to 23) were interviewed in-depth to get a better understanding of how they constructed their narrative identities within the cultural milieu of social media & the impact that these platforms had on this process. Individual, interpretive examination of interviewees' narratives was used for data analysis. Afterwards, four common story motifs were uncovered via comparing and contrasting these encounters using thematic analysis. The stories of combined safe spaces show how LGBTQ+ kids can now easily find places to feel safe, both online and off, which helps them form their identities with less fear. Young LGBTQ+ people use social media to find identities that fit with their current self-concept, according to narratives about outside identity alignment. Adolescents' identity markers are multi-faceted and situationally-dependent, as seen in narratives of numerous context-based identities. Lastly, autobiographical narratives define the ways in which LGBTQ+ kids see themselves as unique individuals within a larger group. These results show how social media plays a multifaceted role in the formation of LGBTQ+ young identities. What follows is a discussion of the consequences. (Bell,2020)

There has been a proliferation of sexual identity labels & definitions. We delve into the ways in which the sexual identities of the increasing number of people who identify as LGBTQ+ (i.e., those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning) are changing, merging, and taking on new forms. We place modern sexual identities inside frameworks that account for life course, intersectionality, and the social production of identity. Here, we take a look back at studies that have come out recently that shed light on the complexities and intersections of identities, how sexuality and gender are becoming more entwined, and how these two axes connect with racial and socioeconomic identities. We conclude by discussing recent research that places sexual identities within the framework of the life cycle, taking into account factors such as developmental processes, relationships, and life stage. (fish,2019)

Throughout sociohistorical time, sexual identities undergo changes; this has been especially evident in the last ten years. Different yet interdependent lifestyles and identities of sexual minorities and gender minorities have been recognised. Queer, questioning, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and other developing sexual the (indeed gender) identities (LGBTQ+) are terms used to describe groups and individuals who identify as sexual and gender minorities. This review focusses on one facet of that shift, the broadening of what it means to be LGBTQ+. It also examines the ways in which sexual identities are changing, merging, and developing among the LGBTQ+ community and those who do not identify as heterosexual, two historically dominant sexual orientations. As the LGBTQ+ community and its challenges become more mainstream in the US and globally, and as more and more individuals find personal significance in the LGBTQ+ umbrella, we can see how ideas of LGBTQ+ identities are evolving. (russe1,2019)

This chapter's discussion of life narrative approaches as a means of documenting the cultural-historical dimensions of LGBTQ+1 identity formation took me on a journey through time. Summer of 2004 was scorching. I had returned from my university in the "big city" to see my folks. I had never spent a summer away from home before. My family and I had just completed breakfast at a nearby greasy spoon, and we were sitting in the garage of a restaurant, doing our traditional goodbye before I began my four-hour return journey. During that time, our vehicle seemed extremely claustrophobic. In the front seat, my mom, brother, and I were joined by my dad in the rear. Knowing that I would be coming forth to my family as homosexual in a matter of minutes, I didn't eat much that morning. As we walked towards the restaurant and headed to our own vehicles, I worked up the nerve to tell my family something they needed to know. So, I found myself in the car's backseat, delivering a message to my loved ones. The message seems more like a demand now that I'm looking at it again. Our usual "see you later" can turn into a "goodbye" if they don't come to accept and even love this new me, just as I did. My tale, which includes my coming out as well as my life story in a sense, begins here. Fortunately, my loved ones are still crucial to the plot. (Weststrate,2021)

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Aim: The primary aim of this study is to explore and analyze the evolving perspectives of youth in Noida towards LGBTQ+ identities.

OBJECTIVES

Explore the psychological and social development of LGBTQ+ identities, examining different models and frameworks that describe how LGBTQ+ individuals navigate and develop their sexual and gender identities over time.

Review the effectiveness of various educational interventions and curricula aimed at increasing LGBTQ+ inclusivity in schools, such as anti-bullying programs, inclusive sex education, and teacher training.

Examine the sociocultural factors influencing LGBTQ+ identity, including societal stigma, media representation, and legal/political shifts, and how these elements shape individual and collective LGBTQ+ experiences.

Assess the evolving perspectives of youth regarding LGBTQ+ identities, including generational shifts in attitudes, the influence of social media, and peer interactions on youth understanding and acceptance of LGBTQ+ issues.

