



Spiritual Well-Being, Emotion Regulation and Resilience among Sandwich Generation

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ABSTRACT

The present study examined the relationship between Spiritual Well-Being, Emotion Regulation and Resilience among Sandwich Generation. In terms of understanding this relationship, it was evaluated through the Spiritual Well-Being Scale by Ellison and Paloutzian, Emotion Regulation Questionnaire by Gross and John and Connor Davidson Resilience Scale by Kathryn M. Cooner and Jonathan R.T. Davidson. The sample consisted of a total of 206 participants aged between 25-50 years, which included of 103 males and 103 females. The relationship between Spiritual Well-Being and Emotion Regulation were analyzed using the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and the results showed a moderate positive relationship between Spiritual Well-Being and Resilience. A very weak positive relationship was found between Cognitive Reappraisal and Resilience; however, a very weak negative relationship was found between Expressive Suppression and Resilience among Sandwich Generation. The Independent Sample t- test was used to compare the difference across gender, and the results showed that there was a significant difference in spiritual well-being across gender.

Keywords: Spiritual Wellbeing, Emotional Regulation, Resilience, Sandwich Generation

INTRODUCTION

An individual's midlife is considered to be an important developmental period between ages of 40-60 in which multiple roles and also responsibilities begin to compete with each other (Parker, 2013). In terms of caregiving, the midlife of an individual is tied between parenting for their adolescent children's and as well as caring for their ageing parents. Thus, the combination of these two types of caring responsibilities has led to labelling these individuals as members of the "Sandwich Generation" (Caregiving and the sandwich generation, 2025).

The term "sandwich generation", was initially coined by Dorothy Miller (1981), which refers to family members with the dual responsibility of providing intergenerational support to both their parents and children's. As this individual are sandwiched between caring for the



needs of their children as well as their aging parents and also including the demands of employment (Parker, 2013).

Individuals from sandwich generation have been caring for their parents and as well as for their children for most of record history, however in the modern days sandwich generation individuals face unique challenges compared to those from the past. In modern times advances in medicines have allowed more and more people to live longer, also due to fertility and other issues, individuals are having children at a much later age than in previous generations. Also, as time passes more and more families include of single parents or two parents who sometimes work outside their homes. All these demographic shifts have improved the lives of individuals in many ways, but it has also led to an increase of sandwich generation (Caregiving and the sandwich generation, 2025).

Nature of Caregiving Tasks of Sandwich Generation Caregivers

Individuals belonging to the sandwich generation often take the role of caregivers to their children and to their parents, as a result they often provide a wide range of support and also performing daily practical tasks at the same time (Jen, 2024). While managing emotional, financial as well as logistical needs for both the generations, in terms of providing support to their parents who maybe coping with various health related issues, while also suffering from the loss of their spouse, on the other hand while caring for their children they may be tied up with various responsibilities of providing daily care and support to their children while also meeting their upbringing, education needs. as a result, this caregiving role of these individuals is highly demanding and challenging at the same time, as it involves responsibilities across multiple domains of life (Carpenter, 2025).

In order to meet both generational demands, the sandwich generation individuals needs to find time and energy to provide help for their aging parents while also ensuring that they are attending to their own needs and also to the needs of their own children, which can create many challenges, conflicts and can also cause stress leading to absenteeism, or sometimes even missed career opportunities, difficulty in balancing work and family demands, experiencing fatigue, guilt, depression, isolation sometimes even feeling physically incapable to provide support or help, amount of time and type of care that is needed. Since the prevalence is



increasing with demographic and societal changes, especially as families delay having children, and parents live longer, more adults are “sandwiched” into caregiving (Jen, 2024).

Spiritual Well-Being

Spiritual well-being is defined as an, “expanding sense of purpose and meaning in life, including one's own morals and ethics.” It may include religious practices and engagement in a community based on this but can also include personal practices that are not defined by a religion or religious group (Howard et al,2023).

The sandwich generations are juggling between the dual responsibilities of caring for their children as well as caring for their aging parents wherein they face intense emotional, physical and financial strains, but these individuals often draw on spiritual well-being as a resource for meaning, resilience and coping (Gibbs et al.,2020).

Spiritual practises like praying, or practising meditation, or even reciting religious texts and talking to God personally provides these individuals with sense of inner peace as well as it helps them in better regulation of their emotions, all these activities tries to channel out anxiety and feelings of frustration into constructive outlets, which in turn enables sandwich generation caregivers to cope with their responsibilities with renewed calmness and happiness. It also provides them with a sense of moral duty and fulfilment. Also connecting with personal values like compassion, intergenerational support helps them to sustain their motivation (Gibbs et al., 2020).

