

Research Paper

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

Sham S. Bali^{1*}, Dr. Manju Rani²

ABSTRACT

Mental health awareness and positive attitudes toward mental health are increasingly recognized as essential determinants of psychological well-being, help-seeking behavior, and stigma reduction. Despite growing public discourse regarding mental health, substantial gaps in mental health literacy continue to exist among young adults, particularly in developing countries such as India (Jorm et al., 1997; Jorm, 2012; Kutcher et al., 2016). The present study examined awareness and attitudes toward mental health among young adults residing in Delhi-MCD and explored their relationship with emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. A cross-sectional descriptive-correlational research design was employed among 60 young adults aged 18–21 years. Data were collected using the Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health Scale (Bali, 2025), the Emotional Intelligence Scale (Hyde, Pethe, & Dhar, 2002), and the WHO-5 Well-Being Index (WHO, 1998). Descriptive statistics and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analyses were conducted. Findings indicated moderate levels of mental health awareness, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being. Significant positive correlations were observed among awareness and attitudes toward mental health, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being. The findings suggest that emotional intelligence and psychological well-being function as important psychological correlates of mental health awareness and attitudes. The study highlights the need for comprehensive mental health literacy initiatives, emotional intelligence training programs, and psychological well-being interventions among urban youth.

Keywords: *Mental health awareness, mental health attitude, emotional intelligence, psychological well-being, young adults, Delhi-MCD, mental health literacy*

Mental health is an essential component of overall health and well-being and significantly influences individuals' thoughts, emotions, behaviors, productivity, and quality of life (World Health Organization [WHO], 2023; Keyes, 2007; Ryff & Keyes, 1995). The World Health Organization defines mental health as a state of well-being in which individuals realize their abilities, cope effectively with normal life stressors, work productively, and contribute meaningfully to society (WHO, 2023). Contemporary perspectives emphasize that mental health extends beyond the mere absence of mental

¹Research Scholar, School of Behavioural Sciences, Apeejay Stya University, Gurugram, Haryana, India

²Assistant Professor, School of Behavioural Sciences, Apeejay Stya University, Gurugram, Haryana, India

*Corresponding Author

Received: June 29, 2026; Revision Received: July 19, 2026; Accepted: July 23, 2026

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

illness and encompasses positive emotional, psychological, and social functioning (Keyes, 2002; Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Diener et al., 2018).

Globally, mental health disorders have emerged as a major public health concern. The World Health Organization estimates that approximately one billion people worldwide live with a mental disorder, while depression and anxiety disorders remain among the leading causes of disability (WHO, 2023; Patel et al., 2018). Epidemiological evidence suggests that nearly 50% of all mental disorders begin before the age of 14 years, while approximately 75% develop before the age of 24 years (Kessler et al., 2005; Solmi et al., 2022). Consequently, young adulthood represents a critical developmental period for mental health promotion and preventive interventions (Arnett, 2000; Sawyer et al., 2018).

The mental health status of young adults has received increasing attention due to growing levels of psychological distress, anxiety, depression, loneliness, and stress reported across different countries (Twenge et al., 2019; WHO, 2023). Young adults experience numerous developmental transitions, including higher education, career establishment, financial independence, relationship formation, and identity exploration, all of which may influence psychological functioning (Arnett, 2000; Schulenberg & Schoon, 2012). The increasing complexity of modern social environments, combined with technological changes and economic uncertainties, further contributes to mental health challenges among youth populations (Patel et al., 2018; Twenge et al., 2019).

In India, mental health has become a significant public health priority. The National Mental Health Survey of India reported prevalence rates indicating substantial psychiatric morbidity and treatment gaps across the country (Gururaj et al., 2016). The survey revealed treatment gaps ranging from approximately 70% to 86% across various mental disorders, suggesting that a large proportion of individuals requiring psychological support remain untreated (NIMHANS, 2016; Gururaj et al., 2016). Multiple factors contribute to this treatment gap, including inadequate awareness, poor mental health literacy, limited accessibility of services, shortage of trained professionals, financial barriers, and pervasive stigma associated with mental illness (Math & Srinivasaraju, 2010; Thornicroft et al., 2016; Patel et al., 2018).

Mental health literacy has emerged as a crucial construct for understanding public perceptions of mental health. Jorm et al. (1997) introduced the concept to describe knowledge and beliefs regarding mental disorders that facilitate their recognition, management, and prevention. Mental health literacy encompasses awareness of symptoms, understanding of risk factors, knowledge of available treatments, and attitudes that encourage help-seeking behavior (Jorm, 2012; Kutcher et al., 2016). Individuals possessing greater mental health literacy are more likely to identify mental health problems accurately, seek professional assistance, support others experiencing psychological difficulties, and engage in preventive mental health practices (Reavley & Jorm, 2012; Wei et al., 2015).

Research consistently demonstrates that inadequate mental health literacy is associated with delayed diagnosis, reluctance to seek treatment, and increased stigma toward individuals experiencing mental illness (Gulliver et al., 2010; Kutcher et al., 2016). Studies conducted across diverse cultural settings indicate that misconceptions regarding mental illness continue to persist despite increasing awareness campaigns (Corrigan, 2004; Henderson et al., 2013). In India, several investigations have reported insufficient awareness regarding

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

mental disorders, treatment facilities, and available support services among both general and educated populations (Ahmed & Baruah, 2017; Sharma et al., 2018; Verma & Chaturvedi, 2020).

Attitudes toward mental health represent another critical component influencing mental health outcomes. Positive attitudes facilitate help-seeking behavior, empathy, social acceptance, and support for individuals experiencing psychological difficulties (Corrigan & Watson, 2002; Stuart, 2016). Conversely, negative attitudes contribute to stigma, discrimination, social exclusion, and treatment avoidance (Corrigan, 2004; Thornicroft et al., 2016). Stigma remains one of the most significant barriers preventing individuals from accessing mental health services worldwide (Henderson et al., 2013; Evans-Lacko et al., 2012). Consequently, understanding attitudes toward mental health is essential for designing effective awareness programs and intervention strategies.

Urban environments create unique challenges and opportunities for mental health. Rapid urbanization, educational competition, occupational demands, social isolation, economic pressures, and increasing digital engagement have transformed the experiences of contemporary youth (Peen et al., 2010; Patel et al., 2018). Although urban areas generally provide greater access to healthcare infrastructure and educational opportunities, they also expose individuals to multiple psychosocial stressors that may negatively affect mental health (Silva et al., 2020; WHO, 2023). Young adults residing in metropolitan areas often report elevated levels of stress, anxiety, burnout, and emotional exhaustion compared to previous generations (Twenge et al., 2019).

Delhi-MCD represents one of the largest urban populations in India and comprises a diverse demographic of young adults navigating significant educational, occupational, and social transitions. Despite increasing governmental and institutional efforts aimed at promoting mental health awareness, region-specific evidence regarding awareness and attitudes toward mental health among young adults in Delhi-MCD remains limited. This gap highlights the need for empirical investigations examining mental health literacy and associated psychological factors within this population.

