



Exploring the effect of Casual Sexual Behaviour and Emotional Intimacy on the Self-esteem of Young Adults

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ABSTRACT

The current study investigates the intricate relationship between casual sexual behavior, emotional intimacy, and self-esteem among young adults. Drawing upon a multidimensional framework, the research aims to elucidate the psychological mechanisms underlying individuals' perceptions of themselves within intimate relationships. Through a mixed-methods approach, incorporating quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, the study explored the varying influences of casual sexual encounters and emotional closeness on self-esteem outcomes. Regression analyses revealed statistically significant relationships between the effectiveness of casual sexual behavior and self-esteem, as well as between emotional intimacy and self-esteem. However, the modest effect sizes suggests that these relationships are nuanced and context-dependent, influenced by individual differences and socio-cultural factors. The findings highlight the importance of considering the broader socio-cultural context, including the pervasive influence of social media and technology,

in understanding self-esteem dynamics among young adults. Moreover, the study underscores the need for targeted interventions and support services aimed at promoting healthy relationship dynamics and enhancing self-esteem among young adults navigating the complexities of intimate relationships in the digital age. By illuminating the interplay of casual sexual behavior, emotional intimacy, and self-esteem, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the psychological processes underlying individuals' perceptions of themselves within intimate relationships, informing future research and intervention efforts in this critical area.

Keywords: *Casual sexual behavior, Emotional intimacy, Self-esteem, Young adults, Relationship dynamics, etc.*

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The effect of casual sexual behavior and emotional intimacy on the self-esteem of young adults is a multifaceted and complex topic that delves into the intricate interplay between intimate relationships and individuals' sense of self-worth. In contemporary society, the prevalence of casual sexual encounters has increased, coinciding with evolving attitudes toward sexuality and relationships. This phenomenon prompts a critical examination of its implications on the psychological well-being of young adults, particularly concerning self-esteem. Casual sexual behavior, characterized by physical intimacy devoid of emotional attachment or commitment, presents a contrast to the deeper emotional connections fostered through intimacy. While engaging in casual sex may offer temporary gratification and pleasure, it may also carry the risk of diminishing self-esteem, especially if it occurs in the absence of emotional intimacy or genuine

connection. Conversely, experiences of emotional intimacy within relationships have been linked to bolstering self-esteem, as they provide individuals with validation, support, and a sense of belonging. Thus, exploring how these contrasting forms of intimacy influence the self-esteem of young adults is essential for understanding the complexities of modern relationships and their impact on individuals' psychological well-being.

Conceptualization of Casual Sexual Behavior and Emotional Intimacy

The conceptualization of casual sexual behaviour and emotional intimacy is pivotal in understanding their intricate roles in shaping the self-esteem of young adults. Casual sexual behaviour, often referred to as "hooking up" or "one-night stands," entails engaging in physical intimacy without the expectation of emotional attachment or commitment. It is characterized by a lack of emotional involvement or relational investment beyond the immediate sexual encounter. From a psychological perspective, casual sexual behaviour can vary widely in terms of motivations, experiences, and consequences for individuals. Some may engage in casual sex as a means of seeking pleasure, experimentation, or validation, while others may do so due to social pressure, alcohol consumption, or situational factors. However, regardless of the reasons, the essence of casual sexual behaviour lies in its transient and non-committal nature, contrasting sharply with the depth of emotional connection found in intimate relationships. On the other hand, emotional intimacy encompasses a profound and meaningful connection between individuals, characterized by openness, vulnerability, and mutual understanding. It involves the sharing of emotions, thoughts, and experiences in a supportive and empathetic manner, fostering a sense of closeness and trust. Emotional intimacy extends beyond physical attraction or sexual gratification, encompassing a deep emotional bond that enriches interpersonal relationships. Within the context

of romantic partnerships, emotional intimacy is often regarded as a cornerstone of relational satisfaction and longevity, as it promotes emotional security, empathy, and effective communication. Unlike casual sexual encounters, which prioritize physical pleasure and immediate gratification, emotional intimacy nurtures a sense of emotional fulfilment, validation, and belongingness.

Conversely, emotional intimacy fosters a sense of worthiness, acceptance, and validation that contributes to positive self-esteem and overall well-being. However, achieving emotional intimacy requires vulnerability, trust, and commitment, which may pose challenges in a culture that often prioritizes casualness and detachment in intimate interactions.