Emotion Regulation

Emotion regulation refers to the process by which an individual monitors, evaluates and try to modify their emotional reactions to appropriately respond to any internal and well as external demands, it basically involves managing the type, the intensity and duration along with the expression of emotions in a feasible way that is acceptable socially and also adaptive to different situations (Of & Gross, 2014).

Sandwich generation are those who simultaneously care for their own children and at the same time caring for their ageing parents. This Group of individuals tend to face high emotional demands and stress due to caring responsibilities of both the generation. Thus, effective emotion regulation among the sandwich generation is critical to managing caregiving tensions, while also mitigating mental health risks and also try to sustain their caregiving



capacity (Petrova & Gross, 2023). Research also highlights how sandwich generation caregivers deploy both the emotion-focused coping (e.g., distancing, seeking emotional support, engaging in spiritual practices, self-soothing) and problem focused coping strategies. Emotion regulation in sandwich generation helps in many ways as it reduces caregiving burden by managing their intense feeling of stress, fatigue and guilt, which are mostly prevalent in this group. These sandwich generation caregivers benefit from tailored training in emotion regulation skills which include mindfulness, cognitive reappraisal and also utilising social support. Techniques like mindfulness and relation enhances emotion regulation by reducing an individual's stress levels, by improving their mental health and thus in turn preventing burnout. Thus, Emotion regulation plays a vital role and acts as a protective shield enabling sandwich generation caregivers to google their multiple roles and responsibilities effectively and thus maintaining resilience amidst caregiving challenges (Pashazade et al., 2024).

Resilience

The term “Resilience” refers to the ability of an individual to cope emotionally as well as to cope mentally with adversities, crises or even with stressful situations, and to recover or to bounce back to a stable mental state quickly. It basically involves adapting positively to the crises despite encountering significant sources of stress, trauma or hardships. Resilience can be developed through various behaviours, thoughts and even actions. It encompasses emotional regulation and also the capacity to maintain overall wellbeing during and after adversity.(Maguire, 2024)

The sandwich generation individuals tend to face unique resilience demands, which comes from either chronic stress, responsibilities overload and sometimes even from emotional strain at this time resilience helps these squeezed caregivers to manage their complex stressors, by preventing burnout among them as well as to manage their emotions and also compete with the dual responsibilities effectively (Maguire, 2024).sometimes due to dual caregiving responsibility individuals suffer from high emotional exhaustion, they face financial burden and sometimes they have issues with identity conflicts as well, yet resilience allows them to maintain their overall well-being and also maintain their mental health amidst the challenges of caregiving. Resilience fosters individuals with problem solving abilities and also with coping mechanism which is essential in sustaining caregiving roles without feelings of burnout and



exhaustion, Thus Psychological resilience is crucial for navigating the multifaceted challenges that sandwich generation faces, which enables them to balancing their care-giving dual responsibilities and balancing their personal life sustaining emotional and psychological strength (Afek et al., 2025).

Statement of the problem: To Study Spiritual Well-Being, Emotion Regulation and Resilience among Sandwich Generation.

Objectives:

- To examine the relationship between Spiritual Well-Being and Resilience among Sandwich Generation.
- To examine the relationship between Emotion Regulation and Resilience among Sandwich Generation.
- To assess Gender differences in Spiritual Well-Being, Emotion Regulation and Resilience among Sandwich Generation.

Hypotheses:

H_{a1}: There will be a significant relationship between Spiritual Well-Being and Resilience among Sandwich Generation.

H_{a2}: There will be a significant relationship between Emotion Regulation and Resilience among Sandwich Generation

H_{a2.1}: There will be a significant relationship between Cognitive Reappraisal and Resilience among Sandwich Generation

H_{a2.2}: There will be a significant relationship between Expressive Suppression and Resilience among Sandwich Generation.

H_{a3.1}: There will be a significant Gender difference in Spiritual Well-Being among Sandwich Generation.

H_{a3.2}: There will be a significant Gender difference in Emotion Regulation among Sandwich Generation.

H_{a3.3}: There will be a significant Gender difference in Cognitive Reappraisal among Sandwich Generation.

H_{a3.4}: There will be a significant Gender difference in Expressive Suppression among Sandwich Generation.



H_a3.5: There will be a significant Gender difference in Resilience among Sandwich Generation.