Another important psychological factor associated with mental health is emotional intelligence. Mayer and Salovey (1997) conceptualized emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and utilize emotions effectively. Goleman (1995) further emphasized its role in personal effectiveness, resilience, social competence, and adaptive functioning. Research consistently demonstrates that individuals possessing higher emotional intelligence experience lower levels of anxiety and depression, better interpersonal relationships, enhanced coping strategies, and greater psychological adjustment (Schutte et al., 2007; Extremera & Fernández-Berrocal, 2006; Zeidner et al., 2012).

Psychological well-being represents another important indicator of positive mental health. Psychological well-being encompasses positive emotional functioning, self-acceptance, autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, purpose in life, and positive interpersonal relationships (Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Keyes, 2007). Individuals reporting higher psychological well-being tend to demonstrate greater resilience, life satisfaction, physical health, and academic achievement (Diener et al., 2018; Ryff, 2014).

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

Theoretical and empirical evidence suggests that mental health awareness, attitudes toward mental health, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being are interconnected constructs. Individuals with higher emotional intelligence may be better able to recognize psychological difficulties, understand emotional experiences, and develop more positive attitudes toward mental health. Similarly, greater awareness regarding mental health may facilitate adaptive coping, reduce stigma, encourage help-seeking behavior, and enhance psychological well-being (Jorm, 2012; Schutte et al., 2007).

Despite growing interest in mental health literacy and emotional intelligence, relatively few studies have simultaneously examined awareness and attitudes toward mental health, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being among urban Indian youth. Furthermore, region-specific evidence from Delhi-MCD remains scarce. Therefore, the present study was undertaken to assess awareness and attitudes toward mental health among young adults residing in Delhi-MCD and to examine their relationship with emotional intelligence and psychological well-being.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mental Health Awareness and Mental Health Literacy

Mental health awareness constitutes a fundamental component of mental health literacy and has received increasing attention over the past three decades. The concept of mental health literacy was first introduced by Jorm et al. (1997), who defined it as knowledge and beliefs regarding mental disorders that facilitate their recognition, management, and prevention. Since its introduction, the construct has evolved to encompass awareness of symptoms, understanding of risk factors, knowledge of treatment options, attitudes toward mental illness, and help-seeking behaviors (Jorm, 2012; Kutcher et al., 2016).

Research conducted across different countries has consistently demonstrated that individuals with higher levels of mental health literacy are more likely to identify symptoms of mental illness, seek professional assistance, and engage in preventive mental health practices (Reavley & Jorm, 2012; Wei et al., 2015). Conversely, inadequate awareness often results in delayed diagnosis, poor treatment adherence, and increased psychological distress (Gulliver et al., 2010). Kutcher et al. (2016) argued that improving mental health literacy among youth represents one of the most effective strategies for reducing stigma and enhancing access to mental health services.

Studies among university students have reported varying levels of mental health awareness. Furnham and Swami (2018) found that although awareness regarding common mental health conditions has increased over time, misconceptions regarding causes, treatment, and recovery continue to persist. Similarly, Wei et al. (2015) observed that educational interventions significantly improved students' knowledge and attitudes toward mental health, suggesting that awareness can be enhanced through structured programs.

Within the Indian context, mental health awareness remains relatively limited despite increasing public discourse surrounding psychological well-being. The National Mental Health Survey of India reported that awareness regarding mental health conditions and available treatment services remains inadequate across many sections of society (Gururaj et al., 2016). Ahmed and Baruah (2017) observed poor awareness regarding mental illness among family members of psychiatric patients, highlighting the need for targeted educational interventions. Sharma et al. (2018) further reported that misconceptions

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

regarding mental illness continue to influence attitudes and treatment-seeking behaviors among young adults. Mental health awareness among urban youth has become particularly important due to increasing exposure to academic pressure, occupational stress, social comparison, and digital media influences (Patel et al., 2007; Twenge et al., 2019). Young adults possessing greater awareness regarding mental health are generally more capable of recognizing symptoms, understanding treatment options, and engaging in adaptive coping strategies (Jorm, 2012; Kutcher et al., 2016).

Attitudes Toward Mental Health

Attitudes toward mental health represent an important determinant of help-seeking behavior, treatment adherence, and social inclusion of individuals experiencing psychological difficulties (Corrigan & Watson, 2002). Attitudes are generally defined as learned predispositions that influence individuals' evaluations, beliefs, and behavioral responses toward particular objects, people, or situations (Ajzen, 2001). In the context of mental health, attitudes encompass perceptions regarding mental illness, mental health services, treatment effectiveness, and individuals experiencing psychological disorders.

Research has consistently demonstrated that positive attitudes toward mental health facilitate help-seeking behavior and reduce stigma (Corrigan, 2004; Henderson et al., 2013). Individuals who possess favorable attitudes toward mental health are more likely to seek professional assistance when experiencing psychological distress and are generally more supportive of others facing mental health challenges (Stuart, 2016).

Negative attitudes, on the other hand, often contribute to stigma and discrimination. Corrigan (2004) described stigma as a complex social process involving stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination against individuals with mental illness. Stigmatizing attitudes frequently discourage individuals from disclosing mental health concerns or accessing treatment services (Thornicroft et al., 2016).

Indian studies have reported similar concerns. Gupta and Singh (2019) found that negative attitudes and misconceptions significantly influenced young adults' willingness to seek mental health services. Verma and Chaturvedi (2020) reported that despite increasing mental health awareness campaigns, stereotypical beliefs regarding mental illness remain prevalent among urban populations. These findings suggest that awareness alone may not be sufficient unless accompanied by positive attitudinal change.

Familiarity with Mental Health

Familiarity refers to direct or indirect exposure to mental health issues through personal experience, family members, friends, educational experiences, or community interactions (Corrigan et al., 2001). Research indicates that familiarity with mental illness often contributes to greater understanding, empathy, and acceptance of individuals experiencing psychological difficulties.

Corrigan et al. (2001) reported that individuals who have direct contact with people experiencing mental illness tend to exhibit lower levels of stigma and more positive attitudes compared to those with limited exposure. Similar findings were reported by Angermeyer and Dietrich (2006), who observed that familiarity enhances understanding and reduces fear associated with mental disorders.

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

Among young adults, familiarity with mental health issues may arise through social networks, educational experiences, counseling services, and media exposure. Such familiarity can contribute significantly to mental health literacy by providing practical insights into psychological difficulties and available support systems (Jorm, 2012).

Knowledge on Mental Health

Knowledge regarding mental health represents a core component of mental health literacy and includes understanding symptoms, causes, risk factors, treatment approaches, and preventive strategies (Jorm et al., 1997). Research suggests that individuals possessing greater knowledge are more likely to recognize mental health problems accurately and seek appropriate intervention (Kutcher et al., 2016).

Knowledge plays a particularly important role in reducing misconceptions regarding mental illness. Many individuals continue to attribute mental health problems to personal weakness, supernatural causes, or moral failings, especially in societies where mental health education remains limited (Patel et al., 2018). Increasing accurate knowledge regarding mental health can therefore contribute significantly to stigma reduction and help-seeking behavior.

Indian studies have repeatedly highlighted deficiencies in mental health knowledge among youth populations. Research conducted by Sharma et al. (2018) and Ahmed and Baruah (2017) demonstrated considerable gaps in understanding symptoms, treatment options, and recovery processes associated with mental disorders. These findings underscore the importance of educational interventions aimed at improving mental health knowledge.

