

Research Paper

The Implication of Parenting Style & Parent-Child Relationship in Risk-Taking behavior and Perception among Indian Sexual Minority and Heterosexual Youth

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to understand the differences in the parent-child relationship, risk-taking behavior, and perception in Indian sexual minority and heterosexual youth as well the relationship between parenting style, parent-child relationship, risk-taking behavior, and perception. A total sample of 152 participants having two parents were drawn from India. Out of the total sample, 77 participants identified themselves as Heterosexual, and 75 participants identified as LGBTQIA+. The results of the study suggested significant differences in the parent-child relationship, risk-taking behavior, and risk-taking perception between the LGBTQIA+ youth and heterosexual youth. A positive correlation was found between authoritative/flexible parenting style and parent-child relationship whereas a negative correlation was found between authoritarian parenting style and the parent-child relationship. Permissive parenting was found to be positively correlated with risk-taking behavior. The study also suggested a negative relationship between the parent-child relationship and risk-taking behavior.

Keywords: Parenting style, Parent-child relationship, Risk-taking behavior, Risk-taking perception, Sexual minority, Heterosexual, Youth

Parents are the first source of interaction for the child and their relationship with the child plays an influential role in one's life (Horstman, 2016). Parents meet the basic needs of their children such as physiological, security, and love needs (Floyd et al., 2014). Such interdependence results in developing a unique bond between the parents and child which has a direct bearing on the development of the child across the lifespan and the related outcomes (Durlak et al., 2011; Elias, 2006; Fantuzzo et al., 2007). Healthy parent involvement and intervention in the child's day-to-day life lay the foundation for better social and academic skills or caregiver is influential in healthy child development (Ackard,

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The Implication of Parenting Style & Parent-Child Relationship in Risk-Taking Behavior and Perception Among Indian Sexual Minority and Heterosexual Youth

et al., 2006). Having a positive relationship with at least one parent or caregiver is influential in healthy child development (Ackard, et al., 2006). Young children who grow with a secure and healthy attachment to their parents stand a better chance of developing happy and content relationships with others in their life. A secure attachment leads to the healthy development of social, emotional, cognitive, and motivational development. A study conducted by Jakobsen and others (2012) found that children who had a positive attachment with their parents had a decreased risk of anxiety and depression later in life. There is a growing body of literature that has suggested the relationship between perceived parent-child relationship and parenting styles in the general population and their subsequent implication on the risk-taking behavior and perception (Fish and Russell 2018; McKinney and Renk, 2011; Watson et al. 2016).

In this research, at the very outset, we are interested to determine whether parenting style has a significant relationship with parent-child relationship. Parenting style explains the different ways in which parents control and socialize their children (Baumrind, 1960). Parenting style includes two important elements of parenting, which are parental responsiveness and parental demandingness (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Parental responsiveness is also referred to parental warmth or supportiveness or the extent to which parents intentionally foster individuality, self-regulation, and self-assertion by being attuned, supportive, and acquiescent to their children's special needs and demands (Baumrind, 1991). While parental demandingness which is also referred to as behavioral control includes the claims parents make on children to become integrated into the family, by their maturity demands, supervision, disciplinary efforts and willingness to confront the child who disobeys them. (Baumrind, 1991). Parenting style has been classified into four types based on responsiveness and demandingness: Authoritative parenting (Parents scoring high on both responsiveness and demandingness), Authoritarian parenting (Lower responsiveness scores and higher demandingness scores), Indulgent parenting (High responsiveness and lack of demandingness), and Neglectful parenting (Low scores on both responsiveness and demandingness) styles (Maccoby and Martin, 1983; Baumrind, 1991). Existing research has shown that variation in parenting styles is related to differences in parent-adolescent relationship features. Researchers have consistently found that authoritative parenting style is associated with higher levels of parent-adolescent cohesion (Nelson et al., 2011) and lower levels of conflict frequency (Smetana, 1995), conflict intensity (Smetana, 1995), and total conflict (McKinney and Renk, 2011). In contrast, lower cohesion (McKinney and Renk, 2011) and increased conflict frequency (Sorkhabi and Middaugh, 2014), intensity (Smetana, 1995), and total conflict (Smetana, 1995) are all linked to an authoritarian parenting style. In a sample of American adolescents, Smetana (1995) found that more frequent and intense conflicts were predicted by more authoritarian parenting and less authoritative parenting. Similarly, Sorkhabi and Middaugh (2014) analyzed data from American adolescents who had Asian, Latino, Arab, European, or other ethnic backgrounds. They found that adolescents of authoritative parents reported less conflict than those with authoritarian parents. There has been previous research on the associations between parenting styles and parent-adolescent conflict. (e.g., Nelson et al., 2011; Sorkhabi and Middaugh, 2014).