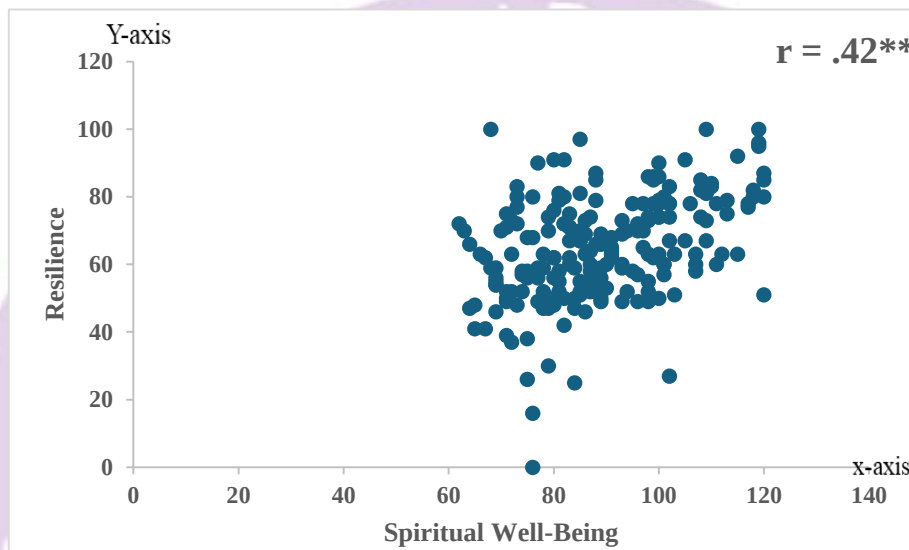
Research Method

The research design used for the present study was a quantitative research design which focused on examining the relationship between Spiritual Well-Being, Emotion Regulation and Resilience among Sandwich Generation. A Correlational study design was used to examine the relationship among key variables that was Spiritual Well-Being, Emotion Regulation and Resilience. Comparative design was incorporated to investigate differences in the variables across gender. The sample consisted of a total of 206 participants which included of 103 males and 103 females. The age range of the participants was from 25-50 years. A combination of purposive sampling along with convenience sampling technique was used to select the participants who met the required criteria of sandwich generation. The participants were administered the Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWB) developed by Ellison Craig W. and Paloutzian Raymond F. (1982). The Emotion Regulation Questionnaire developed by Gross, J.J., & John, O.P. in the year 2003 and The Connor Davidson Resilience Scale developed by two researchers-Kathryn M.Conner and Jonathan R.T.Davidson in the year 2003. Demographic details of the participants and other relevant information regarding the study was collected. The Pearsons Product Moment Correlation was used to analyse the relationship between Spiritual Well-being, Emotion Regulation and Resilience. Independent Sample t-test was used to compare the difference across gender in Spiritual Well-Being, Emotion Regulation and Resilience among Sandwich Generation, all analyses were performed at a significant level of $p < .05$.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

H_{a1}-There will be a significant relationship between Spiritual Well-Being and Resilience among Sandwich Generation.

Figure 1.1: Relationship between Spiritual Well-Being and Resilience among Sandwich Generation.



**** $p < 0.01$**

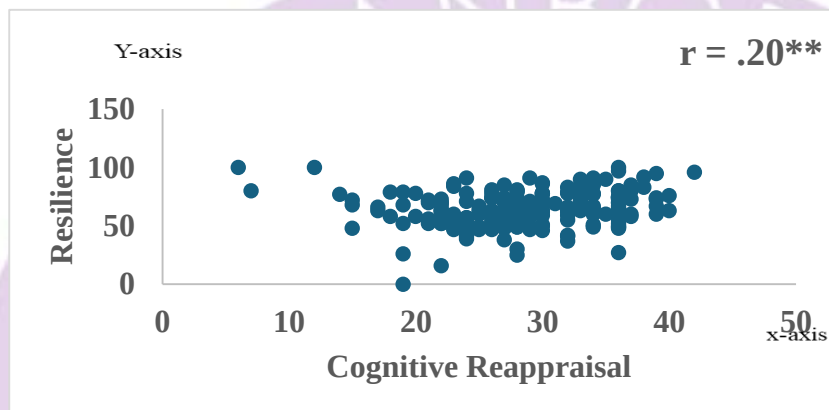
To assess the relationship Spiritual Well-Being and Resilience among Sandwich Generation. The Pearsons Product Moment was used. The results showed a moderate positive relationship between Spiritual Well-Being and Resilience, $r(204) = .42, p = .000$. Therefore, as Spiritual Well-Being increases Resilience also increases.