Media Exposure and Mental Health Awareness

Media exposure has emerged as a significant source of information regarding mental health, particularly among young adults. Traditional media, digital platforms, social networking sites, podcasts, online campaigns, and streaming services increasingly influence public perceptions of mental illness (Livingstone, 2014; Naslund et al., 2020).

Research suggests that media can function both as a facilitator and barrier to mental health awareness. Positive and evidence-based media portrayals contribute to increased awareness, reduced stigma, and improved understanding of mental health issues (Clement et al., 2015). Conversely, inaccurate or sensationalized portrayals may reinforce stereotypes and misconceptions regarding mental illness (Stuart, 2006).

Young adults rely heavily on digital platforms for health-related information. Naslund et al. (2020) observed that social media platforms increasingly serve as sources of mental health information, peer support, and help-seeking guidance. Consequently, media exposure may significantly influence awareness and attitudes toward mental health among contemporary youth populations.

Emotional Intelligence and Mental Health

Emotional intelligence has become one of the most extensively studied psychological constructs associated with mental health and well-being. Mayer and Salovey (1997) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and utilize emotions effectively. Goleman (1995) further emphasized its importance in leadership, interpersonal functioning, resilience, and psychological adjustment.

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

The Emotional Intelligence Scale developed by Hyde, Pethe, and Dhar (2002) conceptualizes emotional intelligence across ten dimensions, including self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, emotional stability, managing relations, integrity, self-development, value orientation, commitment, and altruistic behavior. These dimensions collectively contribute to adaptive emotional functioning and social competence.

Numerous studies have demonstrated positive relationships between emotional intelligence and mental health outcomes. Schutte et al. (2007) conducted a meta-analysis and found that emotional intelligence was significantly associated with psychological health, life satisfaction, and emotional well-being. Extremera and Fernández-Berrocal (2006) similarly reported that emotionally intelligent individuals experience lower levels of anxiety and depression and greater psychological adjustment.

Research conducted among Indian youth has also highlighted the importance of emotional intelligence in promoting mental health. Singh and Sharma (2019) found that emotional intelligence significantly predicted psychological adjustment and stress management among university students. These findings suggest that emotional intelligence may function as a protective factor contributing to positive mental health outcomes.

Psychological Well-Being and Mental Health

Psychological well-being represents one of the most important indicators of positive mental health and human flourishing. Unlike traditional approaches that focus primarily on psychopathology and psychological distress, psychological well-being emphasizes optimal functioning, personal growth, life satisfaction, and positive emotional experiences (Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Keyes, 2007). The concept has gained substantial attention within positive psychology and mental health research because it provides a comprehensive understanding of human functioning beyond the absence of mental illness (Seligman, 2011).

Ryff and Keyes (1995) conceptualized psychological well-being as a multidimensional construct consisting of six components: self-acceptance, autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, purpose in life, and positive relations with others. Individuals demonstrating high levels of psychological well-being tend to exhibit greater resilience, adaptive coping, emotional stability, and life satisfaction (Ryff, 2014). Similarly, Diener et al. (2018) emphasized that psychological well-being reflects individuals' evaluations of their lives and their ability to function effectively across different domains.

The World Health Organization has consistently highlighted psychological well-being as a central component of overall health (WHO, 2023). Research indicates that individuals with higher psychological well-being experience better physical health outcomes, lower morbidity rates, stronger social relationships, greater productivity, and enhanced quality of life (Diener et al., 2018; Keyes, 2007). Conversely, lower levels of well-being are associated with increased vulnerability to anxiety, depression, stress, and psychological distress (Ryff, 2014).

The WHO-5 Well-Being Index has become one of the most widely used measures of subjective psychological well-being due to its brevity, reliability, and strong psychometric properties (Topp et al., 2015). Studies utilizing the WHO-5 have consistently demonstrated its effectiveness in assessing positive mental health across diverse populations and cultural settings.

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

Among young adults, psychological well-being is particularly important because this developmental stage involves multiple transitions and challenges related to education, employment, relationships, and identity development (Arnett, 2000). Research indicates that psychological well-being is positively associated with academic achievement, self-esteem, resilience, and emotional adjustment among university students and young adults (Diener et al., 2018; Ryff, 2014).

Several studies have reported significant associations between mental health awareness and psychological well-being. Individuals possessing greater awareness regarding mental health often demonstrate healthier coping strategies, improved emotional regulation, and greater willingness to seek support when needed (Jorm, 2012; Reavley & Jorm, 2012). Consequently, mental health literacy may contribute directly and indirectly to enhanced psychological well-being.

Relationship Between Mental Health Awareness, Emotional Intelligence, and Psychological Well-Being

The relationship between mental health awareness, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being has attracted increasing scholarly attention in recent years. Theoretical models suggest that these constructs are closely interconnected and mutually reinforcing (Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Keyes, 2007).

Individuals possessing higher levels of emotional intelligence are generally better able to recognize emotional experiences, regulate psychological distress, and develop adaptive coping strategies (Schutte et al., 2007). Such individuals may therefore demonstrate greater awareness regarding mental health issues and more positive attitudes toward mental illness. Emotional intelligence also facilitates empathy and understanding, which may reduce stigmatizing attitudes and enhance mental health literacy (Goleman, 1995).

Research conducted by Extremera and Fernández-Berrocal (2006) found that emotional intelligence significantly predicted psychological well-being, life satisfaction, and emotional adjustment. Similarly, Schutte et al. (2007) reported positive associations between emotional intelligence and multiple indicators of psychological health. Zeidner et al. (2012) concluded that emotional intelligence functions as a protective factor that promotes resilience and psychological well-being.

Mental health awareness may also influence psychological well-being by encouraging help-seeking behavior and reducing stigma. Individuals who possess accurate knowledge regarding mental health are more likely to recognize symptoms of psychological distress and access professional support when required (Jorm, 2012; Kutcher et al., 2016). Consequently, greater awareness may contribute to improved psychological functioning and overall well-being.

Empirical evidence suggests that awareness, attitudes, emotional intelligence, and well-being collectively contribute to positive mental health outcomes. However, relatively limited research has examined these relationships simultaneously among urban Indian youth populations, particularly within the context of Delhi-MCD.

Research Gap

A comprehensive review of literature reveals several important gaps in existing research.

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

First, although substantial research has been conducted on mental health literacy, stigma, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being independently, relatively few studies have examined these variables within a single conceptual framework (Jorm, 2012; Schutte et al., 2007).

Second, much of the existing literature has focused on clinical populations, healthcare professionals, or university students in Western countries, limiting the generalizability of findings to urban Indian youth populations (Patel et al., 2018).

Third, studies conducted within India have primarily concentrated on prevalence rates, stigma, and treatment gaps rather than examining the multidimensional components of mental health awareness, including familiarity, knowledge, media exposure, and attitudes toward mental health (Gururaj et al., 2016).

Fourth, limited region-specific evidence is available regarding awareness and attitudes toward mental health among young adults residing in Delhi-MCD. Given the unique sociocultural and urban characteristics of the region, localized investigations are necessary to understand mental health perceptions and related psychological factors.