In addition, we are interested in determining whether parenting style and parent-child relationship have a significant association with risk-taking which is measured by risk-taking behavior and risk-taking perception. Risk-taking is any consciously or non-consciously controlled behavior with a perceived uncertainty about its outcome or about its possible

The Implication of Parenting Style & Parent-Child Relationship in Risk-Taking Behavior and Perception Among Indian Sexual Minority and Heterosexual Youth

benefits or costs for the physical, economic or psycho-social well-being of oneself or others. Risk-taking behaviors refer to volitional behaviors including sexual activity, eating behaviors, substance use, delinquency, including suicide and injury-related behavior (Irwin et al., 1987). Risk-taking by young children can lead to unintentional injury and, in some cases, hospitalization, permanent disability, and death. Numerous studies over the last two decades have provided evidence for parenting styles that often influence the parent-youth relationship and its subsequent impact on the development and prevention of risky health behavior (Baumrind, 1991; Chapman, 2002; Fromme, 2006). The risk-taking behaviors can include alcohol, drug, or tobacco use. It may also involve violence and unintentional injuries including suicide and violence; sexual behaviors; physical inactivity; and unhealthy dietary behaviors (Eaton et al., 2005). Researches have shown that participants who reported that parents had an authoritative parenting style indicated a decreased risk of drug use (Radziszewska, 1996; Adali Arnardottir & Hafsteinsson, 2001) whereas that children whose parents had negligent, uninvolved, or authoritarian parenting styles were more likely to drink, smoke, or use drugs (Radziszewska B, 1996; Myers, 1997). Increased adolescent alcohol and cigarette usage was also linked to parental permissiveness or indulgence (Patock-Peckham et al., 2001; Slicker, 1998). Other studies have found that there are significant gender differences in the strength of relationships between parenting styles and adolescent substance use, with findings indicating that the parenting style of the same sex parent has the strongest relationship with self-regulation and substance use (Baumrind, 1967; Patock-Peckham, 2006). Research conducted by Rhucharoenpornpanich & Chamrathirong (2012), investigated parenting practices and the reported sexual and delinquent behaviors among Thai adolescents, by focusing on the difference between sons and daughters suggested that there were no gender differences in the reported sexual and delinquent behaviors among the adolescents. For both males and females high levels of parental monitoring, closeness, and greater perception of parent disapproval of sex, and being raised by authoritative parents were associated with less sexual and delinquent behaviors. Studies examining the relationship between parenting styles and unhealthy eating practices suggested that adolescents from authoritative homes had healthier eating behaviors than those adolescents from indulgent homes (Kremers, 2003; Lytle et al., 2003). The authoritative parenting style was often associated with a high level of spirituality (Lytle et al., 2003). Studies have shown a close association between perceived parenting styles and involvement in risk-taking behavior. Risk-taking is any consciously or non-consciously controlled behavior with a perceived uncertainty about its outcome, and/or about its possible benefits or costs for the physical, economic or psycho-social well-being of oneself or others. A total of fifteen papers were assessed to see if there was a link between parenting styles and adolescent drug and alcohol usage. Several studies have found that teenagers whose parents had an authoritative parenting style had a lower risk of drug use. It was also found out that adolescents whose parents had neglectful/ unengaged or authoritarian parenting styles had an increased risk for drinking, smoking, and/or using drugs, and parental permissiveness or indulgence was also associated with increased adolescent alcohol and tobacco use (Radziszewska et al., 1996).

