

## Exploring Behavioural Patterns and Impact of Generational Trauma on Third-Generation

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A silent transmission of the psychological, behavioural and physiological impact of traumatic events experienced by the first generation to subsequent generations, refers to Generational Trauma. The study explores behavioural patterns and the impact of generational trauma on 19 young adult, urban residents of India. Data from semi-structured interviews were analyzed, utilizing Braun & Clarke's Thematic Analysis groundwork. The majority have shown strong generational attachment and community affiliation, and an avoidant attachment within families and its subsequent effects on participants' various aspects of life. Physiological manifestations included avoidant coping strategies, boundary expansion, trust issues, guilt, people-pleasing, and aggression among others. Research suggests young adults potential to break the vicious cycle of generational trauma, indicating the need for interventions and increased awareness among the Indian population.

**Keywords:** behavioural patterns, generational trauma, impact, semi-structured interview, third-generation

Experiencing any kind of traumatic or devastating life event has a significant emotional, psychological and physical impact. Our history has witnessed such complex and distressing events for generations that have deeply affected humans (Reese et al., 2022). Events as such are often silently passed, covert and undefined as a concept and the ensuing generations inherit it either genetically or through adverse childhood experiences.

Rakoff (1966) introduced the concept of "Generational Trauma" while researching the incidence rate of psychological distress among Holocaust survivors and their children (Abdirahman, 2020). Danieli (2018) defined it as handing down trauma symptoms, the nature of responses, and emotional and psychological implications from generation to generation and noted that factors such as parenting styles, vulnerability in genes or group experiences contribute to its transmission.

The passing down of trauma effects can be subject to a varied number of incidents such as riots, loss of a loved one, domestic violence, natural disasters or any other related incident in one's life. Further, there are certain effects of traumatic events which can be felt either individually or as a community altogether. Thus, certain types of generational trauma can help us understand its nature holistically.

*Collective Trauma* includes shared traumatic experiences within societies and families such as pandemics, natural disasters, wars like WWI or WWII, genocide, slavery, or terrorism. The effects are observable across generations as patterns of fear, anxiety and how a community functions, an example being the 9/11 attack.

*Historical Trauma* indicates the impact of generational trauma witnessed by a specific cultural group due to the existence of systematic oppression. Maria Heart introduced the concept of Historical Trauma

and characterised it as multigenerational, “cumulative emotional, and psychological wounding” concerning severe group trauma being faced (Butte,2015), which results in depression, substance abuse, high mortality rates, or unresolved emotional anxiety.

*Generational Trauma* involves trauma transmission across ensuing generations from traumatic events, experienced by first-generation, and passing down its effects silently on subsequent generations. Childhood experience is an important factor and manifests behaviours and symptoms such as hypervigilance, lower self-esteem, anger, over-emotionality or guilt, etc.

Generational trauma was explored by Kaur and Jaggi (2023) in the context of the 1947 Indian-Pakistan partition. Findings suggested a moderate level of impact and incidence of trauma transmission was higher in the third-generation (grandchildren) in terms of adaptational styles, generational trauma and reparative impact.

Fitzgerald et al. (2020) proposed the link between family system theory and generational trauma. Results highlighted that trauma transmission leads to behavioural and emotional concerns among youngsters (for example-verbal aggression) and the key factors include maternal trauma, harsh parenting and negative relationships.

With the transmission of generational trauma, one of the most significant indicators is the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) that add to the intensity of transmission. These experiences that children witness during their developmental years manifest themselves negatively in the form of neglect, abuse, or any other kind of event which is overwhelming or traumatic. Thereby, it results in the formation of toxic stress for the child and affects the behavioural patterns that they exhibit (*Generational Trauma: Breaking the Cycle of Adverse Childhood Experiences. n.d*).