Explore the challenges and barriers to full LGBTQ+ inclusion in educational environments, focusing on resistance to LGBTQ+ issues, lack of teacher preparedness, and institutional practices that hinder acceptance and support.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study adopts a mixed research design, enabling a structured assessment of participants' attitudes and beliefs through numerical data. The primary focus is on measuring responses to specific statements related to LGBTQ+ identities using close-ended questions. The cross-sectional nature of the study captures the views of the youth at a single point in time.

POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The target population for this study comprises young individuals residing in Noida, primarily aged 18 to 35 years. A non-probability convenience sampling method was used due to accessibility and time constraints. Respondents were invited to participate via online platforms, and a total of 84 valid responses were collected.

DATA COLLECTION METHOD

Data was gathered using a Google Form questionnaire, which was shared via social media platforms like WhatsApp, Instagram, and email. The questionnaire consisted of both demographic questions (age, gender, education level) and attitudinal questions using a Likert scale (ranging from "Totally Disagree" to "Totally Agree"). This format allowed for easy data compilation and analysis.

INSTRUMENTATION

The questionnaire was divided into two sections:

Section A collected demographic information: Age group, Gender, and Educational Qualification.

Section B contained 20 attitudinal statements addressing stereotypes, acceptance, fear, and social interaction with LGBTQ+ individuals. The responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale to capture varying degrees of agreement or disagreement. The questionnaire was designed to ensure clarity, neutrality, and minimal bias in wording.

DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

The collected data was analyzed using Microsoft Excel. Responses were compiled into frequency tables and represented visually using bar charts and pie charts.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

The results of a study that looked at how young people in Noida felt about the LGBTQ+ community are detailed in the chapter on data analysis. To investigate important factors such as social media's impact, acceptability, stereotypes, and awareness, a structured questionnaire was used to collect responses from a varied population. The data is examined using descriptive statistics, which provide light on the extent to which LGBTQ+ persons are understood, supported, and confronted with difficulties within the framework of young attitudes. The findings should provide a holistic picture of the way people think right now and point out where people need to learn more in order to promote equality and inclusion.

Table 1: Age-wise Distribution of Respondents

Age Group	Frequency
18–25	74
26–30	7
31–35	3

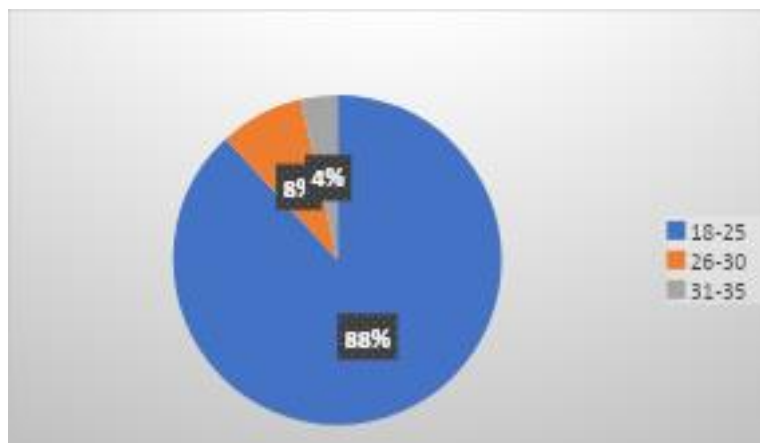


Figure 1: Age-wise Distribution of Respondents

Interpretation:

The majority of the respondents in this study fall in the age group of 18–25 years, accounting for a significant 88% (74 out of 84). This is reflective of the target audience — youth in Noida — who are likely to be more exposed to modern ideologies and discourses surrounding gender and sexual diversity. The representation from age groups 26–30 (7 respondents) and 31–35 (3 respondents) is minimal, indicating a potential gap in responses from older youth or early working professionals. The focus on younger participants helps provide insight into evolving mindsets shaped by changing media narratives, education systems, and peer influence in urban areas.

Table 2: Gender-wise Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency
Male	13
Female	70
Other	1

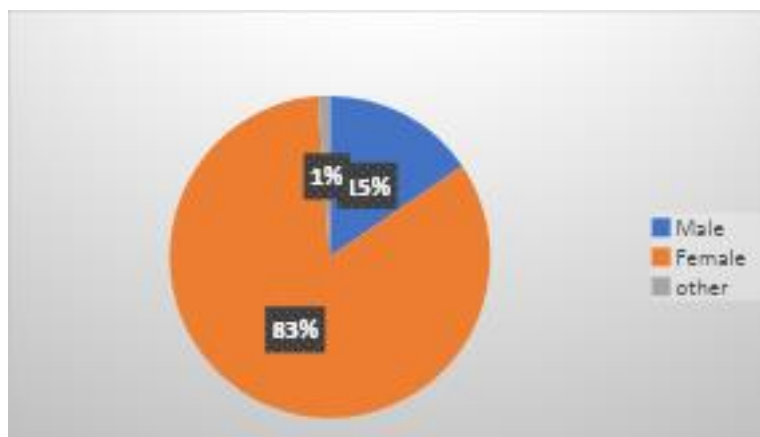


Figure 2: Gender-wise Distribution of Respondents

Interpretation:

The data reveals a stark gender imbalance, with 70 out of 84 respondents identifying as female, 13 as male, and only 1 identifying as “other.” The dominant female participation could indicate a higher willingness among women to engage in conversations about LGBTQ+ issues, possibly reflecting more openness or empathy. The limited response from males and non-binary individuals could suggest hesitancy, discomfort, or lack of outreach. Nonetheless, the inclusion of a respondent from the “other” gender category highlights the relevance and importance of discussing diverse gender identities in this research.

Table 3: Educational Qualification of Respondents

Educational Qualification	Frequency
Undergraduate	22
Graduate	29
Postgraduate	33

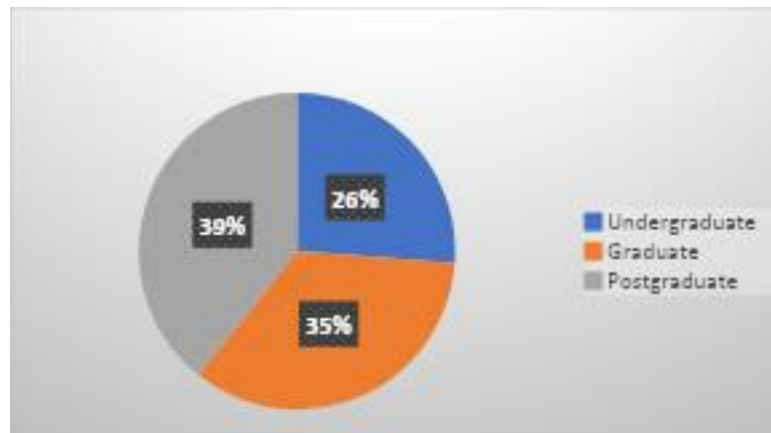


Figure 3: Educational Qualification of Respondents

Interpretation:

The educational background of respondents is fairly distributed, with the highest number holding postgraduate degrees (33), followed by graduates (29), and undergraduates (22). This reflects a highly educated sample, which may influence the openness and critical thinking toward gender and sexual diversity. Education is often correlated with increased awareness and acceptance of marginalized communities. Therefore, the perspectives captured in this study are likely influenced by academic exposure and social discourse during higher education, providing valuable insights into the educated youth demographic in Noida.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This study sheds light on the views, attitudes, and actions of a younger population with regard to the LGBTQ+ group by tracking the changing viewpoints of Noida youth towards LGBTQ+ identities. This study aims to examine the ways in which societal and cultural influences impact the perspectives and levels of acceptance or prejudice held by youngsters about LGBTQ+ persons. Data for this exploration was obtained using a structured questionnaire.

This study's results point to a growing trend of LGBTQ+ acceptance and tolerance among young people. Many respondents said they would remain friends with someone they found out was LGBTQ+, and a large percentage of those people had a good view towards homosexual people. Also, many people felt that LGBTQ+ people should have complete equality in all parts of society and that homosexual weddings should be legal. What this means is that young people are becoming more open-minded and progressive, which may be because of the impact of social media, education, and more global knowledge.

On the other hand, the survey did point out a few places where people still have unfavourable impressions. Some respondents were uncomfortable with the prospect of living or working with an LGBTQ+ person, and a tiny minority confessed to making negative comments about LGBTQ+ people. There was also a sizeable minority that was either hesitant or agreed with discriminatory ideas, such as the idea that LGBTQ+ people shouldn't work with children, even though most people disagreed with such beliefs. Although there has been some improvement, these results show that some young people's perspectives are still shaped by social prejudices and preconceptions regarding LGBTQ+ persons.