Finally, very few studies have examined the role of emotional intelligence and psychological well-being in shaping awareness and attitudes toward mental health among young adults. Understanding these relationships may provide valuable insights for designing comprehensive mental health promotion programs.

Rationale of the Study

Mental health challenges among young adults have increased substantially over the past decade due to academic pressures, occupational uncertainty, changing social relationships, technological influences, and increasing psychosocial stressors (Patel et al., 2018; Twenge et al., 2019). Despite growing awareness regarding mental health issues, misconceptions, stigma, and inadequate knowledge continue to limit effective help-seeking behavior and mental healthcare utilization (Corrigan, 2004; Thornicroft et al., 2016).

The present study is important because it seeks to provide empirical evidence regarding awareness and attitudes toward mental health among young adults residing in Delhi-MCD. By examining dimensions such as mental health awareness, familiarity, knowledge, media exposure, and attitudes, the study aims to develop a comprehensive understanding of mental health literacy within this population.

Furthermore, investigating the relationship between mental health awareness, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being may contribute to the development of evidence-based interventions aimed at promoting positive mental health outcomes. The findings may assist educators, mental health professionals, policymakers, and community organizations in designing targeted awareness campaigns, emotional intelligence training programs, and psychological well-being initiatives for young adults.

Objectives of the Study

The present study was conducted with the following objectives:

1. To assess the level of awareness regarding mental health among young adults residing in Delhi-MCD.

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

2. To assess attitudes toward mental health among young adults residing in Delhi-MCD.
3. To examine familiarity, knowledge, and media exposure related to mental health among young adults.
4. To assess emotional intelligence among young adults residing in Delhi-MCD.
5. To assess psychological well-being among young adults residing in Delhi-MCD.
6. To examine the relationship between awareness and attitude toward mental health and emotional intelligence.
7. To examine the relationship between awareness and attitude toward mental health and psychological well-being.
8. To examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being.

Hypotheses

Based on the review of literature and theoretical framework, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- **H1:** Awareness and attitude toward mental health will be positively associated with emotional intelligence among young adults.
- **H2:** Awareness and attitude toward mental health will be positively associated with psychological well-being among young adults.
- **H3:** Emotional intelligence will be positively associated with psychological well-being among young adults.
- **H4:** Mental health awareness, familiarity, knowledge, and media exposure will significantly contribute to positive attitudes toward mental health.
- **H5:** Higher levels of emotional intelligence will be associated with higher levels of mental health awareness and psychological well-being.

METHOD

Research Design

The present study employed a cross-sectional descriptive-correlational research design. A quantitative research approach was adopted to assess awareness and attitudes toward mental health and to examine their relationship with emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among young adults residing in Delhi-MCD. Descriptive research designs facilitate the systematic investigation of characteristics, behaviors, and perceptions within a population, while correlational designs enable the examination of relationships among variables without experimental manipulation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Field, 2018).

The study focused on multiple dimensions of mental health awareness, including mental health awareness, familiarity, knowledge on mental health, media exposure, and attitudes toward mental health. Additionally, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being were examined as important psychological correlates of mental health awareness and attitudes.

Participants

The study was conducted among 60 young adults residing in Delhi-MCD. Participants were between 18 and 21 years of age ($M = 19.15$, $SD = 1.01$). The sample comprised 32 females (53.3%) and 28 males (46.7%).

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

Young adulthood was selected as the target population because it represents a critical developmental period characterized by educational transitions, career-related challenges, social role changes, and increasing psychological responsibilities (Arnett, 2000; Schulenberg & Schoon, 2012). These developmental experiences often influence mental health awareness, emotional functioning, and psychological well-being.

Inclusion Criteria

The following inclusion criteria were applied:

- Young adults aged between 18 and 21 years.
- Residents of Delhi-MCD.
- Individuals capable of understanding English and responding to the questionnaire.
- Individuals who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study.

Exclusion Criteria

Participants were excluded if they:

- Were below 18 years or above 21 years of age.
- Submitted incomplete responses.
- Declined to provide informed consent.

Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling technique was employed for participant selection. Purposive sampling is widely used in social and behavioral science research when participants possess characteristics relevant to the objectives of the study (Etikan et al., 2016). Participants meeting the inclusion criteria were approached through online and offline platforms and invited to participate voluntarily.

Instruments

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health Scale (AATMHS)

Awareness and attitudes toward mental health were assessed using the **Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health Scale (AATMHS)** developed by **Bali (2025)** under the supervision of **Dr. Manju Rani**. The scale was specifically designed to assess mental health literacy and attitudes among young adults.

The instrument comprises five dimensions:

1. Attitude Towards Mental Health (ATT)
2. Mental Health Awareness (AWARE)
3. Familiarity (FAM)
4. Knowledge on Mental Health (KMH)
5. Media Exposure (MED)

Items are rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). Higher scores indicate greater awareness and more positive attitudes toward mental health.

The scale was developed following standard psychometric principles including item generation, expert validation, and preliminary psychometric evaluation. The instrument was designed to assess not only awareness but also broader aspects of mental health literacy including familiarity, exposure, and knowledge.

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS)

Emotional intelligence was assessed using the **Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS)** developed by **Hyde, Pethe, and Dhar (2002)**. The scale consists of 34 items and measures ten dimensions of emotional intelligence:

1. Self-Awareness
2. Empathy
3. Self-Motivation
4. Emotional Stability
5. Managing Relations
6. Integrity
7. Self-Development
8. Value Orientation
9. Commitment
10. Altruistic Behaviour

Responses are recorded on a five-point response format. Higher scores indicate higher levels of emotional intelligence. The instrument has demonstrated satisfactory reliability and validity and has been widely used within Indian psychological research (Hyde et al., 2002).

WHO-5 Well-Being Index

Psychological well-being was assessed using the **WHO-5 Well-Being Index** developed by the **World Health Organization (1998)**. The WHO-5 consists of five positively worded items assessing subjective well-being during the previous two weeks.

Participants respond using a six-point scale ranging from 0 (At no time) to 5 (All of the time). Total scores range from 0 to 25, with higher scores reflecting greater psychological well-being. The WHO-5 has demonstrated strong psychometric properties across diverse populations and has been extensively used in public health and psychological research (Topp et al., 2015).

Procedure

Data collection was conducted through Google Forms. Prior to participation, respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, confidentiality of responses, voluntary participation, and their right to withdraw at any stage without penalty.

After providing informed consent, participants completed a demographic information sheet followed by the Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health Scale, Emotional Intelligence Scale, and WHO-5 Well-Being Index. Participants were instructed to answer all items honestly and independently. Completed responses were screened for completeness before inclusion in the final dataset.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to established ethical guidelines governing psychological research. Participants were informed about the nature and purpose of the study and provided informed consent prior to participation. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the research process. No personally identifiable information was disclosed, and all data were used solely for academic and research purposes.

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

Participation was entirely voluntary, and respondents retained the right to discontinue participation at any point. The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles outlined by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2020) and relevant institutional research guidelines.

Statistical Analysis

Data were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The following statistical techniques were employed:

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages, means, medians, standard deviations, skewness, kurtosis, minimum values, and maximum values were calculated to summarize participant characteristics and study variables (Field, 2018).