Families in which deep-rooted generational trauma exists lead to entrenched behavioural patterns and their impact on the individuals at the receiving end of it. Some of the early signs are adverse childhood experiences, disciplinary concerns, and poor academic records starting from school age which coincides with the family being overly protective of their children, distress being considered as a weakness or emotions being disregarded. This results in patterns of hypervigilance, emotional numbness, fear, poor time management, and lack of trust alongside symptoms like irritability, suicidal ideations, anger issues, and nightmares (Chapple, 2023). Individuals exhibit extreme responses to stress, substance use, and guilt, show low self-esteem, and are concerned about vulnerability to generational trauma (Chai, 2023).

The present study, “Exploring the Behavioural Patterns and Impact of Generational Trauma in Third-generation” has not been explored much, especially in the Indian context. It is of personal relevance as individuals like myself are struggling yet navigating through the impact of trauma witnessed by our previous generations. As of today, the young adults who constitute the third generation are at the corner of being recipients as well as the potential ones to break this cycle of trauma transmission, hence this research would fill the existing gaps in literature.

## **Method**

### **Sample**

A total of 19 participants (12 female, 7 male) residing in Delhi NCR and constituting the population of third-generation (young adults), aged 19-29 years were recruited for the present study through mutual connections, LinkedIn and Instagram, using purposive and snowball sampling.

## Measures

A semi-structured interview schedule was employed, comprising open-ended questions based on lived experiences, emotionality, narratives constructed, coping mechanisms, and family dynamics of the participants.

## Data Collection

A triangulated approach was used to collect data, comprised of semi-structured interviews, focused group discussion, preparation of codebook and further corresponded with emerged themes for analysis.

## Result

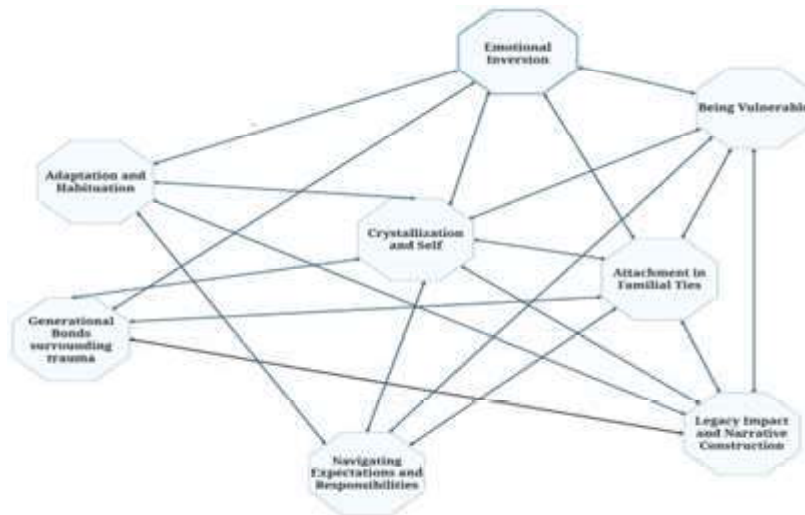


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework of Inter-relationship between Themes