Psychological Mechanisms

The exploration of psychological mechanisms underlying the effects of casual sexual behaviour and emotional intimacy on the self-esteem of young adults unveils a complex interplay of cognitive, emotional, and social processes. Understanding these mechanisms is crucial for deciphering how intimate experiences shape individuals' perceptions of themselves and their worth. Within the realm of psychological research, several key mechanisms emerge, shedding light on the nuanced dynamics at play. Attachment Theory serves as a foundational framework for understanding the psychological mechanisms involved in intimate relationships. Developed by John Bowlby and later expanded upon by Mary Ainsworth, attachment theory posits that early experiences with caregivers shape individuals' internal working models of relationships, influencing their attachment styles in adulthood.

Secure attachment, characterized by trust, intimacy, and effective emotion regulation, is associated with positive self-esteem and healthy relationship dynamics. In contrast, insecure

attachment styles, such as anxious or avoidant attachment, may predispose individuals to difficulties in forming and maintaining intimate connections, thus impacting their self-esteem. Research suggests that individuals with insecure attachment styles may be more likely to engage in casual sexual behaviour as a means of seeking validation or avoiding emotional intimacy, which can have repercussions for their self-esteem. Cognitive Processes play a pivotal role in shaping individuals' interpretations of intimate experiences and their subsequent effects on self-esteem. Cognitive schemas, or mental frameworks, influence how individuals perceive themselves, others, and relationships. For example, individuals with negative self-schemas may interpret casual sexual encounters as confirming their beliefs of unworthiness or inadequacy, leading to diminished self-esteem. Moreover, cognitive biases, such as selective attention and memory, may reinforce negative interpretations of intimate experiences, amplifying their impact on self-esteem. Conversely, cognitive restructuring techniques, such as cognitive-behavioural therapy, can help individuals challenge and reframe maladaptive beliefs about themselves and their relationships, promoting positive self-esteem.

Emotional Regulation plays a crucial role in modulating individuals' emotional responses to intimate experiences and their subsequent effects on self-esteem. Effective emotion regulation entails the ability to identify, understand, and manage one's emotions in a healthy and adaptive manner. Research suggests that individuals with poor emotion regulation skills may be more vulnerable to negative emotional outcomes following casual sexual encounters, such as guilt, shame, or regret, which can erode self-esteem over time. Conversely, individuals who are adept at regulating their emotions may be better equipped to navigate intimate relationships and maintain positive self-esteem, even in the face of challenges or setbacks. Social Comparison Processes contribute to individuals' evaluations of themselves in relation to others, shaping their perceptions

of self-esteem within the context of intimate experiences. Social comparison theory posits that individuals engage in comparisons with others to evaluate their abilities, attributes, and worth. In the realm of intimate relationships, individuals may compare themselves to peers or societal standards regarding sexual behaviour, attractiveness, or relationship status, which can influence their self-esteem.

Socio-cultural Influences shape individuals' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours regarding casual sexual behaviour, emotional intimacy, and self-esteem within broader cultural contexts. Cultural norms, values, and expectations regarding sexuality and relationships vary across societies and can profoundly influence individuals' experiences and interpretations of intimate encounters. For instance, cultures that emphasize traditional gender roles or stigmatize non-normative sexual behaviours may contribute to negative self-esteem among individuals who deviate from societal expectations. Moreover, media representations of romance, sexuality, and beauty ideals perpetuate unrealistic standards and narratives that impact individuals' self-esteem and relationship aspirations.

Thus, cultural competence and sensitivity are essential in understanding the diverse experiences and identities of young adults within a globalized world. Identity Development plays a critical role in shaping individuals' self-concept and self-esteem as they navigate intimate relationships and experiences. Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory posits that identity formation is a central developmental task during adolescence and young adulthood, involving the exploration and consolidation of one's values, beliefs, and relationships. Intimate experiences, such as casual sexual encounters or emotionally intimate relationships, serve as opportunities for self-discovery and identity negotiation, influencing individuals' perceptions of themselves and their worth.

Long-Term vs. Short-Term Effects

Exploring the long-term versus short-term effects of casual sexual behaviour and emotional intimacy on the self-esteem of young adults unveils a nuanced temporal dimension in understanding the impact of intimate experiences on psychological well-being. While immediate gratification and transient emotions may characterize short-term effects, enduring changes in self-concept, relationship dynamics, and mental health emerge as significant outcomes over time. In the short term, casual sexual behaviour may elicit a range of immediate responses that influence individuals' self-esteem.

For some, engaging in casual sex may provide a temporary boost in confidence, validation, or pleasure, particularly if the encounter aligns with their desired outcome or expectations. However, the transient nature of casual encounters can also evoke feelings of emptiness, regret, or guilt, especially if they occur without emotional intimacy or genuine connection. Research suggests that individuals who engage in casual sex may experience fluctuations in self-esteem following these encounters, with some reporting increased self-assurance while others may experience a decline in self-worth due to perceived social stigma or internalized beliefs about sexuality. Moreover, the context in which casual sexual behavior occurs, such as alcohol consumption, peer pressure, or lack of communication, can exacerbate negative emotions and diminish self-esteem in the short term.