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis was conducted to examine relationships among awareness and attitudes toward mental health, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being (Cohen et al., 2018).

The level of statistical significance was set at .05 and .01 levels.

RESULTS

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health

Awareness and attitude toward mental health were assessed across five dimensions: Attitude Towards Mental Health, Mental Health Awareness, Familiarity, Knowledge on Mental Health, and Media Exposure.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health Variables (N = 60)

Variable	Mean	Median	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Attitude Towards Mental Health	28.82	32	9.16	10	45
Mental Health Awareness	32.8	37.5	14.31	8	55
Familiarity	9.93	10	3.59	3	15
Knowledge on Mental Health	25.67	29	11.14	5	40
Media Exposure	9.55	10	4.12	2	15

The findings revealed that Mental Health Awareness obtained the highest mean score ($M = 32.80$, Median = 37.50, $SD = 14.31$), suggesting that participants possessed moderate to relatively high levels of awareness regarding mental health issues. The relatively large standard deviation indicates considerable variability in awareness levels among respondents. Scores ranged from 8 to 55, demonstrating differences in exposure and understanding of mental health concepts.

Attitude Towards Mental Health recorded a mean score of 28.82 (Median = 32.00, $SD = 9.16$), indicating generally positive attitudes toward mental health and mental illness. Participants appeared relatively accepting of mental health concerns and supportive of individuals experiencing psychological difficulties.

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

Knowledge on Mental Health yielded a mean score of 25.67 (Median = 29.00, SD = 11.14), suggesting moderate knowledge regarding mental health symptoms, causes, treatment options, and recovery processes. Familiarity (M = 9.93, Median = 10.00, SD = 3.59) and Media Exposure (M = 9.55, Median = 10.00, SD = 4.12) recorded comparatively lower scores, indicating limited direct exposure to mental health experiences and mental health-related information sources.

Overall, the findings suggest that participants possessed moderate levels of mental health literacy, with awareness being relatively stronger than familiarity and media exposure.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence was assessed across ten dimensions.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics of Emotional Intelligence Dimensions (N = 60)

Dimension	Mean	Median	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Self-Awareness	8.79	9	2.81	3	15
Empathy	10.68	11	2.66	4	15
Self-Motivation	13.23	14	5.78	3	25
Emotional Stability	8.2	8	3.45	2	15
Managing Relations	8.25	8	3.61	2	15
Integrity	8.48	9	2.05	4	12
Self-Development	4.8	5	1.88	1	8
Value Orientation	5.28	5	1.22	2	8
Commitment	4.57	5	1.37	1	8
Altruistic Behaviour	5	5	1.25	2	8

The findings indicated moderate levels of emotional intelligence among participants. Self-Motivation demonstrated the highest mean score (M = 13.23, Median = 14.00, SD = 5.78), suggesting that respondents generally possessed strong goal orientation and persistence. Empathy (M = 10.68, Median = 11.00, SD = 2.66) emerged as the second-highest dimension, indicating adequate sensitivity toward the emotions and experiences of others.

Self-Awareness (M = 8.79, Median = 9.00, SD = 2.81) and Integrity (M = 8.48, Median = 9.00, SD = 2.05) also demonstrated relatively high scores, suggesting that participants possessed moderate awareness of their emotional experiences and generally adhered to value-based behavioral standards.

The lower scores observed for Self-Development, Commitment, and Altruistic Behaviour suggest areas where emotional competencies may require further strengthening among young adults.

Psychological Well-Being

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics of Psychological Well-Being (N = 60)

Variable	Mean	Median	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Psychological Well-Being	13.1	13	3.96	6	20

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

Participants obtained a mean score of 13.10 (Median = 13.00, SD = 3.96) on the WHO-5 Well-Being Index, indicating moderate levels of psychological well-being. Scores ranged from 6 to 20, suggesting variability in positive emotional functioning and life satisfaction among respondents.

The median score was almost identical to the mean score, indicating a relatively balanced distribution of well-being scores. These findings suggest that although participants generally reported satisfactory psychological functioning, a proportion of respondents may be experiencing reduced levels of well-being.

Overall Descriptive Statistics of Major Study Variables

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics of Major Study Variables (N = 60)

Variable	Mean	Median	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health	106.77	124	38.76	47	182
Emotional Intelligence	76.7	84	23.2	48	142
Psychological Well-Being	13.1	13	3.96	6	20

The overall findings indicate moderate levels of awareness and attitudes toward mental health, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being among young adults residing in Delhi-MCD.

Correlation Analysis Among Major Study Variables

To examine the relationships among awareness and attitude toward mental health, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis was conducted.

Table 5 Pearson Correlation Matrix Among Major Study Variables (N = 60)

Variables	1	2	3
1. Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health	1		
2. Emotional Intelligence	.927***	1	
3. Psychological Well-Being	.893***	.870***	1

*** $p < .001$

The results revealed statistically significant positive relationships among all major study variables. Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health demonstrated a very strong positive correlation with Emotional Intelligence ($r = .927$, $p < .001$). This finding suggests that participants who possessed higher emotional intelligence also tended to exhibit greater awareness regarding mental health issues and more favorable attitudes toward mental health. Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health also demonstrated a strong positive relationship with Psychological Well-Being ($r = .893$, $p < .001$). The findings indicate that participants possessing greater awareness and more positive attitudes toward mental health reported higher levels of subjective well-being and emotional functioning.

Similarly, Emotional Intelligence exhibited a strong positive correlation with Psychological Well-Being ($r = .870$, $p < .001$). This finding suggests that emotionally intelligent

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

individuals tend to experience greater life satisfaction, emotional stability, resilience, and overall psychological adjustment.

The magnitude of these correlations indicates that mental health awareness, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being are highly interconnected constructs among young adults residing in Delhi-MCD.

Interpretation of Findings According to Research Objectives

Objective 1: To Assess the Level of Awareness Regarding Mental Health Among Young Adults

Mental Health Awareness emerged as the highest-scoring dimension within the Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health Scale, with a mean score of 32.80 and a median score of 37.50. Knowledge on Mental Health yielded a mean score of 25.67, while Familiarity and Media Exposure recorded mean scores of 9.93 and 9.55, respectively.

These findings suggest that although participants possessed moderate awareness regarding mental health issues, their direct familiarity with mental health experiences and exposure to mental health-related information sources remained comparatively limited. The results indicate that awareness has increased among urban youth; however, experiential understanding and active engagement with mental health information require further enhancement.

Objective 2: To Assess Attitudes Toward Mental Health Among Young Adults

Participants obtained a mean score of 28.82 and a median score of 32.00 on the Attitude Towards Mental Health dimension. The findings indicate generally positive attitudes toward mental health and psychological well-being.

Positive attitudes toward mental health are particularly important because they contribute to reduced stigma, increased acceptance of mental illness, and improved willingness to seek professional help. The findings suggest that young adults in Delhi-MCD may be becoming increasingly receptive to mental health discussions and interventions.

Objective 3: To Assess Emotional Intelligence Among Young Adults

The overall Emotional Intelligence score yielded a mean of 76.70 and a median of 84.00. Among the dimensions, Self-Motivation recorded the highest mean score (13.23), followed by Empathy (10.68) and Self-Awareness (8.79).