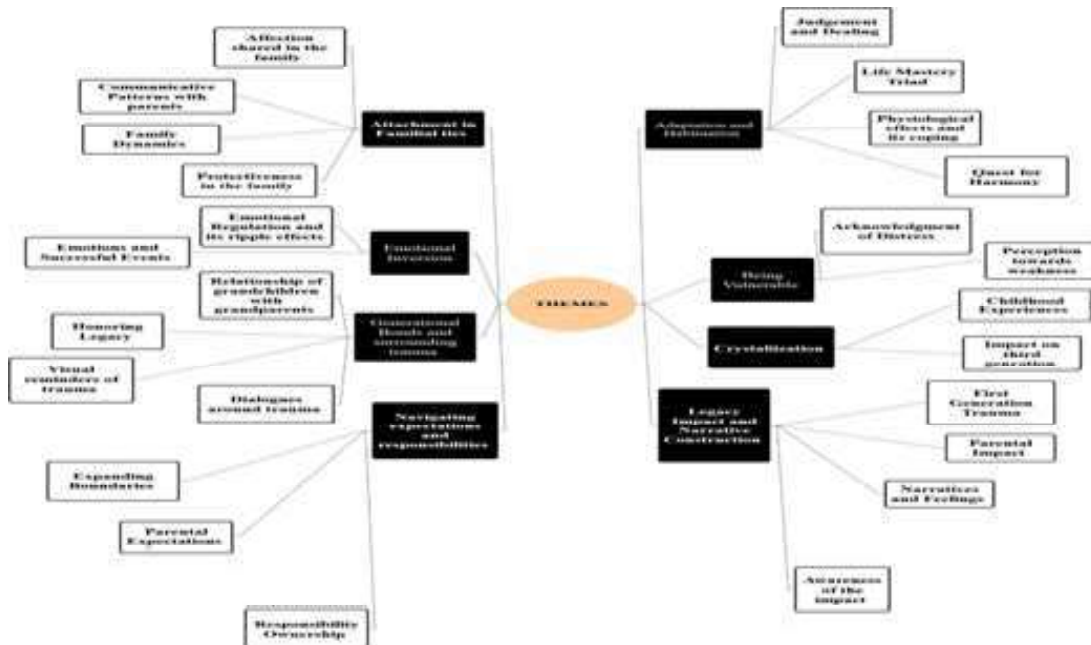


Figure 2. Theoretical Framework of Emerging Sub-themes (imported from Nvivo)

## Discussion

The present study aimed to explore behavioural patterns and the impact of generational trauma on third-generation young adults. Overall, 8 themes emerged from the study based on data generated.

### Theme 1

*“Legacy Impact and Narrative Construction”* highlights the generational effects of trauma transmission from grandparents to the ensuing generations, leading to the formation of participants’ emotional landscapes and narrative formation. Adoption of violent behaviours was found uniquely due to the exposure to family violence in children, resulting in negative effects such as anxiety, depression or temperamental issues (Kniskern, 1982). Similarly, one participant revealed *“I am my father’s female version! If my father is 100% filled with anger, I am 70% of it.”* It further becomes significant to take note of *“first-generation trauma”* i.e. specific events experienced by grandparents.

*“My grandmother told me that there used to be a hitlist- names of people who are Kashmiri Pandits are going to get shot and killed. Within one night things changed suddenly and they said if you get converted well and good if not then be prepared for death to come. Within one night my whole family fled away with nothing in hand. My grandmother told me how she was scared and it was difficult for her as a mother to even hope for his son to be alive because he ran away.”*

Traumatic events witnessed by grandparents included the 1947 India-Pakistan partition, the 1984 Sikh riots, financial crises, the loss of a loved one and property disputes, resulting in a profound influence on the subsequent generations, silently passed down, taking a toll on how the family would lead their lives, highlighting

resilience in first-generation as compared to other generations. Grandmothers raising grandchildren showcase resilience using spirituality, community support, instilling hope, and searching for joy in their relationships, helping them cope with their challenges (Dolbin-MacNab et al., 2015). Participants’ *“awareness of the impact”* recognizes how well attuned they are to the silent passing down of generational effects of trauma.

*“Now, because he did not have his father at the age of 18, he didn’t get any love. Her mother also died at the age of 24. He didn’t get that love and somewhere, I don’t like to say it, but this is a fact. My mother raised me single-handedly. He didn’t pay much attention to me. So, neither he got it nor I got it.”*

*“My grandfather and my grandmother were way stronger than my Dad.”*

The majority of them are well-attuned and aware of the effects of trauma transmission, comprehensively recognising its impact on themselves and their parents. Families engaging in effective communication about the experience resulted in *‘greater historical awareness’* and high affiliation to their identity among second and third generations (Johns et al., 2022) *“Parental Impact”* underscored understanding the nuances of the effects, perceptions over how they believe it has shaped their parents lives.