Furthermore, we are interested to see whether there exists a significant difference among heterosexual and sexual minority participants in terms of their parent-child relationship and risk-taking behavior as well as perception. Sexual minority youth (Gay, Lesbians, Bisexual, Transgender, and others) are no different from their heterosexual peers in their need for supportive parenting to promote adaptive outcomes, yet sexual minority young people are more likely to report strained relationships with parents compared to their heterosexual

The Implication of Parenting Style & Parent-Child Relationship in Risk-Taking Behavior and Perception Among Indian Sexual Minority and Heterosexual Youth

counterparts (Fish and Russell 2018; Watson et al. 2016) and in a country like India acceptance of a child who identifies as LGBTQIA+ is rare. The research conducted by Coulter et al., 2019 showed that early experiences of support, or lack thereof, among sexual minority adolescents, may lead to elevated risk for alcohol abuse shortly thereafter and other risky behaviors.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

A sample of 152 participants having two parents and falling in the age range of 18-29 years was drawn using snowball sampling technique from India. The age range for the sample was determined in consultation with Indian National Youth Policy (2014) and ethical concerns. Out of the total sample, 77 participants identified themselves as Heterosexual, and 75 participants identified as LGBTQ+. The mean age of the sample was 21.59 and S.D. was 14.72. All the participants were from urban India.

Procedure

For the purpose of study, Google forms were created owing to the pandemic restrictions. Each form had a consent form attached, with an overview of the study along with a common email address for correspondence with the researchers in case of any query. Following which there was a section of demographic details (age, sexual orientation, and geographic setting) for the participants. In the subsequent sections, each measure was presented along with their separate and clear instructions mentioned at the beginning of each section. The measures used for the collection of data are:

Tools

- **Parental Authority Questionnaire:** The parental Authority Questionnaire was used to assess the parenting styles given by Dr. John R. Buri in 1991. It has 30 items that produce scores on three different subscales: Permissive parenting style, Authoritarian parenting style & Authoritative/flexible parenting style. This was administered twice, first from the mother's and then from the father's point of view. The reliabilities obtained for the scales were: .75 for mother's permissiveness, .85 for mother's authoritarianism, .82 for mother's authoritative/flexibility, .74 for father's permissiveness, .87 for father's authoritarianism, and .85 for father's authoritative/flexibility.
- **The Parent Adult-Child Relationship Questionnaire:** The Parent Adult-Child Relationship Questionnaire was used to measure the relation between parents and children. It was given by Peisah, C., Brodaty, H., Luscombe, G., Kruk, J., & Anstey, K. (1999). It has 26 items (13 each for mother and father). The mother solution yielded a reliability of 0.87 for the regard factor and 0.82 for the responsibility factor. About the father's solution, a reliability of .86 was obtained for the regard factor and .74 was obtained for the responsibility factor.
- **Domain-Specific Risk-Taking (DOSPERT) scale:** The Domain-Specific Risk-Taking scale was used to measure the risk-taking behaviors and perceptions of the participants. It was given by Ann-Renée Blais and Elke U. Weber (2006). It has 30 items. This scale was administered twice, for measuring the engagement and the perception of the particular risk-taking behavior. The answers are assessed on a 7-point scale from 1 (extremely unlikely) to 7 (extremely likely).

The Implication of Parenting Style & Parent-Child Relationship in Risk-Taking Behavior and Perception Among Indian Sexual Minority and Heterosexual Youth

The reliability of the general score was found to be .84, for the ethical domain it was .65, for the financial domain .77, for the health/safety domain .63, for the social domain .62, and for the recreational domain .79.

Once the participants submitted all their responses, the responses were closed and participants were thanked for their valuable contribution.

Research Design

Between group and correlational research designs were used in the study to understand the relationship between the Parenting style, Parent-child relationship, and risk-taking behavior among participants as well as to measure the difference that exists between participants who identified as LGBTQI+ and heterosexual.

Correlational research is a research method that involves observing two variables in order to establish a statistically corresponding relationship between them (Shona McCombs, 2019). The aim of correlational research is to identify variables that have some sort of relationship to the extent that a change in one creates some change in the other.

Data Analysis

The individual scores for the parental authority questionnaire, parent adult-child relationship questionnaire, and domain-specific risk-taking scale were calculated and compiled. The compiled scores were analyzed using independent sample t-test and Pearson correlation. The results were deduced in the form of tables.

RESULTS

Table 1.1 Showing Difference in Parent-Child Relationship, Risk-Taking behavior And Risk-Taking Perception Between LGBTQI+ Participants & Heterosexual Participants

Variables	Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	df	't' Scores
Parent-Child Relationship	LGBTQI+	75	44.60	6.41	150	3.52**
	Heterosexual	77	49.15	9.23		
Risk-Taking Behavior	LGBTQI +	75	141.0	29.18	150	5.89**
	Heterosexual	77	111.23	32.87		
Risk Taking Perception	LGBTQI+	75	151.13	27.08	150	2.41*
	Heterosexual	77	139.90	30.14		

*p<0.05, ** p<0.01

The mean score for parent child relationship of LGBTQI+ (M=44.60& S.D= 6.41) and the mean score heterosexual participants (M=49.15 & S.D. = 9.23) indicates a significant difference between the two groups, with Heterosexual participants having higher level of relationship with their parents as compared to LGBTQ+ participants. The t-statistics computed and summarized in above table 1.1, indicates a difference between the groups on the dimension of Parent-child participants relationship as t = 3.52, p<0.05.

