

Communication Style, Conflict Resolution and Forgiveness as Predictors of Relationship Satisfaction among Young Adults

Upasana Chaddha Samina Bano** Kriti Vyas****

Abstract

Research has indicated that relationship satisfaction is a very complex phenomenon. There are several relational and individual factors that influence the quality of a relationship. The current study explores the role of relationship communication style, conflict and forgiveness in relationship satisfaction among emerging adults. An online form consisting of four questionnaires assessing the constructs under study were forwarded to 280 emerging adults. Out of which 89 complete forms were received. Descriptive and Inferential statistics were used to compute results. Results indicated that length of relationship; positive conflict resolution style and forgiveness lead to relationship satisfaction.

Key words: Relationship Satisfaction, Forgiveness, Communication Style, Conflict Resolution, Regression

*About Authors: * & ***Research Scholar, Department of Psychology,
Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi 110025*

*** Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi 110025*

Introduction

Relationships are central to our lives and form the very meaning of our existence. People tend to consider some relationships, such as dating and marriage, more intimate than the others. It is in the context of these intimate relationships that our species exist and genes are carried forward to the next generation. People are conceived in relationships, born into relationships, grow into relationships and survive being in relationships. The pervasive influence of romantic relationships can be seen in everyday life. Its reference creeps into conversations, music lyrics, movies, daily soaps, and is broadcasted in media on daily basis.

Abraham Maslow had established, Need to belong as an essential human need and desire, and normal functioning is heavily influenced by quality and quantity of close relationships (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Positive interpersonal relationships are important to the overall mental health because humans require social connections to thrive

(Luong, Charles & Fingerman, 2011). Thus, striving for a healthy and satisfying relationship with a romantic partner is an essential goal for most of the individuals.

Human beings are born into relationships. As we grow up, we learn to sustain and value relationships, form new relationships which vary in their scope and intimacy. It is usually during adolescence that people crave for romantic love. Many are in a romantic relationship by the time they attain adulthood. A close bond with a romantic partner plays a pivotal role in the life of an emerging adult.

According to Arnett (2004), emerging adulthood is a period from 18 to 25 years old or perhaps even older. It is a time of exploring possibilities and opportunities before assuming adult roles. Emerging adults explore their options in romance and love, they venture into relationships to understand the kind of person they would like to marry, and gain relationship experience before settling on someone to partner with permanently (Arnett, 2004).

Studies (eg., Steinberg and Morris 2001) have shown that romantic relationships are important developmental milestones and have significant developmental consequences for individuals engaged in them. This exploration can lead to varied experiences: good or bad. It is been reported that majority of the students who seek counselling at the university counselling centres are for the difficulties in their romantic relationships (Creasey, Kershaw, & Boston, 1999). The negative emotions associated with these complaints may “trigger strong stress responses, self-esteem problems, academic difficulties and violence” within the relationship (Creasey & Hesson-McInnus, 2001). Creasey & Hesson-McInnus (2001) further state that while some may find late adolescent dating relationships “fleeting or trivial, about 30% of these couples find themselves married within five years”. The one's who fail in their current relationship possibly due to their corrosive conflict behaviors, could get negatively influenced and it might further hamper the development and success of a future romantic relationship.

Romantic Relationship in Indian Context

Love marriage, a term which is used especially in India and neighboring countries refers to a marriage which is based on the sole decision of the couple. It is usually considered a concept of West and deviant from the traditional arranged marriage. In arranged marriages, alliances are determined by families, arranged by parents and is based more on practical aspects of living together than on the basis of romantic love. Interestingly, the Indian mythology, Sanskrit literature and certain schools of Indian philosophy holds a comprehensive, realistic, liberal and a dispassionate view of human sexuality. Indian epics and mythology have ample examples that depict the glory of romantic love as well as its dangers and tragedies (Punja, 1992). *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, lodges a

lot of love legends. The love legend of Shakuntala and the king Dushyanta sung by Kalidasa in the play *Abhijnanashakuntalam* (Emeneau, 1962) depicted Gandharva marriage according to *Apastamba* Grhyasutra—an ancient Hindu method of marriage where the girls selects her own husband. This form of marriage was based on mutual attraction between a man and a woman, with no rituals, witnesses or family participation. Surdas's lyrical version of the legends of Radha, Krishna and the gopis of Vraj, portrayed Radha to be the most loved by Sri Krishna. *Ved Vyasa*, the most revered figure in Hinduism and a scribe of the *Vedas*, *Puranas* and the great epic *Mahabharata* was born to Sage Parashara and *Satyavati*, daughter of a fisherman out of wedlock.