*“With my father, I feel he has that barrier that after a point he will not share things at all with anyone. That feeling of “what would have happened”, that uncertainty and even fear of unknown fear at times.”*

*“I don’t know how but he got addicted to alcohol and its consequences I am still witnessing. I have never seen my father healthy. My father’s nature is aggressive.”*

*‘Fear’ and ‘uncertainty’* among parents of second generations, lead them to emotionally repress their feelings, especially fathers partly due to the *‘strong man’* conception of

society. A sense of insecurity leads them to constant fear around the safety of their child, thus wanting their children in the government sector. They were also seen resorting to consumption of alcohol. There is a direct connection between parents influencing their child's adjustment, especially self-downing beliefs (Johnson et al., 2022). Lastly, "Narratives and Feelings" were tapped into showcasing how the participants' stories are formed around the trauma.

"If you talk about my perspective, if I bear children in future I will make sure not to pass on this thing to my children. I will not carry this forward. So I believe yes this cycle can be broken down."

Young adults were able to acknowledge the unhealthy family patterns and believed in breaking the cycle of generational trauma for their future ones. It was also understood through a reflective lens they are trapped in a maze struggling to find a way to come out of it.

## Theme 2

"*Generational Bonds and Surrounding Trauma*" reflects interpersonal connections within family generations, community ties and honouring deceased grandparents. It highlights the formation of the bonds over subsequent generations. A participant revealed their community affiliation - "*I identify myself to be a part of the Sikh community. So I honour my community by following the teaching that our community gave and I have learnt most of it within my family only.*" As per the feelings expressed by young adults, they exhibit a strong generational bond through open communication, a sense of belongingness and core affiliation towards one's community identity, values and beliefs, thus, inherited across generations, exhibiting both in parents and grandchildren. The research assessed the sub-theme "*Relationship of Grandchildren with Grandparents*" to understand perception

around surrounding trauma and how they view their grandparents.

"*I think for my granddad it's more like physical and uh like he would hug me and it's more verbal like he would say that I'm proud of you or whatever.*"

An affectionate relationship was seen between first and third generations, expressing admiration and viewing their deceased grandparents as 'stars' or 'bhagwan (god)'. Participants highlighted appreciation and longing for their existence by missing them on significant occasions in their lives. Every individual has their coping mechanism, "*honouring legacy*" underscored how young adults and their family honours uphold memories about grandparents/communities.

"It's I think in a way like telling that story is a way for me to honour history because we are called the 'Daler Kaum' (fearless community) so um yeah it's a proud moment for us."

"We do the 'Akhand Path' (3-day Path in Sikhism) for gratitude. With that now it's more like we are appreciating and cherishing the memories we had with them (grandparents). As a family, we have found a very nice comfortable space"

Considering the practices to maintain the legacy in families, a strong connection with the community could be seen along with reminiscing about grandparents by adopting practices the way their parents honour, suggesting transmission of adaptive coping mechanisms across generations, which facilitates trauma healing (Schultz et al., 2016). Another aspect to be considered is the exposure to overwhelming events being discussed through "*Visual Reminders of Trauma*" reflecting vicarious adoption of the effects of trauma through watching series or movies depicting the surrounding traumatic event. Participants feel 'heightened emotions'

and 'overwhelmed' to see their parents cry, adding to feeling more emotional, thus actively avoiding it. Further, preference over watching it in a group is more as compared to watching it alone, relating to factors such as 'togetherness' or 'better comforted' making it less triggering, thus engaging in the process of 'work-through' (Klein, 2007).

"I can't even cry like I'm so hurt that I just shut down um so I used to avoid it but then I did watch Jogi and um like I realized that people so close to my community knowing people that I know and love has been through this."

Lastly, conversations around the overwhelming events being discussed were covered under the theme "*Dialogues Around Trauma*", which highlights the magnitude of the effects felt, addressing past experiences wrapped around traumatic events, thus, prioritizing children's safety and security. This is related to *theme 1*, linking past fears to present ones.

"I mean females were not at all safe during their time like I mean they felt that you know females run away from home and they don't get independence and secondly it was said that because of the partition, there was a lot of Hindu-Muslim riot so all of them used to keep their females inside their house."