The Implication of Parenting Style & Parent-Child Relationship in Risk-Taking Behavior and Perception Among Indian Sexual Minority and Heterosexual Youth

The mean score of LGBTQI+ (M=141 & S.D= 29.18) and the mean score of heterosexual participants (M=111.23 & S.D. = 32.87) on the dimension of risk-taking behavior , indicates a significant difference between the two groups, with LGBTQI+ participants having a higher level of involvement in risk-taking behavior as compared to heterosexual participants . The results of t statistics indicate a difference between the groups on the dimension of risk-taking behavior as $t = 5.89, p < 0.05$. Similarly on the dimension of risk-taking perception, the mean score of LGBTQI+ (M=151.13 & S.D= 27.08) and the mean score of heterosexual participants Risk-Taking (M=139.90 & S.D. = 30.14) indicates a significant difference between the two groups, with LGBTQI+ participants have a higher level of risk taking perception as compared to heterosexual participants . The results of t statistics indicate a difference between the groups on the dimension of risk taking behavior as $t = 2.41, p < 0.05$.

Table 1.2 Showing correlation between parenting styles, parent child relationship & risk taking behavior

		Parent relationship	child	Risk-Taking Behavior
Permissive Parenting Style	Pearson Correlation	0.065		0.257**
	Sig. (2- tailed)	0.428		0.001
	N	152		152
Authoritarian Parenting style	Pearson Correlation	-0.269**		0.123
	Sig. (2- tailed)	0.001		0.133
	N	152		152
Authoritative/Flexible Parenting style	Pearson Correlation	0.214**		0.057
	Sig. (2- tailed)	0.008		0.482
	N	152		152

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

The correlation computed and has been summarised in table 1.2, indicates authoritarian parenting style $r = -0.269, p < 0.05$, which suggests that participants with authoritarian parenting style will have lower levels of parent-child relationship. The correlation also suggested a positive correlation between authoritative /flexible and parent-child relationship $r = 0.214, p < 0.05$, which suggests that participants with authoritative/flexible parenting style will have a higher level of parent-child relationship. No correlation was found between Permissive parenting style and Parent-child relationship $r = 0.065, p > 0.05$.

A positive correlation was found between permissive parenting style and risk-taking behavior as $r = 0.275, p < 0.05$, which suggests the risk-taking behavior will increase with

The Implication of Parenting Style & Parent-Child Relationship in Risk-Taking Behavior and Perception Among Indian Sexual Minority and Heterosexual Youth

permissive parenting style in the individual. However, no correlations were found between Authoritarian parenting style and risk-taking behavior as $r=0.123$, $p>0.05$ as well as for Authoritative parenting style and risk-taking behavior $r = 0.057$, $p>0.05$.

Table 1.3 Showing correlation Between Parent Adult Child Relationship & Risk-Taking Behavior

		Risk-Taking Behavior
Adult Child Relationship	Pearson Correlation	-0.331**
	Sig. (2- tailed)	0.000
	N	152

** $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$*

The correlation computed and has been summarized in table 1.3 indicates that Parent-child relationship is negatively correlated with risk-taking behavior $r = -0.331$, $p<0.05$, which suggests when participants have a high level of relationship with their parents they will be less likely to engage in risky behaviors.

DISCUSSION

This study covers the vast literature review pertaining to Parent-child relationships, Parenting style, and Risk-taking behavior. The researches have shown that the parenting style influences the relationships of the individual which further has an implication on their risk-taking behavior (Coulter et al., 2019; Mckinney & Renk, 2011; Nelson et al., 2011; Radziszewska B, Richardson JL, Dent CW & Flay BR, 1996; Rhucharoenpornpanich & Chamrathirong 2012; Sonetana, 1995; Sorkhabi & Middaugh 2014). In the present study, an attempt has been made to understand the difference in the Parent-Child relationship, Risk-taking behavior and perception in LGBTQI+ youth and heterosexual youth, and the relationship between Parenting Style, adult-child relationship, risk-taking behavior, and risk perception. A total sample of 152 participants was drawn using snowball sampling. Out of the total sample, 75 participants were LGBTQI+ and 77 were heterosexual participants. The mean age of the sample was 21.59 and S.D. was 14.72.