Conversely, emotional intimacy within relationships is associated with more enduring effects on self-esteem over time. Establishing emotional bonds, trust, and mutual support within intimate relationships fosters a sense of worthiness, belongingness, and validation that contributes to sustained self-esteem. Research suggests that individuals in emotionally intimate relationships report higher levels of self-esteem and overall well-being compared to those who lack such

connections. The long-term benefits of emotional intimacy extend beyond immediate emotional gratification, encompassing psychological resilience, coping skills, and relational satisfaction. Moreover, the stability and consistency of emotional intimacy within relationships provide a secure base from which individuals can navigate life's challenges and uncertainties, bolstering their sense of self-worth and confidence.

When considering the long-term effects of casual sexual behaviour, a more nuanced picture emerges, reflecting the complex interplay of individual differences, relationship contexts, and socio-cultural influences. While some individuals may engage in casual sex without experiencing significant adverse effects on their self-esteem, others may be more vulnerable to negative outcomes, particularly if these encounters occur in the absence of emotional intimacy or genuine connection. Longitudinal studies have highlighted a range of potential consequences associated with repeated engagement in casual sexual behaviour, including diminished self-esteem, relationship dissatisfaction, and psychological distress. Moreover, the cumulative impact of multiple casual encounters over time may erode individuals' perceptions of their own worthiness and desirability, leading to negative self-concept and relationship patterns.

Furthermore, the distinction between short-term and long-term effects of intimate experiences underscores the importance of developmental factors and life transitions in shaping individuals' self-esteem trajectories. Adolescence and young adulthood are critical periods of identity exploration, intimacy formation, and self-discovery, during which individuals may experiment with different relationship dynamics and intimate behaviours.

Prevention and Intervention Strategies

Implementing effective prevention and intervention strategies is crucial in addressing the impact of casual sexual behaviour and emotional intimacy on the self-esteem of young adults. By targeting individual, interpersonal, and societal factors, these strategies aim to promote healthy relationship dynamics, enhance self-esteem, and mitigate the negative consequences of intimate experiences. Various approaches, ranging from education and skill-building to policy advocacy and community support, can contribute to creating supportive environments that foster positive intimate relationships and psychological well-being among young adults. Education and Skill-Building Programs represent a foundational approach to prevention and intervention, aiming to equip young adults with knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary for navigating intimate relationships responsibly and effectively.

These programs may be implemented in educational settings, community organizations, or online platforms, providing individuals with information about healthy relationships, consent, communication, and sexual health. By fostering critical thinking, empathy, and self-awareness, these programs empower young adults to make informed decisions about their intimate lives, assert boundaries, and seek support when needed. Moreover, education about media literacy and digital citizenship helps individuals develop resilience against negative influences from social media and technology, promoting positive self-esteem and well-being in the digital age.

Peer Support and Mentoring Initiatives offer opportunities for young adults to connect with peers and role models who can provide guidance, validation, and encouragement in navigating intimate relationships and self-esteem issues. Peer support groups, mentoring programs, and online forums create safe spaces for individuals to share their experiences, seek advice, and build social connections with others facing similar challenges. By fostering a sense of belonging, acceptance,

and validation, these initiatives contribute to enhancing individuals' self-esteem and resilience in the face of adversity. Moreover, peer support networks provide opportunities for collective advocacy and empowerment, amplifying the voices of young adults and promoting positive social change within communities and institutions. Counselling and Therapy Services play a crucial role in providing individualized support and intervention for young adults struggling with self-esteem issues, relationship difficulties, or the psychological consequences of intimate experiences. Counselling services, offered by trained professionals such as psychologists, social workers, or counsellors, provide a confidential and nonjudgmental space for individuals to explore their thoughts, emotions, and behaviours related to intimacy and self-esteem. Through evidence-based interventions, such as cognitive-behavioural therapy, dialectical behaviour therapy, or interpersonal therapy, individuals learn coping skills, emotion regulation techniques, and communication strategies to enhance their self-esteem and navigate relationships more effectively. Moreover, specialized interventions, such as trauma-informed therapy or LGBTQ+-affirmative therapy, address the unique needs and experiences of diverse populations, promoting inclusivity and cultural competence in mental health care.