### **Theme 3**

"*Crystallization and Self*" explores the formation of individual personalities and behaviour due to the parenting received/ experiences in childhood, thereby manifesting in their adult lives, related to the concept of the 'deposition process'. Adverse childhood experiences significantly contribute to the aggravation of trauma transmission indicates participants are not only influenced by internal family factors but were also subject to external life experiences. The reason partly comes from parents going through similar adverse events in varying intensities. Replication of similar behaviour,

neglect and aggressiveness against the child in parents who witnessed childhood abuse and neglect were observed, resulting in exacerbating children's "*childhood experiences*" negatively (Kong et al., 2021)

*"You know when a child is around 5 years old and his memory is formed at that time, from that time till now how much is it? 21 years! I have seen so much during my childhood life that I wish no child should see. A kid has a very fragile mind, he gets all the care, right? I did not get that at all. All I have seen was violence, physical beating and too much aggression in the family. I was responsible for handling this from a very young age. It was not my age to handle such things but I did."*

Participants were subjected to bullying, body image struggles, and exposure to violence, leading to low self-esteem and emotional distress. Parents lack the provision of emotional support during their children's developmental years. Considering these factors, it has a profound "*Impact on Third-Generation*" young adults. Participants' responses reflected the transmission of internal effects, impacting their emotional well-being, personality and life in general.

"I fear everything in life. I will not indulge in any fights or argue with anyone just because of that fear"

"I hate taking a stand for myself. So I go with what my parents tell me, assuming that they know better than me. So I hate taking accountability. So I am critical about that I judge myself a lot I still deal with low self-esteem and I want people to like me I have this really weird trait that I feel that people who are close to me would leave me one day because of my behaviour."

Young adult participants expressed their impact in terms of fear, overthinking, uncertainty, suicidal thoughts, emotional suppression, financial insecurity, and low

self-esteem, obstructing their daily functioning. Trauma-related symptoms in third-generation individuals were seen despite not having direct exposure to ancestral trauma (Chea, n.d.).

#### Theme 4

Highlighting the significant role of the second generation in transmission effects surrounding trauma points to the role of *"Attachment in Familial Ties"*. It explores the intricate web of connections in the family system affected by generational trauma. Majority of the families lack healthy attachments with their family members, influenced by parenting received thereby affecting communication and trust of the young adults. A participant revealed his feelings *"It is a full mental toll. If I am looking forward to something good in my life that aggression that gets laid on me by my father changes the whole scene. I get so upset and the thing which I was looking forward to means nothing to me then afterwards."*

"So there is no direct affection in my family. I call my parents and tell them "I miss you" or something like that my mother would just say laughingly "Oh no way!". There is no verbal affection in my family. I feel my parents' love language is to send money, feed me and make sure I am fine and all available resources are there around me."

Mostly, families are hesitant to outwardly express warmth and love, verbally and physically, revealing father figures as non-affectionate as compared to mothers. It could be deep-rooted societal expectations of male stoicism and emotional numbness due to hardships faced. Affection is shared through 'providing' financial support and food. Men are shaped by traditional norms, limiting emotional expression (Clearly, 2019).

The fear exhibited by parents often takes shape by showcasing *"Protectiveness in the Family"*, which blurs the thin line between

'being concerned' and 'being overly protective'.

*"they're protective of the fact that they won't let me make decisions for myself that's how protective they are. Uh, my mom does not let me go out past sunset. They have to know where I am who I am how long I'll be gone they need to know all that they need to know and photos as they need photos as well"*

The magnitude of being overly protective of one's child has been bent over to a stifling control over young adults, leading to trust issues, fear of exploring, and communication gaps. Young adults resort to 'white lies' to avoid uncomfortable conversations with parents and keep a distance from hurting them. Being overprotective results in affecting *"Communicative Patterns with Parents."* A participant revealed, *"No! I don't discuss it with my family or anyone. It is just that the other person can't comprehend what I want to convey and I don't get the response that I expect"*.