A study that was undertaken by Cevik (2025) supports the above findings. The study aimed to investigate the mediating the effects of spiritual well-being on caregivers' burden of parents of children with cancer. The results found that there is a statistically significant positive, moderate relationship between spiritual well-being and resilience.

Spiritual Well-Being provides individuals with sense of purpose, inner peace and a sense of connection to a higher power which fosters them with better stress recovery without fully determining outcomes and amid dual caregiving roles and responsibilities.

H_a2.1: There will be a significant relationship between Cognitive Reappraisal and Resilience among Sandwich Generation.

Figure 1.2: Relationship between Cognitive Reappraisal and Resilience among Sandwich Generation.



**** $p < 0.01$**

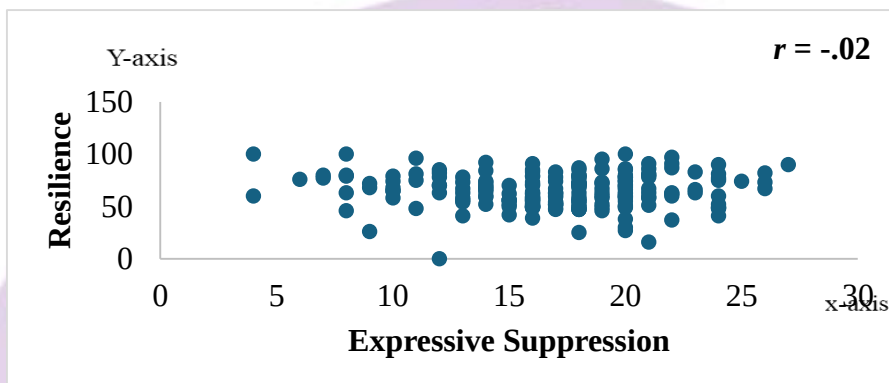
Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between Cognitive Reappraisal and Resilience among Sandwich Generation. There was a very weak positive relationship the two variables. $r(204) = .20, p = .004$. Therefore, it means that higher use of Cognitive Reappraisal strategy corresponds with greater resilience.

Another study by Han et al. (2023) supports the findings. The study explored the effects of coping style and two potentials intermediately factors (cognitive reappraisal and psychological resilience). The results of the study indicated that positive coping styles positively predicted cognitive reappraisal and psychological resilience.

The use of cognitive reappraisal helps individuals to reframe from stressors positively which aligns noticeably with higher resilience, which lead to better adaption to burdens.

H_a2.2: There will be a significant relationship between Expressive Suppression and Resilience among Sandwich Generation.

Figure 1.3: Relationship between Expressive Suppression and Resilience among Sandwich Generation.



Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between Expressive Suppression and Resilience among Sandwich Generation. The results showed a very weak negative relationship the two variables. $r(204) = -.02, p = .750$ indicating that greater use of expressive suppression strategy corresponds with decreased resilience.

A similar finding was reported by Yu et al. (2023). The study examined the separability and distinct well-being effects of suppressing positive and negative emotions. The findings of the study indicate that suppression shows weak relationship with well-being. Another study by Azizah et al. (2025). Reviewed through articles that maladaptive strategies like suppression have very weak negative effects on adaption amid dual roles.

The use of Expressive suppression leads to hiding of frustration or sadness during caregiving roles for children and aging parents which slightly correspond with lower resilience among sandwich generation.



H_a3.1: There will be a significant Gender difference in Spiritual Well-Being among Sandwich Generation.

Table 1.1 Descriptive and Inferential Statistics of Spiritual Well-Being with respect to Gender.

	Gender	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	Sig	df
Spiritual Well-Being	Males	103	85.903	13.9210	2.980	.003	204
	Females	103	91.796	14.4544			

To statistically compute the difference in Spiritual Well-Being with respect to gender, the Independent Sample t-test was employed. The results indicated that there was a significant difference $t(204) = 2.980, p = .003$ in Spiritual Well-Being among Sandwich Generation Males and Females.

A study Jay et al. (2024) supports the above findings. The study investigated the relationship between spiritual well-being and loneliness among young adults. The results indicated that there was a difference between spiritual well-being and loneliness among males and females.