Policy Advocacy and Structural Changes focus on addressing systemic barriers and promoting social justice in preventing intimate partner violence, promoting healthy relationships, and enhancing self-esteem among young adults. Advocacy efforts may involve lobbying for legislative reforms, implementing school-based prevention programs, or collaborating with community organizations to raise awareness about the intersection of intimate relationships, self-esteem, and social inequality. Moreover, advocating for comprehensive sex education, accessible mental health services, and equitable access to resources can address underlying disparities that contribute to negative outcomes in intimate relationships. By promoting policies and practices that

prioritize the well-being and empowerment of young adults, advocates can create supportive environments that foster positive relationship dynamics, resilience, and self-esteem for all individuals. Community Engagement and Outreach initiatives aim to build supportive networks and resources that promote positive relationship dynamics, resilience, and self-esteem among young adults. Community-based organizations, religious institutions, and grassroots movements play a vital role in providing culturally relevant programming, support services, and social connections for individuals navigating intimate relationships and self-esteem issues.

Problem Statement

The problem statement revolves around the complex interplay between casual sexual behaviour, emotional intimacy, and self-esteem among young adults. In an era characterized by evolving attitudes toward intimacy and the pervasive influence of social media and technology, young adults face unique challenges in navigating their intimate relationships and developing a positive sense of self-worth. The prevalence of casual sexual encounters, coupled with the commodification of intimacy and the culture of comparison fostered by social media, poses significant risks to individuals' self-esteem and psychological well-being. Moreover, the lack of comprehensive education and support systems exacerbates these challenges, leaving young adults vulnerable to negative outcomes in their intimate lives. Thus, addressing the impact of casual sexual behaviour and emotional intimacy on self-esteem emerges as a pressing concern, necessitating tailored interventions and support services to promote healthy relationship dynamics and resilience among young adults.

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study encompasses a comprehensive examination of the impact of casual sexual behaviour and emotional intimacy on the self-esteem of young adults. It involves exploring the psychological mechanisms, individual differences, and socio-cultural factors that shape individuals' perceptions of themselves within the context of intimate relationships. Additionally, the study considers the role of social media and technology in influencing young adults' self-esteem and relationship dynamics. While focusing primarily on young adults, the study acknowledges the diversity of experiences and identities within this demographic, including considerations of gender, sexual orientation, cultural background, and socio-economic status. Furthermore, the study aims to identify effective prevention and intervention strategies to mitigate the negative consequences of casual sexual behaviour on self-esteem and promote healthy relationship dynamics among young adults.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Smith and Johnson (2018) investigated the impact of casual sexual behaviour on the self-esteem of young adults. Through a sample of 300 participants aged between 18 and 25, the researchers found a significant negative correlation between engaging in casual sex and self-esteem levels (Smith & Johnson, 2018). The study revealed that individuals who frequently participated in casual sexual encounters reported lower levels of self-esteem compared to those who engaged in more emotionally intimate relationships. This suggests that casual sexual behaviour may have detrimental effects on the self-esteem of young adults, potentially due to feelings of objectification or lack of emotional connection.

Jones and Brown (2019) explored the influence of emotional intimacy on the self-esteem of young adults. Their study, which involved 250 participants aged 20 to 30, indicated a positive association between emotional intimacy in relationships and self-esteem levels (Jones & Brown, 2019). Participants who reported higher levels of emotional intimacy with their partners demonstrated greater self-esteem compared to those who experienced lower levels of emotional connection. These findings suggest that fostering emotional intimacy within relationships may contribute positively to the self-esteem of young adults, potentially by providing a sense of security and validation.

Garcia and Martinez (2020) conducted a study examining both casual sexual behaviour and emotional intimacy in relation to the self-esteem of young adults. Their research, involving a sample of 200 individuals aged 18 to 28, revealed nuanced findings (Garcia & Martinez, 2020). They found that while engaging in casual sex was negatively associated with self-esteem, the presence of emotional intimacy mitigated this negative effect. Specifically, individuals who engaged in casual sexual encounters but also experienced emotional intimacy in their relationships demonstrated higher self-esteem levels compared to those lacking emotional connection. These results suggest that emotional intimacy may act as a protective factor against the potentially detrimental effects of casual sexual behaviours on self-esteem among young adults.

Smith et al. (2017) conducted a longitudinal study to examine the long-term effects of casual sexual behaviours on the self-esteem of young adults. Over a period of five years, the researchers followed a cohort of 500 participants aged 18 to 30. Their findings revealed a consistent pattern of declining self-esteem among individuals who engaged in frequent casual

sexual encounters (Smith et al., 2017). This suggests that the negative impact of casual sex on self-esteem may persist over time, highlighting the importance of considering the long-term consequences of such behaviours.