The young adults' conversations around discussing personal issues turn out to be negligible, stemming from indicators such as feeling of burdening their parents, perceived lack of comprehension, cultural rules, and indirect communication within the family system. Lastly, *"Family Dynamics"* also turned out to be dysregulated as perceived by young adults. One participant mentioned *"Among these siblings, love, drama and fights are there. They are abnormal stuff."* Family displaying lessened affection and showing signs of being overly protective and parental influence increases the likelihood of family being a dysfunctional family. This results in attachment style being 'Avoidant' and 'Insecure.' The first one reflects less responsive caregiving, negatively affecting emotional connections (WebMD Editorial Contributors, 2023) and the latter reflects trust issues and relationship difficulties (Moore, 2022)

## Theme 5

Our Indian culture where 'strong' is valued over 'vulnerability' is explored under the theme of *"Being Vulnerable"*, delving into how families steer the wheel of accepting weakness in their child's life and express distress in the context of generational trauma, impacting third-generation.

A participant expressed her feeling within the family as *"So there is no moral support and when you are living with people and they don't support you that shit hurts that's very painful that kills you from inside"* giving an indication of parents being unsupportive and behave insensitively against their weakness, leads to keep things to themselves. Adding on to the acceptance part, participants also had opinions over *"Acknowledgement of Distress"* when they shared distress with their parents.

"Most of the time they don't understand a lot, they are like "It's okay", 'It will pass', 'Nothing will happen', or 'God will take care'. Acknowledging the feeling and understanding what is happening and just being there and letting the silence be there is not there at all. It is very uncomfortable"

Families were seen perpetuating the generational trauma with negligible

acknowledgement of the distress being discussed within families by young adults, claiming problems with reciprocation and nullifying the distressing situation. It also adds to the perception of their distress of a lesser intensity as compared to previous generations, leading to normalization and affecting young adults in using unhealthy coping mechanisms and suppressed emotions. The reason why distress is not acknowledged was explored under *"Perception towards Weakness"*, revealing views of parents regarding vulnerability, and spreading awareness on the reason why weakness is perceived as a non-negotiable within family systems.

"Yeah, my father thinks that crying is for the weak. If you cry you're a weak person. He is like I went through a lot at your age when I was 18 I was in India I was rolling front and back and in the sun blisters on my back, so he thinks that you should be able to express yourself in better ways and crying is not the way"

Such families consider the expression of bawling or crying as a sign of weakness because of the survival mindset, inherited from previous generations, further projecting onto their children. Parents consider it as a symbol of strength amidst adversity, stemming from past events of enduring hardships, imbibing numbness to adversity and keeping one strong to survive. Most of the participants have cultivated the same belief, *"My family does think crying is a sign of weakness I feel the same that it is a sign of weakness."* Patterns among third-generation have equated strength with emotional suppression due to societal norms, resulting in isolation and repression of feelings.

## Theme 6

The theme *"Adaptation and Habituation"* delved into third-generation navigating their daily life experiences, shedding light upon physiological responses as manifested by generational trauma effects. Not only internal but young adults are also compounded by external factors, shaping behaviours ranging from hypervigilance, peaceful acceptance of their lives and rebelliousness, leading to a complex interplay between adaptation, coping and transmitted effects. Family dynamics and negative childhood experiences affect well-being and foster unhealthy coping mechanisms in young adults (Daines et al., 2021). Narrowing down and throwing light upon young adults' coping mechanisms *"Judgement and Dealing"* aspect was explored delving into how they navigate with judgements coming both from families and society.

“So, deal again avoidance. It’s a negative interaction.”

“I think a lot about this. I care a lot about people’s judgement. Even now I might be perceived by others which also makes me feel that it should be important for me to portray myself in a certain picture that is acceptable to everyone.”