The survey concludes that many young people in Noida are coming around to the idea of LGBTQ+ inclusion and equal rights, and that their opinions towards these identities are changing. Still, we have a ways to go before we can call out and eradicate bigotry, prejudice, and false information. Building a more accepting society requires education, honest conversations, and more visibility for LGBTQ+ people in the media and public sphere. Going forward, it is critical for community leaders, educators, and lawmakers to keep raising LGBTQ+ acceptance and understanding so that everyone can treat LGBTQ+ people with respect and decency. The results of this study can pave the way for future studies and initiatives in India that target the LGBTQ+ community in an effort to increase tolerance and equality.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Make Lessons on LGBTQ+ Sensitivity Part of the Standard Curriculum:** Programs to raise LGBTQ+ understanding and sensitize students should be required coursework in high schools and universities. From an early age, these programs can help pupils develop empathy and dispel damaging prejudices. In order to foster acceptance and tolerance, it is important to teach young people about the experiences of LGBTQ+ people, the diversity of gender expression, and sexual orientation. One effective way to create a more tolerant society is via raising awareness through stories, conversations, and personal experiences.
- **Advocate for More Positive LGBTQ+ Media Representation:** The function of the media in molding public opinion is vital. One way to normalize LGBTQ+ identities and lessen societal stigma is to increase the amount of varied, truthful, and respectful depiction of these characters in media. A more accepting society for LGBTQ+ people may be achieved through positive representation, which can assist young viewers in connecting with and understanding LGBTQ+ people. We need to push for more inclusive storylines and more attention to LGBTQ+ concerns from content makers and influencers.
- **Plan Campaigns to Raise Awareness in the Community:** Public awareness campaigns and community outreach activities can help close the knowledge gap and change people's opinions. Workshops, seminars, pride celebrations, and sensitization initiatives can be organized in public locations by NGOs, student unions, and local government agencies. Campaigns like this have the potential to reach out to people of all ages, opening up new avenues of understanding and conversation while also dispelling myths and encouraging tolerance on a local level.
- **Promote Honest Dialogue Within Family Units:** Every person's set of core values and ideas is mostly shaped by their family. One way to provide a welcoming atmosphere for LGBTQ+ adolescents is to encourage honest and accepting dialogue regarding sexual orientation and gender identity within the family. Parental education on LGBTQ+ issues and how to provide support to their children and others should be a priority in parenting programs and counselling services.
- **Establish Trusting Environments in the Workplace and Classroom:** It is the responsibility of educational institutions, businesses, and the government to create welcoming spaces for the LGBTQ+ community. LGBTQ+ employees and students need anti-discrimination rules that are enforced rigorously and ways for their grievances to be addressed. Furthermore, organisations should establish LGBTQ+ alliances and peer support groups so that people may openly express themselves and feel welcomed.
- **Back More Studies on LGBTQ+ Youth Perceptions:** Academic research must be continuous in order to monitor shifts in public opinion and pinpoint problem areas. To further understand how young Indians are thinking about LGBTQ+ identities, more research should be done that focus on specific regions or demographics. To create a more inclusive future, this type of study may guide media initiatives, educational changes, and legislative decisions.

SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTIONS

- **Awareness and Sensitization Campaigns:** Social workers should initiate structured awareness programs in schools, colleges, and community spaces to educate youth about LGBTQ+ identities, rights, and challenges. These campaigns should focus on dispelling myths, reducing stereotypes, and promoting empathy through real-life stories, films, and interactive sessions.
- **Peer Support Groups and Safe Spaces:** Creating peer support groups and safe spaces within educational institutions and community centers can provide LGBTQ+ youth with emotional support and reduce feelings of isolation. These platforms can also serve as dialogue spaces where both LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ individuals can share perspectives and foster mutual understanding.
- **Inclusion in School and College Curricula:** Social workers can collaborate with educational authorities to advocate for the inclusion of LGBTQ+ issues in life skills education and social science subjects. Educating youth from an early age helps in normalizing diversity in gender and sexuality and contributes to long-term attitudinal change.
- **Policy Advocacy and Legal Literacy:** Social workers can organize workshops to raise awareness about LGBTQ+ rights under Indian law (such as the decriminalization of Section 377, the Transgender Persons Act, etc.). Educating young people on legal protections can reduce discriminatory behaviors and increase respect for human rights.
- **Counseling and Psychosocial Support:** Providing confidential counseling services for both LGBTQ+ individuals and those struggling with acceptance can help resolve internalized stigma and emotional distress. Trained social workers and mental health professionals should be accessible through educational institutions and NGOs.
- **Training Programs for Professionals:** Social workers should conduct sensitivity training for teachers, counselors, law enforcement, and healthcare providers to ensure inclusive service delivery. Professionals who interact with youth must be equipped to respond to LGBTQ+ issues with empathy and awareness.

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