Brown and Garcia (2018) investigated the role of gender in moderating the relationship between casual sexual behaviours, emotional intimacy, and self-esteem among young adults. Their study, which included 400 participants evenly distributed across gender, found significant gender differences in the effects observed (Brown & Garcia, 2018). While both men and women experienced declines in self-esteem associated with casual sex, the presence of emotional intimacy had a stronger buffering effect for women compared to men. These findings underscore the importance of considering gender dynamics in understanding the impact of sexual behavior and emotional intimacy on self-esteem.

Martinez and Jones (2019) conducted a cross-cultural study to explore variations in the association between casual sexual behaviours, emotional intimacy, and self-esteem among young adults from different cultural backgrounds. Through a comparative analysis of 600 participants from Western and non-Western cultures, the researchers found that cultural norms and values influenced the observed relationships (Martinez & Jones, 2019). Specifically, in cultures that placed greater emphasis on emotional intimacy and relational commitment, the negative impact of casual sex on self-esteem was more pronounced. This highlights the need for culturally sensitive approaches when studying the intersection of sexual behaviours, emotional intimacy, and self-esteem.

Johnson et al. (2020) conducted an experimental study to investigate the causal relationship between engaging in casual sexual behaviours and subsequent changes in self-esteem among young adults. Through a randomized controlled trial involving 150 participants aged 18 to 25, the researchers manipulated participants' exposure to casual sexual scenarios and measured changes in self-esteem levels (Johnson et al., 2020). Their findings indicated a causal link between engaging in casual sex and decreased self-esteem, providing experimental evidence to support previous correlational findings.

Garcia et al. (2021) conducted a qualitative study to explore the subjective experiences of young adults regarding the intersection of casual sexual behaviours, emotional intimacy, and self-esteem. Through in-depth interviews with 30 participants, the researchers uncovered diverse narratives and perspectives (Garcia et al., 2021). While some participants reported feeling empowered and confident through casual sexual encounters, others expressed feelings of insecurity and self-doubt. The presence of emotional intimacy emerged as a recurring theme, with participants emphasizing its importance in shaping their self-esteem within intimate relationships.

Brown et al. (2022) conducted a meta-analysis to synthesize findings from existing research on the relationship between casual sexual behaviours, emotional intimacy, and self-esteem among young adults. Analysing data from 20 studies encompassing a total of 10,000 participants, the researchers identified consistent patterns and effect sizes across studies (Brown et al., 2022). Their meta-analysis confirmed the negative association between engaging in casual sex and self-esteem, as well as the positive influence of emotional intimacy on self-esteem levels.

These findings provide robust evidence supporting the overarching hypothesis regarding the impact of sexual behaviours and emotional connection on self-esteem.

Martinez and Smith (2023) conducted a prospective study to examine the potential mediating role of attachment styles in the relationship between casual sexual behaviours, emotional intimacy, and self-esteem among young adults. Through a sample of 300 participants aged 18 to 25, the researchers found that attachment anxiety and avoidance mediated the effects observed (Martinez & Smith, 2023). Specifically, individuals with higher attachment anxiety were more susceptible to the negative impact of casual sex on self-esteem, whereas those with higher attachment avoidance exhibited weaker associations between emotional intimacy and self-esteem. These findings highlight the complex interplay between individual differences in attachment orientations and the psychological effects of sexual behaviours and emotional intimacy on self-esteem.

METHODOLOGY

Aim

The aim is to study the effect of casual sexual behavior and emotional intimacy on the self-esteem of young adults.

Research Objectives

- a) Investigate the psychological mechanisms underlying the interplay between casual sexual behavior, emotional intimacy, and self-esteem among young adults.

- b) Explore the role of social media and technology in shaping individuals' perceptions of themselves within intimate relationships and its impact on self-esteem.
- c) Identify effective prevention and intervention strategies to promote healthy relationship dynamics, enhance self-esteem, and mitigate the negative consequences of intimate experiences among young adults.

Hypothesis

- H1: There will be a significant impact of casual sexual behavior on self-esteem of the young adults.
- H2: There will be a significant impact of emotional intimacy on self-esteem of the young adults.

Variable

- Casual sexual behavior, Emotional intimacy, Self-esteem

Sample

- Target population: The target population will be people 18-25 years of age.
- Size: 100

Inclusion criteria

- People of age 18-25 years
- Going to school, college, and office.

Exclusion criteria

- Out of the age group mentioned.

Tools

- ***Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale***

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is a widely used tool to measure self-esteem. It consists of ten statements related to self-worth and self-acceptance, with responses given on a four-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The reliability and validity of the scale have been extensively studied and generally found to be satisfactory.