Response to societal judgements reflected the impact of generational trauma and cultural norms forming their coping mechanisms. There is an aversion to the societal culture due to the fear of judgement or there is a complete avoidance of societal scrutiny. Those exposed to criticism in their childhood experience long-term self-esteem issues and a constant need for validation manifested in adulthood (Rakshit, 2022). Interconnection between coping with challenges, decision-making and time-management among third-generation was examined under the aspect of the “*Life Mastery Triad*”, understanding how coping abilities influence decision-making skills and time-management in the face of stressful events.

*“I am very indecisive. I just moved into this new house of mine and the walls had to be painted, I took plenty of days to decide on one colour for my wall. The same is true with big decisions that I have to make in life.”*

*“I rely on friends, music, alcohol and cigarettes- these are the specific behavioural patterns I indulge in for comfort. I play cards and gamble. I smoke a lot, I drink a lot, and I consume cigarettes with alcohol a lot. I do a lot of risky things.”*

*“When I am confused regarding my decisions there are times when I seek and find answers from our Guru Granth Sahib Ji.”*

*“Very poorly and I don’t know why. I procrastinate a lot. I delay things till I reach the deadline and then do things.”*

The interplay of the triad underscored the complexity around hurdles faced by third-generation, who often depend on parental input for decision-making partly because of family dynamics and overprotectiveness displayed. This dependency inhibits autonomy and resilience, and results in unhealthy coping mechanisms like substance abuse but protective factors have also emerged like finding solace in humour and spirituality. It impacts how they navigate conflicts in their lives, an aspect covered under “*Quest for Harmony*”. Young adults resort to defensiveness in anger, people-pleasing behaviours and avoidance, hindering the resolution of interpersonal conflicts and relationships. “*Most of the conflicts are with my father and they are pretty bad. Now how I deal with it is to keep myself quiet, now I avoid communicating*”

There are varied physiological symptoms stemming from the effects of generational trauma and participants’ experiences, “*Physiological Effects and Coping*” delves into this aspect, further highlighting coping mechanisms.

*“My gut health gets affected quite a lot my appetite changes I might get an upset stomach. Appetite change could happen in both ways right less or more”*

*“I am very alert, I am very cautious and I will look here and there repeatedly to make things assured for me. I will check my main gate, switch off the lights..... I will go again and check”*

Majorly, participants report experiencing hypervigilance, especially outside the home and physical symptoms like stomach lurch, headaches, anxiety, or nerve throbbing, followed by excessive crying in isolation. Prolonged symptoms can adversely impact mental health and well-being resulting in diseases or disorders in future. Daskalakis et al., (2020) discovered generational trauma results in decreased activity in genes related

to the immune system, further leading to reduced innate immunity.

### **Theme 7**

*“Navigating Expectations and Responsibilities”* delves into young adults affected by generational trauma surrounding family expectations and roles implicitly put on them, focusing on the potentiality to break free from these patterns by expanding one’s horizons. Kahane-Nissenbaum (2011) revealed that first-generation individuals abate financial burdens and expectations of success, leading to anxiety and stress among third-generation. Thus, justifying exploring the aspect of *“Parental Expectations”*, incorporates a level of expectations withheld by family members for young adults.

“A lot of pressure around career and success, so my father was forcing me to give UPSC and I am not interested in it at all. We had arguments around that. I have taken AFCAT for the Air Force just because of my father’s desire for him to see me in a government job.”

“They’re high. My mom wants me to be ladylike”

Majority of them are grappling with the weight of parental expectations, torn between living up to their parents’s expectations and pursuing their aspirations. Families showed a higher inclination for their children to pursue a ‘government job’ for the sake of security, highlighting origins from a desire for a secure stable life against future uncertainties. With the above aspect, another dimension gets explored in the study around *“Responsibility Ownership”* reflecting roles ascribed and feelings attached to owning it among third-generation.

“Yes! I feel they need my help. I feel guilty when I don’t because you know they also took care of me when I was not well. So I make sure to handle everything when someone is not well at home.”

