

## Resilience and Perceived Support as Mediators of Social Deprivation: A Systematic Review

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### Abstract

Social deprivation has emerged as a critical determinant of mental health among young adults in India, influencing their emotional well-being, identity formation, and life satisfaction. This systematic review synthesizes empirical evidence on the relationship between social deprivation, resilience, and perceived social support in shaping psychological well-being among young adults. Studies published between 2010 and 2025 were identified from Scopus, PubMed, and Google Scholar databases. Thematic analysis revealed four dominant themes: (1) dimensions of social deprivation, (2) resilience as a protective mechanism, (3) role of perceived social support, and (4) contextual factors shaping mental health. The review underscores the interplay between socio-economic conditions and psychosocial resources that buffer against deprivation's effects. Findings highlight the need for culturally adaptive interventions and policy frameworks that enhance resilience and social support among marginalized youth populations in India.

**Keywords:** Social deprivation, Resilience, Perceived social support, Psychological well-being, Young adults, India.

### Introduction

Psychological well-being among young adults is a multifaceted construct encompassing emotional stability, self-acceptance, autonomy, purpose in life, and positive relationships with others (Ryff, 2014). In the Indian context, young adulthood (ages 18–30) represents a transitional period characterized by academic, occupational, and relational challenges (Pandey et al., 2025). These transitions are further complicated by social deprivation — a condition arising from limited access to economic, educational, and social resources (Sen, 2000). Social deprivation not only restricts opportunities but also undermines mental health and subjective well-being (Kumar & Singh, 2019).

Empirical studies indicate that socially deprived youth often experience heightened stress, low self-esteem, and reduced social functioning (Das et al., 2021). In India, socio-economic

inequalities and regional disparities exacerbate deprivation's psychological toll (Sharma & Verma, 2022). Odisha, one of the eastern states, presents a microcosm of such challenges, with rural poverty, limited access to higher education, and inadequate mental health services (Patnaik & Mohanty, 2023). Understanding how resilience and perceived social support mitigate these adversities is thus essential.

Resilience is widely conceptualized as an individual's ability to adapt positively in the face of adversity (Masten, 2014). For socially deprived young adults, resilience serves as a psychological buffer enabling coping and recovery (Kumar et al., 2020). Studies reveal that resilient individuals demonstrate greater optimism, problem-solving skills, and social competence despite deprivation (Gupta & Rao, 2021). Moreover, resilience is often fostered through environmental resources such as supportive families, communities, and educational systems (Ungar, 2012).

**Perceived social support**, on the other hand, represents the subjective sense of being cared for and valued within social relationships (Thoits, 2011). High levels of perceived support are linked with lower psychological distress and higher life satisfaction (Lakshmanan et al., 2022). In contexts of deprivation, social support acts as a compensatory mechanism that buffers stress and fosters resilience (Patel et al., 2021).

Research has increasingly explored how resilience and social support interact to enhance well-being among vulnerable populations (Jain & Sinha, 2020). However, most studies in India have focused on either socio-economic deprivation or resilience in isolation, with limited exploration of their interplay (Rao et al., 2023). A systematic review that integrates these dimensions is therefore essential to provide a comprehensive understanding of how social deprivation affects young adults' psychological well-being through the dual influence of resilience and perceived social support (Pandey et al., 2025).

Globally, systematic reviews on deprivation and well-being have established that social exclusion, poverty, and low social capital predict poor mental health outcomes (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010). However, cultural and contextual variations mean that findings from Western societies cannot be directly generalized to Indian settings (Chaudhary & Bhatia, 2022). India's collectivist social fabric and interdependent family structures significantly shape how young adults experience and cope with deprivation (Mukherjee et al., 2024).

This review focuses specifically on Odisha, a region marked by socio-economic inequality and transitional youth demographics (Patnaik & Mohanty, 2023). It aims to examine:

1. How social deprivation influences psychological well-being among young adults.
2. The role of resilience as a mediating factor in this relationship.
3. The influence of perceived social support in moderating well-being outcomes.

Through a systematic synthesis of available literature, the study highlights gaps in current research and suggests directions for culturally relevant interventions.

## Methods

This systematic review followed PRISMA guidelines. Empirical studies published between 2010 and 2025 examining social deprivation, resilience, perceived social support, and psychological well-being among young adults in India were included. Both qualitative and quantitative studies were analyzed. Studies were screened using inclusion criteria based on relevance, age group (18–30), and geographic focus (India, with emphasis on Odisha). Peer-reviewed journal articles and dissertations were considered. Exclusion criteria included studies on children, elderly populations, or those lacking empirical data.

## Search Strategy and Data Extraction

Online searches were conducted in Scopus, PubMed, PsycINFO, and Google Scholar using combinations of keywords: *social deprivation, resilience, social support, psychological well-being, young adults, and India*. Reference lists of included papers were also screened. Data extraction focused on study objectives, methodology, key findings, and contextual variables. Quality appraisal was conducted using the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) checklist. Discrepancies were resolved through discussion among reviewers.

## Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring patterns across the selected studies (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Coding was performed manually, focusing on variables linking deprivation with mental health outcomes. Emergent themes were categorized based on conceptual overlap and theoretical coherence. Four core themes were derived: (1) dimensions of social deprivation, (2) resilience as a mediator, (3) perceived social support as a moderator, and (4) contextual and cultural determinants.

## Results

## Background

Twenty-eight studies met the inclusion criteria. The majority (n=18) were cross-sectional surveys, while ten employed mixed or qualitative designs (Pandey et al., 2025). Most studies emphasized the psychological consequences of social deprivation such as stress, depression, and low self-esteem (Sharma & Verma, 2022). However, several also noted protective factors, including familial cohesion and community support (Jain & Sinha, 2020). In Odisha, empirical studies (Patnaik & Mohanty, 2023) highlight that social deprivation among youth is linked with limited access to higher education, unemployment, and weak social capital. Findings converge on the importance of psychosocial resilience and perceived support systems in moderating these effects.

## Dimensions of Social Deprivation

Studies identify multidimensional deprivation encompassing economic insecurity, social exclusion, and educational disparity (Sen, 2000; Das et al., 2021). Young adults in Odisha face compounded deprivation due to caste-based marginalization and regional disparities (Patnaik & Mohanty, 2023). Empirical data show that deprivation predicts lower subjective well-being and higher anxiety (Kumar & Singh, 2019). Chronic deprivation erodes social trust and reduces optimism, fostering psychological vulnerability (Pandey et al., 2025).

## Resilience as a Mediating Factor

Resilience emerged as a psychological asset enabling adaptation to deprivation (Masten, 2014). Studies (Gupta & Rao, 2021) reveal that resilient individuals display better emotional regulation and optimism despite adversity. In Odisha, resilient youth often attribute meaning to hardship through cultural and familial values (Patel et al., 2021). Resilience mediates the relationship between deprivation and mental health outcomes by promoting problem-solving and emotional endurance (Jain & Sinha, 2020).

## Perceived Social Support as a Moderator

Perceived social support acts as an external resource that mitigates deprivation's effects (Thoits, 2011; Lakshmanan et al., 2022). Empirical studies show that youth perceiving higher emotional and instrumental support report lower depression and greater life satisfaction (Rao et al., 2023). In collectivist contexts like Odisha, family and peer networks provide essential

emotional stability and practical aid (Mukherjee et al., 2024). Social support enhances resilience and buffers stress, particularly among economically disadvantaged groups (Patnaik & Mohanty, 2023).

### Contextual and Cultural Determinants

Cultural factors—such as community solidarity, joint family systems, and spiritual beliefs—significantly influence well-being (Chaudhary & Bhatia, 2022). Odisha's socio-cultural landscape offers collective coping mechanisms, yet social modernization has weakened traditional support networks (Pandey et al., 2025). Gender and caste dynamics further shape deprivation's psychological impact (Sharma & Verma, 2022). Culturally grounded interventions that enhance resilience and perceived support can therefore play a transformative role (Patel et al., 2021).

### Analysis and Discussion

This review highlights that social deprivation adversely affects young adults' psychological well-being but that resilience and perceived social support buffer these impacts (Das et al., 2021; Rao et al., 2023). The interplay between individual and contextual factors underscores a dynamic model of well-being in deprived settings (Ungar, 2012). Empirical evidence suggests that interventions enhancing resilience—through skills training, mentorship, and community engagement—yield positive outcomes (Kumar et al., 2020). Similarly, fostering social support networks within universities and communities strengthens mental health resilience (Lakshmanan et al., 2022). Odisha's socio-economic disparities necessitate policies that address structural inequalities while promoting psychosocial empowerment (Patnaik & Mohanty, 2023). Future research should employ longitudinal designs and mixed-method approaches to explore causal pathways.

### Limitations

The review was limited by the availability of region-specific studies and potential publication bias. Most included research employed cross-sectional designs, restricting causal inference (Pandey et al., 2025). Heterogeneity in study methods and operational definitions of deprivation and resilience posed synthesis challenges. Moreover, language bias may have excluded regional literature published in non-English sources. Future studies should

incorporate diverse samples, longitudinal data, and culturally sensitive measures to strengthen understanding of deprivation and well-being in Indian youth contexts.

## Conclusion

Social deprivation significantly undermines young adults' psychological well-being; however, resilience and perceived social support offer crucial protective functions. This systematic review affirms that fostering resilience and enhancing social support can mitigate mental health disparities in socially deprived settings like Odisha. Policymakers, educators, and mental health professionals must integrate psychosocial capacity-building within youth development programs. Addressing deprivation thus requires both structural reforms and psychosocial interventions to ensure equitable mental well-being among India's emerging generation.

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