The results of the study showed significant differences in parent-child relationship, risk-taking behavior, and risk-taking perception between LGBTQI+ youth and Heterosexual youth. Results suggested that heterosexual youth have a higher level of relationship with their parents as compared to the LGBTQI+ youth and are in line with previous studies where it has been found that heterosexual youth have a higher relationship with their parents as compared to youth who identifies as LGBTQI+ (Fish and Russell 2018; Newman & Gerard, 1993, Pearson & Wilkinson, 2013) as most of the LGBTQI+ Youth experience parental rejection in the form of verbal and physical abuse for gender non-conforming behaviors and gender expression which are considered to be deviant and threat to family honor and religious belief especially in some ethnic communities like Hispanic, Latino and Asian (D’Augeli et al., 1998, Roberts et al., 2012; Ryan, Huebner, Diaz & Sanchez, 2009). Both in terms of risk-taking behavior and risk-taking perception LGBTQI+ youth scored higher as compared to Heterosexual youth. An interesting observation here to note is that despite having a higher risk perception, LGBTQI+ youth reported a high level of risky behavior involvement which could be possible because higher rates of peer rejection, violence, and

The Implication of Parenting Style & Parent-Child Relationship in Risk-Taking Behavior and Perception Among Indian Sexual Minority and Heterosexual Youth

victimization associated with higher levels of hopelessness and attempted suicide in sexual and gender minority youth can result in a higher level of drug and alcohol use or abuse, risky sexual behaviors, eating disorders and other types of risk-taking behavior (Collier et al., 2013; King et al., 2008; Wilson, & Cariola, 2020). Lack of financial support to LGBTQI+ Youth (Higa et al., 2014) majorly because of peer rejection might lead them to be involved in some risk-taking jobs to financially support themselves and need to amass financial profits in a short span might lead them to invest their money in gambling, online casino, etc (Broman & Hakansson, 2018; Rick, 2018).

The results of the study indicate a negative correlation between Authoritarian parenting style and Adult Child Relationships which suggests youth with authoritarian parenting styles will have lower levels of Adult child relationships. These findings are in line with the review of literature which suggests that an authoritarian parenting style is associated with lower cohesion (McKinney and Renk, 2011) and higher conflict frequency (Smetana, 1995; Sorkhabi and Middaugh, 2014), intensity (Smetana, 1995), and total conflict (McKinney and Renk, 2011). Similarly, Sorkhabi and Middaugh (2014) analyzed data from American adolescents who had Asian, Latino, Arab, European, or other ethnic backgrounds. Youth with authoritarian parents show higher levels of conflict that are frequent and intense leading to a strained relationship with their parents. It was also found that adolescents of authoritative parents reported less conflict than those with authoritarian parents.

The results also indicate that there is a positive correlation between authoritative parenting style and Adult Child Relationship which indicates that participants with authoritative/flexible parenting style will have a higher level of parent-child relationship. In various studies, Nelson et al. (2011) discovered that authoritative parenting style is linked to higher levels of parent-adolescent cohesion and lower levels of conflict frequency, intensity, and total conflict (Smetana, 1995). (McKinney and Renk, 2011). When there are lower levels of conflict and higher levels of cohesion it can lead to a better and healthy relationship with their parents. Youth with authoritative parents are more likely to become independent, self-reliant, socially accepted, academically successful, and well-behaved (Dewar, 2010; 2017). Another study also suggests that having at least one authoritative parent can make a big difference (Fletcher et al 1999).

The results of the study indicate that there exists a positive correlation between Permissive Parenting Style and Risk-Taking Behaviour. This implies that if the parents are permissive, the child will indulge in more risk-taking behavior and vice-versa. In studies, it has been found that having a parent with a permissive parenting style is associated with the risk of delinquent activity across a variety of delinquent behaviors (Bronte-Tinkew et al., 2006). Children with permitting parents are more likely to engage in risk-taking behaviors including sexual risk-taking and alcohol or drug experimentation (Adalbjarnardottir & Hafsteinsson, 2001; Huebner & Howell, 2003; Patock-Peckham, & Morgan- Lopez, 2006). The permissive parenting style increases impulsiveness, decreases personal control, and increases both alcohol use and alcohol-related problems for children. Also, lack of parental involvement and interaction results in an increased risk of violence, primarily in male juveniles (Brook et al, 2014).