A feeling of obligate and guilt around not fulfilling the expected roles to perform was seen, resulting in being sacrificial most of the time to uphold the weight of expectations imposed on them. They assume themselves to be solely responsible for the family, driven by a desire to heap the void created because of consumes effects of trauma transmission. A desire to potentially break free emerges as a protective factor in young adults was witnessed under the aspect of *“Expanding Boundaries”*.

“I am a shy person and I don’t like to go ahead and talk to random people but when I was in my bachelor’s final year I took this step out of my shell of my comfort zone to become the president of my department. I took part in the elections and god knows how I got elected. I interacted with so many people and after that only I realised it’s important to take risks”

Young adults seek to come out of their comfort zones, reclaim their agency and yet show some degree of fear and reluctance but most of them feel they are successful at expanding their boundaries. This exploration and expansion of horizons could be seen as a path of healing and protecting themselves.

### **Theme 8**

The last theme *“Emotional Inversion”* delves into the regulation of emotions among young adults amidst generational traumatic effects on emotions. The magnitude at which it affects perception towards successful endeavours and interpersonal relationships. In families with traumatic effects of generational trauma, young adults often face emotional dysregulation, affecting both their personal and external relationships. This could be due to negative parenting, as found by Mekawi et al., (2023), that certain negative parenting behaviours, including psychological control and physical aggression result in emotional dysregulation. To comprehensively understand the

awareness around participants influencing the emotions of other people due to their words and actions, within social relations or significant others was underscored under the dimension of *“Emotional Regulation and its Ripple Effects”*.

*“I am an aggressive person and I get heated up very fast and when people tell me such things I get more angry. Out of 100%, I am 99% aggressive. It naturally happens with me”*

*I don't know. I jump to conclusions which are not good. Sometimes I jump to conclusions and immediately snap out of it.”*

Young adults were seen showing feelings of guilt, extreme aggression, and impulsivity, thus, impacting their familial and social relationships. There are certain people-pleasing behaviours as well, as one participant mentioned *“I have been a people pleaser my entire life so I make very conscious decisions I wouldn't want the ambience around me to be disrupted”*.

Lastly, self-perceived emotions were also looked into, considering outlook about positive events in life, optimism or pessimism related to success. This was delved under *“Emotions and Successful Events”*.

*“I am pretty numb! I process more negative emotions than positive ones. I don't even like to share with many people. I achieved so many dance awards but it has always been numb.”*

An emotional numbness towards one's achievement was seen to be exhibited, attributing to the factors of lack of appreciation and warmth shared in the family. It results in detachment from their achievements and considering achieving success as fulfilling parental expectations, leading to shadowing oneself by keeping it to oneself and feelings of overwhelmedness. This leads them to overlook positive life events from a pessimistic point of view. Not

much research has been conducted related to perceiving successful events but one such related study by Bombay et al., (2009) states the appraisal process gets impacted by stressful events, thus influencing coping methods and lifestyle changes.

## **Conclusion**

The study employed semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis to explore the behaviour and impact of generational trauma on third-generation, effectively addressing its aim. Young adults expressed rooted entrenchment in the view of generational trauma, reflected in their families' avoidant and insecure attachment styles. Further, impacting third-generation development concerning emotional, psychological and physiological dimensions, potentially indicating serious mental health and illnesses if prolonged. Despite negative aspects, there were protective factors that emerged, such as awareness of the transmission, which led to modelling healthy outlets such as spirituality. Others are subject to unhealthy coping strategies like exhibiting behaviours of substance abuse, emotional numbness, avoidant strategies, and aggressiveness, directly linked to parental expectations and unfulfilled desires. A 'survival mode' mindset emerged out of the study, indicating the perpetuation of generational trauma across three generations, with residue left of the impact on each subsequent generation.

Certain limitations were noticed including focusing solely on the urban population of third-generation, neglecting those who come from rural backgrounds. Further, there was an absence concerning second-generation (parents) perspectives. Lastly, the qualitative data limits generalization, and the lack of combining quantitative components. Research suggests further research to incorporate intervention strategies or models to help young adults break free from the cycle of generational trauma.

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