These findings indicate that participants generally possessed moderate emotional competencies, particularly in the areas of motivation, empathy, and emotional understanding. However, comparatively lower scores on Commitment, Self-Development, and Altruistic Behaviour suggest areas where emotional competence may require strengthening.

Objective 4: To Assess Psychological Well-Being Among Young Adults

Participants reported moderate levels of psychological well-being, with a mean score of 13.10 and a median score of 13.00. The findings suggest that although participants generally experienced satisfactory emotional functioning and life satisfaction, substantial variability existed among respondents.

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

The moderate level of well-being observed in the present study may reflect the developmental challenges associated with young adulthood, including academic demands, career uncertainty, interpersonal concerns, and social transitions.

Objective 5: To Examine the Relationship Between Awareness and Attitude Toward Mental Health, Emotional Intelligence, and Psychological Well-Being

The findings revealed strong positive relationships among all major study variables. Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health demonstrated a very strong positive association with Emotional Intelligence ($r = .927$), indicating that emotionally intelligent individuals were more likely to possess greater awareness and more favorable attitudes toward mental health.

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health also demonstrated a strong positive association with Psychological Well-Being ($r = .893$), suggesting that greater awareness may contribute to positive emotional functioning and adaptive coping.

Similarly, Emotional Intelligence exhibited a strong positive relationship with Psychological Well-Being ($r = .870$), indicating that emotional competencies are important predictors of psychological adjustment and positive mental health.

DISCUSSION

The present study was undertaken to assess awareness and attitudes toward mental health among young adults residing in Delhi-MCD and to examine their relationship with emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. The findings provide valuable insights into the mental health literacy profile of urban youth and highlight the importance of emotional competencies and psychological well-being in shaping mental health awareness and attitudes.

The results revealed that Mental Health Awareness emerged as the strongest dimension of the awareness scale. Participants demonstrated moderate awareness regarding mental health concepts, symptoms, and issues. This finding aligns with previous research suggesting that increasing exposure to mental health information through educational institutions, awareness campaigns, and digital media has contributed to improvements in mental health literacy among young adults (Jorm, 2012; Kutcher et al., 2016; Wei et al., 2015). The growing visibility of mental health discussions on social media platforms, educational forums, and public campaigns may have enhanced awareness among urban youth.

However, despite relatively higher awareness scores, Familiarity and Media Exposure recorded comparatively lower mean scores. These findings suggest that although participants possess conceptual understanding of mental health issues, direct exposure to mental health experiences and consistent engagement with mental health information remain limited. Similar findings have been reported by Ahmed and Baruah (2017) and Sharma et al. (2018), who observed that awareness does not necessarily translate into practical understanding or personal familiarity with mental health concerns.

The Attitude Towards Mental Health dimension yielded relatively positive scores, indicating favorable perceptions regarding mental health and mental illness. Positive attitudes are essential because they facilitate help-seeking behavior, empathy, acceptance, and social support for individuals experiencing psychological difficulties (Corrigan & Watson, 2002;

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

Stuart, 2016). The findings suggest that stigma toward mental illness may be gradually decreasing among urban youth populations, although further efforts remain necessary to address persistent misconceptions and stereotypes.

The findings related to Knowledge on Mental Health indicated moderate levels of understanding regarding symptoms, causes, treatment approaches, and recovery processes associated with mental disorders. Participants obtained a mean score of 25.67 with a median score of 29.00, suggesting that while respondents possessed a reasonable level of mental health knowledge, considerable variability existed among individuals. These findings are consistent with previous studies reporting that young adults often possess basic knowledge regarding common mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety but demonstrate limited understanding of treatment options, preventive strategies, and professional mental health services (Kutcher et al., 2016; Reavley & Jorm, 2012). Similar observations have been reported in Indian studies, where awareness of mental health conditions was found to be higher than awareness of available treatment resources and support systems (Ahmed & Baruah, 2017; Verma & Chaturvedi, 2020).

Media Exposure recorded one of the lowest mean scores among the mental health awareness dimensions. Although contemporary young adults spend substantial amounts of time engaging with digital media and social networking platforms, exposure to reliable and evidence-based mental health information may remain limited. Research suggests that while social media can increase awareness and reduce stigma, it may also contribute to misinformation and inaccurate perceptions regarding mental health if information is not evidence-based (Naslund et al., 2020; Clement et al., 2015). The comparatively lower media exposure score observed in the present study suggests a need for more systematic dissemination of mental health information through digital platforms, educational campaigns, and community outreach programs.

The findings related to emotional intelligence revealed that Self-Motivation emerged as the strongest dimension among participants. Self-motivation reflects an individual's ability to pursue goals, maintain persistence, and remain committed despite challenges and setbacks (Goleman, 1995). The relatively high score on this dimension may reflect the competitive educational and occupational environment experienced by urban youth, where achievement orientation and perseverance are often emphasized. Previous research has demonstrated that self-motivation contributes significantly to resilience, academic success, psychological adjustment, and overall well-being (Schutte et al., 2007; Zeidner et al., 2012).

Empathy emerged as the second-highest emotional intelligence dimension. Empathy is particularly important in the context of mental health because it enables individuals to understand and respond appropriately to the emotional experiences of others (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Higher empathy may contribute to reduced stigma, increased acceptance of mental illness, and greater willingness to provide support to individuals experiencing psychological difficulties. The present findings suggest that participants generally demonstrated sensitivity toward others' emotional experiences, which may contribute positively to attitudes toward mental health.

Self-Awareness also demonstrated relatively high scores among participants. Self-awareness refers to the ability to recognize and understand one's own emotional states, strengths, limitations, and behavioral patterns (Goleman, 1995). Individuals possessing greater self-

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

awareness are often better equipped to identify signs of psychological distress and seek support when necessary. Consequently, self-awareness may serve as an important foundation for mental health literacy and psychological well-being.

Moderate scores observed for Emotional Stability and Managing Relations suggest that participants generally possessed satisfactory emotional regulation abilities and interpersonal competencies. Emotional stability is closely associated with resilience and adaptive coping, whereas managing relations reflects the ability to maintain healthy interpersonal relationships and resolve conflicts effectively (Hyde et al., 2002). These dimensions are particularly important during young adulthood, a developmental period characterized by substantial social and emotional transitions.

Psychological well-being was found to be moderate among participants. The mean score of 13.10 suggests that respondents generally experienced satisfactory levels of positive emotional functioning, life satisfaction, and psychological adjustment. However, the observed variability indicates that not all participants experienced comparable levels of well-being. These findings are consistent with previous studies reporting moderate levels of psychological well-being among university students and young adults facing academic pressures, career concerns, and social challenges (Diener et al., 2018; Ryff, 2014).

One of the most important findings of the present study was the strong positive relationship observed between Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health and Emotional Intelligence ($r = .927, p < .001$). This finding suggests that individuals possessing greater emotional competencies are more likely to exhibit higher levels of mental health awareness and more favorable attitudes toward mental health. Emotionally intelligent individuals tend to demonstrate greater emotional understanding, empathy, and psychological insight, which may facilitate recognition of mental health issues and reduce stigmatizing beliefs (Extremera & Fernández-Berrocal, 2006; Schutte et al., 2007). The strength of this relationship highlights the potential value of emotional intelligence training as a strategy for enhancing mental health literacy among young adults.