In line with prior studies, a significant negative correlation was found between the adult-child relationship and risk-taking behavior. Hughes and Bolar (2012) concluded that there is a close relation between positive parent-child relationship during childhood and more risk-

The Implication of Parenting Style & Parent-Child Relationship in Risk-Taking Behavior and Perception Among Indian Sexual Minority and Heterosexual Youth

taking as young adults, suggesting when an individual has a supportive parent-child relationship, their risk-taking perception will be low and they will be less likely to engage in risky behaviors.

Furthermore, many studies have found a strong correlation between parent-child relation and risk-taking, behaviors which include financial risk-taking, risky sexual behavior, delinquency, and self-injured behavior including suicide. Rick Nauert (2018) suggested that going into debt or breaking the laws could be rooted in the individual's childhood relationship with parents. Research suggests that adults' financial risk-taking was predicted by negative parental interactions, concluding that parent-child interactions may serve as a cue as to the relevant costs and benefits of risk-taking behavior (Del Giudice, 2009; Xiao et al., 2011). Moreover, when it comes to risky sexual behaviors researches show that an adult who grew up with more caring and less controlling parents and who talked about sex with their parent are most likely to have better quality relationships and to an extent, engage in safer sexual behaviors. (Nicole M. Richards, 2013). Hutchison and Conney (2005) suggested that sex education provided at home by parents was related to the later age of sexual activity and more effective contraception use. Kelly Elizabeth Carter (2009) suggested that delinquency was associated with lower parent-child relationship quality, thereby concluding that good parenting skills can lower the rate of delinquency. High support and high monitoring can produce better adolescent outcomes in terms of safeguarding delinquency (Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg & Dornbusch, 1991; McKinney & Renk, 2008; Simons & Conger, 2007). Furthermore, it is noted that the experience of adverse family life is correlated with self-injury behavior. Study shows that high-quality parent-child relationships, such as parent-child trust and parent-child communication, were linked to fewer discipline violations, less antisocial behavior (Burk & Laursen, 2010). Recent studies have demonstrated that poor-quality parent-child attachment can increase the incidence of self-injury behavior (Honglei et al., 2018). In addition, combinations of high parental control with low perceived love and high control with high role reversal were associated with particularly elevated risks for suicide attempts (Reznikoff, 1982).

CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to understand the relationship between the parenting style, parent-child relationship, risk-taking behavior, and risk perception in Indian LGBTQI+ and Heterosexual Youth. Research has upended with the conclusion that parent-child relationship, risk-taking behavior, and risk-taking perception between the LGBTQI+ youth and heterosexual youth suggested significant differences between both the groups. A negative correlation was found between authoritarian parenting style and parent-child relationship whereas a positive correlation was found between authoritative parenting style and parent-child relationship. Permissive parenting style was found positively correlated with risk-taking behavior. A negative correlation was found between the Parent-child relationship and risk-taking behavior.

Limitation and Future Implication

The current research has certain limitations. The sample size was small as the study was conducted in the constraints of a pandemic and the sample was largely from an urban setting. Therefore, generalization of results is limited. Also, the study has no qualitative data to take into account for in-depth understanding.

The Implication of Parenting Style & Parent-Child Relationship in Risk-Taking Behavior and Perception Among Indian Sexual Minority and Heterosexual Youth

Despite these limitations, this study contributes to literature pertaining to parenting style, parent-child relationship, risk-taking behavior, risk-taking perception in the sexual minority (LGBTQI+) and Heterosexual youth. The findings of this study could be beneficial in developing certain policies to ensure proper mechanisms to address the well-being of LGBTQI+ youth in the country, who are currently highly stigmatized. Future research on similar topics is necessary and could use different tools of data collection such as interviews or focus group discussions for the in-depth understanding of people's perceptions. Certain variables like socio-economic to behavior status and educational qualification can be added to future research to make the study more inclusive and generalizable. Also, sex can be considered as a variable in order to study certain differences between risk-taking behavior amongst the youth.

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The Implication of Parenting Style & Parent-Child Relationship in Risk-Taking Behavior and Perception Among Indian Sexual Minority and Heterosexual Youth

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Conflict of Interest

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