Even though ancient India has many tales of romantic love to recite. Premarital relationships—whether involving physical intimacy or not, are still widely discouraged in Modern India. Yet, regardless of strict sanctions, including parental violence, loss of reputation and quickly arranged marriages to someone else than the romantic partner, up to 10% of young women and 15–30% of young men form such partnerships (Jejeebhoy & Sebastia 2005). The tales from ancient India not only depicted romantic love but it portrayed love in its purest form. The virtues of an individual were given a higher value than the materialistic aspects that an individual possessed. It is observed that many young couples today are attracted more towards the materialistic qualities of their partner than the inherent individualistic virtues. Materialism, is defined as "a value system that is preoccupied with possessions and the social image they project", is both socially destructive and self-dangerous. It could eventually ruin the happiness of the people who succumb to it. “It's connected with anxiety, sadness and broken relationships. Also couples who either have or strive for more money and are more materialistic

appear to actually have more problems and a poorer relationship than couples who are less materialistic. (Psych Central, 2011),

Relationship Satisfaction, Communication, Conflict and Forgiveness

Relationship satisfaction is defined as an interpersonal evaluation of the positivity of feelings for one's partner and attraction to the relationship (Rusbult & Buunk, 1993). Relationship satisfaction is particularly important as it gives an indication of a couple's intimacy level and also because it can be linked with other key factors such as psychological well-being and relationship dissolution (Bumpass, 2002). Previous researches on the topic of relationship satisfaction have focussed on various aspects that have shown to be significant indicators of relationship satisfaction. One such component is communication.

Communication has long been an establishment on which great relationships are manufactured. Communication in intimate relationships is defined as the verbal and/or non-verbal interactions that occur between men and women (Smith, 2007). When communication deteriorates, the nature of the relationship suffers. One or both partners feel more despondent, and this despondency can rapidly spiral as communication further disintegrates. Communication is the substance of relationships, without it there is no relationship (Guerrero, Anderson & Afifi, 2011). Therefore, the style of communication is important in determining the outcome of relationships. Affection, Similarity, Trust, Composure, Dominance, Formality and Task Orientation are the various styles of communication which have been studied in the present study. Faulty communication has been a major factor in triggering conflict.

Though conflict has a bad reputation, but it is not always bad. Conflict is a natural part

of a relationship. When the conflict arises, how the couple handles it, is the key to a better resolution. Guerreo et al (2011), have reported that the way partners manage conflict is a better predictor of relationship satisfaction than the experience of conflict itself. Gottman (1994) classified couples as regulated and non regulated couples on the basis of the way they handled their conflict and not what they conflicted upon. It is precisely because intimate relationships are characterized by a shared history and future, as well as strong emotional investments and intense affect, that solving conflicts in the intimate setting seem to matter so much to a couple.

Past research on relationship satisfaction in marriages and dating relationships consistently suggests that individuals in validating, avoidant, and volatile relational styles, respectively, have greater relationship satisfaction than hostile couples (Gottman, 1994; Holman & Jarvis, 2003). Relationship satisfaction is directly influenced by relational conflict style because of the differences in positive and negative communication utilized by conflict styles. Couples reporting an overwhelming amount of validation in their relationships had the highest levels of satisfaction, the highest amount of positive communication, and the least amount of negative communication compared to non-validating couples (Holman & Jarvis, 2003). Another component that contributes towards relationship satisfaction and under the scope of the study is forgiveness. Forgiveness is one of the important contributors to relationship satisfaction. Dispositional forgiveness is the general tendency to forgive others, self, and situations over which the individual had no control (e.g., illness) (Thomson, Snyder & Hoffman, 2005).

As individual differences influence one's behaviours, desires, emotions differently,

the requirements of each partner in the relationship also tend to vary considerably. Consequently, it is essential to understand the factors that positively or negatively impact satisfaction in intimate relationship.