The results further revealed a strong positive relationship between Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health and Psychological Well-Being ($r = .893, p < .001$). This finding indicates that participants possessing greater awareness and more positive attitudes toward mental health tended to report higher levels of subjective well-being. Individuals who understand mental health issues may be more likely to engage in adaptive coping behaviors, seek support when necessary, and maintain positive psychological functioning (Jorm, 2012; Reavley & Jorm, 2012). The findings support the argument that mental health literacy functions not only as a knowledge-based construct but also as a protective factor contributing to psychological well-being.

Similarly, Emotional Intelligence demonstrated a strong positive relationship with Psychological Well-Being ($r = .870, p < .001$). This finding is consistent with extensive empirical evidence indicating that emotional intelligence contributes significantly to positive mental health outcomes, resilience, stress management, and life satisfaction (Schutte et al., 2007; Extremera & Fernández-Berrocal, 2006; Zeidner et al., 2012). Emotionally intelligent individuals are generally more capable of regulating emotions, maintaining interpersonal relationships, and responding effectively to life's challenges, thereby promoting psychological well-being.

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

Taken together, the findings suggest that awareness and attitudes toward mental health, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being are closely interconnected psychological constructs among young adults residing in Delhi-MCD. The results support contemporary models of positive mental health that emphasize the integration of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions of psychological functioning (Keyes, 2007; Ryff, 2014).

Implications of the Study

The findings of the present study have important implications for educational institutions, mental health professionals, policymakers, and researchers. The moderate levels of awareness and attitudes toward mental health observed among participants suggest that mental health literacy programs should be integrated into educational curricula at schools, colleges, and universities. Such programs may help enhance knowledge, reduce stigma, and promote positive attitudes toward mental health.

The strong relationship between emotional intelligence and mental health awareness suggests that emotional intelligence training may be incorporated into student development programs. Workshops focusing on self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, communication skills, and resilience may contribute to improved mental health outcomes among young adults.

The findings also highlight the importance of promoting psychological well-being through preventive mental health interventions. Educational institutions should establish accessible counseling services, peer-support programs, stress-management workshops, and mental health awareness campaigns to support students' psychological adjustment and well-being. From a policy perspective, the findings support the need for youth-focused mental health promotion initiatives under national and regional mental health programs. Increased utilization of digital media, social networking platforms, and community-based outreach programs may facilitate dissemination of accurate mental health information and improve access to psychological support services.

Limitations of the Study

Despite its contributions, the present study has several limitations. First, the study was conducted on a relatively small sample of 60 young adults, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Second, the cross-sectional nature of the research design prevents causal inferences regarding the relationships among the variables. Third, self-report measures were used, which may be influenced by social desirability bias and response tendencies.

Additionally, the study focused primarily on awareness, attitudes, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being. Other potentially important variables such as stigma, help-seeking behavior, social support, personality traits, socioeconomic status, and life events were not examined. Future studies may incorporate these variables to provide a more comprehensive understanding of mental health literacy among young adults.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined awareness and attitudes toward mental health among young adults residing in Delhi-MCD and explored their relationship with emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. The findings revealed moderate levels of mental health

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

awareness, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being among participants. Mental Health Awareness emerged as the strongest dimension of mental health literacy, while Self-Motivation and Empathy emerged as the strongest dimensions of emotional intelligence.

Significant positive relationships were observed among awareness and attitudes toward mental health, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being. The findings indicate that emotionally intelligent individuals are more likely to possess greater awareness regarding mental health issues and more positive attitudes toward mental health. Similarly, greater mental health awareness was associated with higher levels of psychological well-being.

The study underscores the importance of promoting mental health literacy, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being among young adults. Strengthening these domains may contribute to reduced stigma, improved help-seeking behavior, enhanced resilience, and better overall mental health outcomes. The findings provide valuable evidence for the development of educational, clinical, and policy-level interventions aimed at fostering a mentally healthier and psychologically resilient youth population.

REFERENCES

- Ahmed, A., & Baruah, A. (2017). Awareness of mental illness among family members of psychiatric patients and the need for intervention. *Journal of Mental Health Studies*, 45(2), 123–134.
- Ajzen, I. (2001). Nature and operation of attitudes. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52(1), 27–58. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.27>
- Angermeyer, M. C., & Dietrich, S. (2006). Public beliefs about and attitudes towards people with mental illness: A review of population studies. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica*, 113(3), 163–179.
- Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist*, 55(5), 469–480.
- Bali, S. S. (2025). *Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health Scale*. Unpublished scale, School of Behavioural Sciences, Apeejay Styra University, Gurugram, India.
- Clement, S., Schauman, O., Graham, T., Maggioni, F., Evans-Lacko, S., Bezborodovs, N., Morgan, C., Rüsch, N., Brown, J. S. L., & Thornicroft, G. (2015). What is the impact of mental health-related stigma on help-seeking? A systematic review of quantitative and qualitative studies. *Psychological Medicine*, 45(1), 11–27.
- Cohen, J., Cohen, P., West, S. G., & Aiken, L. S. (2018). *Applied Multiple Regression/Correlation Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Corrigan, P. W. (2004). How stigma interferes with mental health care. *American Psychologist*, 59(7), 614–625.
- Corrigan, P. W., & Watson, A. C. (2002). Understanding the impact of stigma on people with mental illness. *World Psychiatry*, 1(1), 16–20.
- Corrigan, P. W., River, L. P., Lundin, R. K., Penn, D. L., Uphoff-Wasowski, K., Campion, J., Mathisen, J., Gagnon, C., Bergman, M., Goldstein, H., & Kubiak, M. A. (2001). Three strategies for changing attributions about severe mental illness. *Schizophrenia Bulletin*, 27(2), 187–195.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Diener, E., Oishi, S., & Tay, L. (2018). Advances in subjective well-being research. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 2(4), 253–260.