The possible reasons that females often score higher on spiritual well-being compared to males could be due to deeper faith integration for coping with dual responsibilities of caregiving burdens and cultural roles which emphasizes relational spiritual well-being (Koyu et al., 2024).

H_a3.2: There will be a significant Gender difference in Emotion Regulation among Sandwich Generation.

H_a3.3: There will be a significant Gender difference in Cognitive Reappraisal among Sandwich Generation.

Table 1.2 Descriptive and Inferential Statistics of Cognitive Reappraisal with respect to Gender.

	Gender	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	Sig	df
Cognitive Reappraisal	Males	103	28.184	6.0565	.809	.419	204
	Females	103	28.913	6.8315			



To statistically compute the difference in Cognitive Reappraisal with respect to gender, the Independent Sample t-test was employed. The results indicated that there was no significant difference $t(204) = .809, p = .419$ in Cognitive Reappraisal among Sandwich Generation Males and Females.

A study conducted by Joseph et al. (2024) supports the above findings. The study examined the effects of emotion regulation and driving behaviours among young adults. The finding of the study revealed that there is no significant difference between males and females in terms of cognitive reappraisal.

Sandwich generation individuals may use cognitive reappraisal to cope with dual responsibilities, which is likely due to Indian context where both genders may adapt through reframing their emotions rather than gender- stereotyped difference which exists.

Ha3.4: There will be a significant Gender difference in Expressive Suppression among Sandwich Generation.

Table 1.3 Descriptive and Inferential Statistics of Expressive Suppression with respect to Gender.

	Gender	N	M	SD	t	Sig	df
Expressive Suppression	Males	103	17.282	4.1854	.884	.378	204
	Females	103	16.748	4.4759			

To statistically compute the difference in Expressive Suppression with respect to gender, the Independent Sample t-test was employed. The results indicated that there was no significant difference $t(204) = .884, p = .378$ in Expressive Suppression among Sandwich Generation Males and Females.

A study by Zhang et al. (2023) supports the above findings which indicates that there is no significant gender difference between males and females in suppression abilities. Another study conducted by Joseph et al. (2024) supports the above findings. The study examined the effects of emotion regulation and driving behaviours among young adults. The finding of the study revealed that there is no significant difference between males and females about expressive suppression.

The possible reasons for showing no significant difference in terms of gender among sandwich generation in expressive suppression could be due to shared cultural pressures based



on Indian context which tend to favor and restraint over expression of their emotions (Zhang et al., 2023).

H_a3.5: There will be a significant Gender difference in Resilience among Sandwich Generation.

Table 1.4 Descriptive and Inferential Statistics of Resilience with respect to Gender.

	Gender	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	Sig	df
Resilience	Males	103	64.621	13.8090	.071	.944	204
	Females	103	64.777	17.4631			

To statistically compute the differences in Resilience with respect to gender, the Independent Sample t-test was employed. The results indicated that there was no significant difference $t(204) = .071$, $p = .944$ in Resilience among Sandwich Generation Males and Females.

The above findings are supported by a study conducted by Raja et al. (2023). The study aimed to analyses the levels of resilience in the Indonesian Sandwich generation. The results found that there was no significant difference which were found in resilience among sandwich generation males and females.

The reason that there was no significant difference which exists between males and females could be due to their internal as well as their external factors which may include of self-concept, self-regulation ability and shared cultural as well as family pressures based on Indian context overriding gender specific coping (Raja et al., 2023).

CONCLUSION

This study has shown that spiritual well-being plays a pivotal role among sandwich generation, while emotion regulation strategies tend to show limited impact, with cognitive reappraisal offering sandwich generation individuals with minimal benefits and expressive suppression potentially detrimental. With this information, it can be concluded that the sandwich generation individuals might prioritize spiritual practices to build their resilience, while shifting away from suppression of emotions towards more adaptive regulation over time.

LIMITATIONS

The research study consisted of a small sample size, which constrained the generalizability of the findings to the entire sandwich generation population. Also the study



included only those participants who were proficient in English, while excluding non-English speakers, which leads to language biasness. The research study focused on age range between 25-50 years which limited insights into age-related variations. Also confining the study to only Goa, reduced external validity beyond this region.

SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future studies can address the current limitations of this study by including larger sample size, to enhance generalizability of the findings to the entire population. By also recruiting individuals from multiple regions beyond just Goa. Also incorporating qualitative and mixed methods approaches, to get deeper insights into the experiences of sandwich generation. Future studies can also incorporate diverse linguistic and cultural groups, to improve generalizability.

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