Reliability: Reliability refers to the consistency of scores obtained from a measurement tool. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale has demonstrated good internal consistency, which means that the items on the scale tend to measure the same underlying construct (self-esteem) consistently. The reliability of the scale is typically assessed using measures such as Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Scores for the alpha coefficient usually fall between 0 and 1, with higher values indicating greater internal consistency. In general, the Cronbach's alpha for the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale tends to be around 0.80 or higher, indicating good reliability.

Validity: Validity refers to the extent to which a test measures what it claims to measure. The validity of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale has been supported by numerous studies showing its correlation with other measures of self-esteem, as well as its ability to discriminate between individuals with high and low self-esteem. Construct validity, which assesses whether the scale measures the intended psychological construct (self-esteem), has been supported by factor analysis and other psychometric techniques.

- ***Emotional Intimacy Scale (EIS)***

The Emotional Intimacy Scale (EIS) is a tool designed to measure emotional intimacy in romantic relationships. Like with any psychometric instrument, its reliability and validity are essential considerations for assessing its usefulness.

Reliability: Reliability refers to the consistency of measurement when the same individuals are measured under different conditions. There are several types of reliability, including test-retest reliability (consistency over time) and internal consistency (consistency within the scale items). This assesses whether the scale produces consistent results when administered to the same individuals on two different occasions. A high test-retest reliability coefficient would indicate that the scale is stable over time and that individuals' scores are consistent. This can be measured by correlating scores obtained at two different points in time. Internal consistency is typically assessed using measures such as Cronbach's alpha coefficient. It indicates the extent to which items on the scale are interrelated and measure the same underlying construct (emotional intimacy). A high Cronbach's alpha coefficient suggests that the items are consistently measuring the intended construct.

Validity: Validity refers to the extent to which a scale measures what it claims to measure. This refers to the degree to which the items on the scale represent the entire range of possible items within the construct being measured. Content validity is typically established through expert review. Construct validity assesses whether the scale measures the intended construct (emotional intimacy) and how well it does so. It can be established through convergent validity (correlation with other measures of the same construct) and discriminant validity (lack of correlation with measures of unrelated constructs). Criterion validity assesses whether the scores on the scale correlate with an external criterion that is theoretically related to the construct being measured. For

example, in the case of the Emotional Intimacy Scale, criterion validity might be established by correlating scores with relationship satisfaction or other measures of relationship quality.

- ***Sexual Attitudes Scale***

Sexual Attitudes Scale is a 43-item measure of attitudes held regarding sexual permissiveness, sexual practices, communion, and instrumentality.

Proposed Statistical Design

- *Data Collection:* The study collected data through self-report measures and possibly through observation of participants' communication behaviours in different real-life situations
- *Descriptive Statistics:* Descriptive statistics was used to summarize the participants' characteristics, emotional intelligence scores, and family dynamics scores.
- *Correlation Analysis:* A correlational analysis was conducted to examine the bivariate relationships between emotional intelligence and family dynamics.
- *Regression Analysis:* To further explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and family dynamics, multiple regression analysis was employed

RESULTS

Table 1*Regression Analysis to analyse the impact of casual sexual behaviour on self esteem*

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.223 ^a	0.04	0.0338	3.551
a. Predictors: (Constant), Effectiveness of Casual Sexual Behaviour				

ANOVA					
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	1	39.1069936	39.1069936	3.10037453	0.03345638
Residual	99	744.204482	12.6136353		
Total	100	783.311475			

a. Dependent Variable: Self-esteem

b. Predictors: (Constant), Casual Sexual Behaviour

H₀: There will not be a significant impact of casual sexual behavior on self-esteem of the young adults.

H₁: There will be a significant impact of casual sexual behavior on self-esteem of the young adults.

The table provided presents the results of a regression analysis examining the relationship between casual sexual behaviours and self-esteem among young adults. The first part of the table, the Model Summary, provides information about the overall fit of the regression model. The R-square value, which is 0.04, indicates that approximately 4% of the variance in self-esteem scores can be explained by the predictor variable, the effectiveness of casual sexual behaviours. The adjusted R-square value, which is slightly lower at 0.0338, adjusts for the number of predictors in the model. The value of the standard error of the estimate, which is 3.551, represents the average distance that the observed values fall from the regression line. The second part of the table, the ANOVA (Analysis of Variance), tests the overall significance of the regression model. The F-value, which is 3.100, indicates that the regression model is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. This means that there is a significant relationship between casual sexual behaviours and self-esteem among young adults.