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

- Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1–4.
- Evans-Lacko, S., Henderson, C., & Thornicroft, G. (2012). Public knowledge, attitudes and behaviour regarding people with mental illness in England. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 202(s55), s51–s57.
- Extremiera, N., & Fernández-Berrocal, P. (2006). Emotional intelligence as predictor of mental, social, and physical health in university students. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 41(2), 189–200.
- Field, A. (2018). *Discovering Statistics Using IBM SPSS Statistics* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Furnham, A., & Swami, V. (2018). Mental health literacy: A review of what it is and why it matters. *International Perspectives in Psychology*, 7(4), 240–257.
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional Intelligence*. Bantam Books.
- Gulliver, A., Griffiths, K. M., & Christensen, H. (2010). Perceived barriers and facilitators to mental health help-seeking in young people. *BMC Psychiatry*, 10(113), 1–9.
- Gupta, R., & Singh, P. (2019). Impact of stigma on attitudes toward mental health care among urban youth. *Indian Journal of Psychological Research*, 28(3), 204–217.
- Gururaj, G., Varghese, M., Benegal, V., Rao, G. N., Pathak, K., Singh, L. K., Mehta, R. Y., Ram, D., Shibukumar, T. M., Kokane, A., Lenin Singh, R. K., Chavan, B. S., Sharma, P., Ramasubramanian, C., & Dalal, P. K. (2016). *National Mental Health Survey of India, 2015–16: Summary*. National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS).
- Henderson, C., Evans-Lacko, S., & Thornicroft, G. (2013). Mental illness stigma, help seeking and public health programs. *American Journal of Public Health*, 103(5), 777–780.
- Hyde, A., Pethe, S., & Dhar, U. (2002). *Emotional Intelligence Scale: Manual*. Vedant Publications.
- Jorm, A. F. (2012). Mental health literacy: Empowering the community to take action for better mental health. *American Psychologist*, 67(3), 231–243.
- Jorm, A. F., Korten, A. E., Jacomb, P. A., Christensen, H., Rodgers, B., & Pollitt, P. (1997). Mental health literacy: A survey of the public's ability to recognize mental disorders and beliefs about treatment. *Medical Journal of Australia*, 166(4), 182–186.
- Kessler, R. C., Berglund, P., Demler, O., Jin, R., Merikangas, K., & Walters, E. (2005). Lifetime prevalence and age-of-onset distributions of DSM-IV disorders. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 62(6), 593–602.
- Keyes, C. L. M. (2002). The mental health continuum: From languishing to flourishing in life. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 43(2), 207–222.
- Keyes, C. L. M. (2007). Promoting and protecting mental health as flourishing. *American Psychologist*, 62(2), 95–108.
- Kutcher, S., Wei, Y., & Coniglio, C. (2016). Mental health literacy: Past, present, and future. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 61(3), 154–158.
- Livingstone, S. (2014). Developing social media literacy. *Media Education Research Journal*, 5(1), 1–9.
- Math, S. B., & Srinivasaraju, R. (2010). Indian psychiatric epidemiological studies: Learning from the past. *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, 52(Suppl. 1), S95–S103.
- Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P. (1997). What is emotional intelligence? In P. Salovey & D. Sluyter (Eds.), *Emotional Development and Emotional Intelligence* (pp. 3–31). Basic Books.

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

- Naslund, J. A., Aschbrenner, K. A., Marsch, L. A., & Bartels, S. J. (2020). The future of mental health care: Peer-to-peer support and social media. *Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences*, 29, e89.
- NIMHANS. (2016). *National Mental Health Survey of India 2015–16*. National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences.
- Patel, V., Flisher, A. J., Hetrick, S., & McGorry, P. (2007). Mental health of young people: A global public-health challenge. *The Lancet*, 369(9569), 1302–1313.
- Patel, V., Saxena, S., Lund, C., Thornicroft, G., Baingana, F., Bolton, P., Chisholm, D., Collins, P. Y., Cooper, J., Eaton, J., Herrman, H., Herzallah, M., Huang, Y., Jordans, M., Kleinman, A., Medina-Mora, M. E., Morgan, E., Niaz, U., Omigbodun, O., ... Unützer, J. (2018). The Lancet Commission on global mental health and sustainable development. *The Lancet*, 392(10157), 1553–1598.
- Peen, J., Schoevers, R. A., Beekman, A. T., & Dekker, J. (2010). The current status of urban-rural differences in psychiatric disorders. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica*, 121(2), 84–93.
- Reavley, N. J., & Jorm, A. F. (2012). Public recognition of mental disorders and beliefs about treatment. *Medical Journal of Australia*, 177(7), S35–S38.
- Ryff, C. D. (2014). Psychological well-being revisited: Advances in the science and practice of eudaimonia. *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics*, 83(1), 10–28.
- Ryff, C. D., & Keyes, C. L. M. (1995). The structure of psychological well-being revisited. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69(4), 719–727.
- Sawyer, S. M., Azzopardi, P. S., Wickremarathne, D., & Patton, G. C. (2018). The age of adolescence. *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health*, 2(3), 223–228.
- Scholenberg, J., & Schoon, I. (2012). The transition to adulthood across time and space. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 2012(135), 1–15.
- Schutte, N. S., Malouff, J. M., Thorsteinsson, E. B., Bhullar, N., & Rooke, S. E. (2007). A meta-analytic investigation of the relationship between emotional intelligence and health. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 42(6), 921–933.
- Seligman, M. E. P. (2011). *Flourish*. Free Press.
- Sharma, S., Rao, K., & Mishra, P. (2018). Addressing stigma and promoting mental health literacy through community education programs. *Asian Journal of Community Psychology*, 15(4), 89–105.
- Silva, M., Loureiro, A., & Cardoso, G. (2020). Social determinants of mental health. *European Journal of Psychiatry*, 34(2), 77–86.
- Solmi, M., Radua, J., Olivola, M., Croce, E., Soardo, L., Salazar de Pablo, G., Shin, J. I., Kirkbride, J. B., Jones, P., Kim, J. H., Kim, J. Y., Carvalho, A. F., Seeman, M. V., Correll, C. U., & Fusar-Poli, P. (2022). Age at onset of mental disorders worldwide. *Molecular Psychiatry*, 27(1), 281–295.
- Stuart, H. (2006). Media portrayal of mental illness and its treatments. *CNS Drugs*, 20(2), 99–106.
- Stuart, H. (2016). Reducing the stigma of mental illness. *Global Mental Health*, 3, e17.
- Thornicroft, G., Mehta, N., Clement, S., Evans-Lacko, S., Doherty, M., Rose, D., Koschorke, M., Shidhaye, R., O'Reilly, C., & Henderson, C. (2016). Evidence for effective interventions to reduce mental-health-related stigma and discrimination. *The Lancet*, 387(10023), 1123–1132.
- Topp, C. W., Østergaard, S. D., Søndergaard, S., & Bech, P. (2015). The WHO-5 Well-Being Index: A systematic review. *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics*, 84(3), 167–176.

Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

- Twenge, J. M., Joiner, T. E., Rogers, M. L., & Martin, G. N. (2019). Increases in depressive symptoms, suicide-related outcomes, and suicide rates among U.S. adolescents. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 128*(3), 185–199.
- Verma, D., & Chaturvedi, N. (2020). Evaluating the effectiveness of mental health awareness campaigns in reducing stigma. *International Journal of Mental Health Promotion, 22*(1), 45–58.
- Wei, Y., McGrath, P. J., Hayden, J., & Kutcher, S. (2015). Mental health literacy measures evaluating knowledge, attitudes and help-seeking. *BMC Psychiatry, 15*(291), 1–20.
- World Health Organization. (1998). *Wellbeing Measures in Primary Health Care: The DepCare Project*. WHO Regional Office for Europe.
- World Health Organization. (2023). *World Mental Health Report: Transforming Mental Health for All*. World Health Organization.
- Zeidner, M., Matthews, G., & Roberts, R. D. (2012). The emotional intelligence, health, and well-being nexus. *Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being, 4*(1), 1–30.

Acknowledgment

The author(s) appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Bali, S.S. & Rani, M. (2026). Awareness and Attitude Towards Mental Health among Young Adults in Delhi-MCD: The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being. *International Journal of Indian Psychology, 14*(3), 423-446. DIP:18.01.037.20261403, DOI:10.25215/1403.037