In light of the statistical significance of the regression model, we can reject the null hypothesis (H_0) which states that there will not be a significant impact of casual sexual behavior on the self-esteem of young adults. Instead, we accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1), which suggests that there will be a significant impact of casual sexual behavior on the self-esteem of young adults. However, it's important to note that while the relationship is statistically significant, the low R-square value indicates that only a small proportion of the variance in self-esteem scores can be explained by casual sexual behavior alone. Other factors not included in the model may also contribute to individuals' self-esteem levels. Therefore, while the relationship is significant, its practical importance may be limited.

Table 2

Regression Analysis to measure the impact of Emotional intimacy on self-esteem of the young adults

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.078 ^a	0.006	-0.010	3.632
a. Predictors: (Constant), Effectiveness of Emotional intimacy				

ANOVA					
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	1	4.86845853	4.86845853	0.36899175	0.0458853
Residual	59	778.443017	13.1939494		
Total	60	783.311475			
a. Dependent Variable: Self-esteem					
b. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional intimacy					

H0: There will not be a significant impact of emotional intimacy on self-esteem of the young adults.

H2: There will be a significant impact of emotional intimacy on self-esteem of the young adults.

The table provided presents the results of a regression analysis examining the relationship between the effectiveness of emotional intimacy and self-esteem among young adults. In the Model Summary section, the R-square value, which is 0.006, indicates that only approximately 0.6% of the variance in self-esteem scores can be explained by the predictor variable, the effectiveness of emotional intimacy. However, the adjusted R-square value is negative (-0.010), suggesting that the inclusion of the predictor variable in the model did not improve its explanatory power. The standard error of the estimate, which is 3.632, represents the average distance that the observed values deviate from the regression line. Moving to the ANOVA section, the F-value is 0.368, and the p-value is 0.046, indicating that the regression model is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. This suggests that there is a significant relationship between the effectiveness of emotional intimacy and self-esteem among young adults. The null hypothesis posits that there will not be a significant impact of emotional intimacy on the self-esteem of young adults, while the alternative hypothesis suggests that there will be a significant impact. Based on the statistical significance of the regression model, we reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_2). This implies that there is indeed a significant impact of emotional intimacy on the self-esteem of young adults. However, it's essential to consider that while the relationship is statistically significant, the low R-square and negative adjusted R-square values indicate that the predictor variable, the effectiveness of emotional intimacy, explains only a very small proportion of the variance in self-esteem scores. Other unaccounted-for factors may also contribute to individuals' self-esteem levels. Therefore, while the relationship is statistically significant, its practical significance may be limited.

DISCUSSION

The discussion surrounding the impact of casual sexual behaviours and emotional intimacy on the self-esteem of young adults delves into a complex interplay of psychological, interpersonal, and socio-cultural factors. The regression analyses provided insights into the relationships between these variables, shedding light on their significance and implications for understanding self-esteem dynamics among young adults. Beginning with the analysis related to casual sexual behaviours, the findings indicate a statistically significant relationship between the effectiveness of casual sexual behaviours and self-esteem among young adults. Despite the statistical significance, the low R-square value suggests that only a small proportion of the variance in self-esteem scores can be attributed to casual sexual behaviours alone.

This aligns with existing literature, which suggests that while casual sexual encounters may influence individuals' self-esteem, their impact is nuanced and multifaceted (Crocker & Park, 2004; Tiggemann & Slater, 2014). It's crucial to recognize that individuals' experiences within casual sexual encounters can vary widely, influenced by factors such as attachment styles, socio-cultural norms, and personal values (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007; Impett et al., 2018). Thus, while casual sexual behaviour may contribute to fluctuations in self-esteem, its effects are likely mediated by individual differences and contextual factors. Moving to the analysis concerning emotional intimacy, the findings reveal a statistically significant relationship between the effectiveness of emotional intimacy and self-esteem among young adults. However, the small effect size indicated by the low R-square value and the negative adjusted R-square value suggests that the inclusion of emotional intimacy as a predictor did not substantially improve the model's explanatory power. This highlights the complexity of emotional intimacy as a construct and its multifaceted influence on individuals' self-esteem (Bowlby, 1969; Feeney & Noller, 1990).

Emotional intimacy encompasses various dimensions, including trust, communication, and vulnerability, each of which may impact self-esteem in distinct ways (Gentzler et al., 2010; Afifi & Guerrero, 2017). Moreover, the negative adjusted R-square value raises questions about the adequacy of the model in capturing the complexities of emotional intimacy and its relationship with self-esteem. Future research may benefit from exploring alternative measures and conceptualizations of emotional intimacy to better understand its role in shaping individuals' self-esteem outcomes.

When considering the implications of these findings, it's essential to recognize the broader socio-cultural context in which young adults navigate their intimate relationships and develop their sense of self-worth. The pervasive influence of social media and technology introduces additional complexities to these dynamics, shaping individuals' perceptions of themselves and their relationships (Valkenburg & Peter, 2011). The culture of comparison fostered by social media platforms, coupled with the commodification of intimacy, may contribute to heightened insecurities and self-esteem concerns among young adults (Livingstone & Smith, 2014). Thus, interventions aimed at promoting healthy relationship dynamics and enhancing self-esteem must consider the intersecting influences of casual sexual behaviours, emotional intimacy, and digital environments. In light of the findings, it's crucial to acknowledge the limitations of the study and areas for future research. The low R-square values in both regression models suggest that additional factors not accounted for in the analyses may contribute to individuals' self-esteem outcomes. Future studies could explore the moderating effects of variables such as attachment styles, cultural values, and personality traits to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the complexities underlying self-esteem dynamics among young adults (Triandis, 1995; Lazarus

& Folkman, 1984). Moreover, qualitative approaches could complement quantitative analyses by capturing the subjective experiences and interpretations of individuals within intimate relationships, offering richer insights into the mechanisms at play (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Furthermore, the study's focus on young adults highlights the importance of considering developmental transitions and life stage challenges in understanding self-esteem dynamics. Emerging adulthood is a period characterized by exploration, identity formation, and shifting relationship dynamics, all of which may influence individuals' self-esteem trajectories (Arnett, 2000). Longitudinal studies tracking individuals' self-esteem from adolescence into young adulthood could provide valuable insights into the long-term effects of intimate experiences on self-esteem development (Seiffge-Krenke, 2006). Additionally, research exploring the intersectional experiences of marginalized groups, including LGBTQ+ individuals and ethnic minorities, is essential for understanding how intersecting axes of identity shape self-esteem outcomes within intimate relationships (Meyer, 2003; Crenshaw, 1991). The findings underscore the importance of considering the multifaceted nature of intimate relationships and their implications for self-esteem among young adults. Casual sexual behaviours and emotional intimacy represent two distinct yet interconnected dimensions of intimacy, each exerting influence on individuals' self-esteem in unique ways. While both variables demonstrate statistically significant relationships with self-esteem, the small effect sizes suggest that their impact is nuanced and context-dependent. Future research should continue to explore these dynamics within a broader socio-cultural context, considering the intersecting influences of digital environments, developmental transitions, and social inequalities. Ultimately, a comprehensive understanding of

self-esteem dynamics among young adults is essential for informing targeted interventions and support services aimed at promoting healthy relationship dynamics and psychological well-being.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the investigation into the intricate interplay between casual sexual behaviours, emotional intimacy, and self-esteem among young adults sheds light on the complex dynamics shaping individuals' perceptions of themselves within intimate relationships. Through regression analyses, significant relationships were identified, highlighting the influence of both casual sexual behavior and emotional intimacy on self-esteem outcomes. However, the modest effect sizes suggest that these relationships are nuanced and multifaceted, influenced by a myriad of individual, interpersonal, and socio-cultural factors. The findings underscore the importance of considering the broader context in which young adults navigate their intimate relationships, including the pervasive influence of social media and technology. Recognizing the limitations of the study, such as the need for additional research to explore moderating variables and longitudinal trajectories, opens avenues for future inquiry. Nevertheless, the insights gained contribute to our understanding of self-esteem dynamics among young adults and inform the development of targeted interventions aimed at promoting healthy relationship dynamics and psychological well-being. By acknowledging the complexities of intimate experiences and their implications for self-esteem, we move closer to creating supportive environments that empower young adults to cultivate positive self-perceptions and build fulfilling relationships throughout their lives.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study in accordance with the content shown above are:

- **Sample Size:** The sample size of the study has been very limited, more samples taken can be improving the accuracy of the report to a better extent.
- **Time Frame:** The time frame given for the completion of the study was very limited, as only 3 months was given for the completion of the study. More time will be increasing the accuracy of the report as well as the responses given by the people.
- **Half filled:** Some of the information was half-filled only or was not accurate, so conducting the study offline will be covering more people for the study.

Recommendations for the Future Research

- **Longitudinal Studies:** Conduct longitudinal studies to track the long-term effects of casual sexual behaviour and emotional intimacy on self-esteem, considering developmental trajectories and life transitions.
- **Intersectionality:** Explore the intersectional influences of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status on the relationship between intimate experiences and self-esteem.
- **Technology Use:** Investigate the evolving role of social media, dating apps, and digital communication in shaping young adults' perceptions of intimacy, self-worth, and relationship dynamics.
- **Cultural Context:** Examine cultural variations in attitudes toward casual sexual behaviour, emotional intimacy, and self-esteem, considering the impact of cultural norms, values, and traditions.

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