Rationale of the Study

India is a collectivistic society, even though it provides a rich and interesting context to study romantic relationships considering its rich and extensive literature on romantic love. Romantic love among young adults is not widely accepted even despite globalisation and industrialisation. Youngsters even today prefer semi arranged marriages; they espouse conjugal love over family harmony as necessary for quality life (Derne 2000). However, in modern urban societies of India, the trend of getting involved in a romantic relationship and further culminating the relationship into marriage is on a rise and families are becoming tolerant towards their children choosing their own partners. Emerging adults often meet their potential partners in schools, colleges or workplace. Western researches suggest that the dating relationship usually predicts the future patterns of a long term committed relationship. It is imperative that we study and understand this particular stage of social development and the factors that predict relationship satisfaction among emerging adults. The findings can be helpful in educating emerging adults in maintaining a healthy relationship which has its own benefits.

In summary, acknowledging the significance of romantic relationships in one's life, the relationship patterns of young adults are being studied in the current paper. The present study attempts to explore the contribution of communication style, conflict resolution style, tendency to forgive and length of relationship towards relationship satisfaction among young adults in a dating relationship. The individuals who forgive easily are the ones who are high on

relationship satisfaction than the ones who don't. Ultimately, the more time you spend in the relationship, higher is the relationship satisfaction.

Objectives

- To study the role of length of relationship in predicting relationship satisfaction among young adults in a committed relationship.
- To study the role of different communication style in predicting relationship satisfaction among young adults in a committed relationship.
- To study the relationship between different conflict management style and relationship satisfaction among young adults in a committed relationship.
- To study the relationship between forgiveness and relationship satisfaction among young adults in a committed relationship.

Hypotheses

- There would be a significant relationship between length of relationship and relationship satisfaction among young adults in a committed romantic relationship.
- There would be a significant relationship between communication styles and relationship satisfaction among young adults in a committed romantic relationship.
- There would be a significant relationship between conflict styles and relationship satisfaction among young adults in a committed romantic relationship.
- There would be a significant relationship between forgiveness and relationship satisfaction among young adults in a committed romantic relationship.

- There would be a significant contribution by length of relationship and relationship satisfaction among young adults in a committed romantic relationship.
- There would be a significant contribution by communication styles and relationship satisfaction among young adults in a committed romantic relationship.
- There would be a significant contribution by conflict styles and relationship satisfaction among young adults in a committed romantic relationship.
- There would be a significant contribution by forgiveness and relationship satisfaction among young adults in a committed romantic relationship.

Method

Participants

Snowball and purposive sampling was done to collect data for the study. One prerequisite for inclusion in the study was that participants had to be in a monogamous, romantic relationship for three months or longer. The sample consisted of 89 university students from Delhi/NCR. The age of participants ranged from 18 years to 28 years. The mean age of the participants was 21.5 years. The sample consisted of 41.6% (N= 37) males and 58.4% (N=52) females. There were varying relationship lengths: 15.7% of participants were in a relationship of 3-6 months, 12.4% were in a relationship of 6-12 months, 31.5% were in a relationship for 1-2 years, and 11.2% were in a relationship for 2-3 years and 29.2% were in a relationship for 3 or more years.

Measures

Communication style: Relational Communication Scale by Burgoon & Hale (1987) was used to measure communication styles. It is a 32 item scale which measures 12 relational communication dimensions, Dominance-Submission, Intimacy, Affection-Hostility, Intensity of Involvement, Inclusion-Exclusion, Trust, Depth-Superficiality, Emotional Arousal, Composure, Similarity, Formality and Task-Social Orientation. The participants were asked to give ratings from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) to indicate their degree of disagreement and agreement with the each statements. The Cronbach alpha value was .69 for the present study.

Conflict resolution: Conflict Resolution Style Inventory by Kurdec (1994) was used to measure conflict resolution styles. It is a 16 item measure which assess four conflict strategies, Positive Problem solving, Conflict Engagement, Conflict Withdrawal and Compliance. The items are rated on 1 (never) to 5 (all the time) Likert scale. The Cronbach alpha value was .530 for the current study.

Forgiveness: Heartland Forgiveness Scale by Thomson, Snyder & Hoffman (2005) was used. It's an 18 item scale that measures an individual dispositional forgiveness; general tendency to forgive others, self and situations over which the individual had no control. The participants were asked to give ratings from 1 (almost always false of me) to 7 (almost always true of me). The Cronbach alpha value was .852 for the current study.

Relationship satisfaction: Relationship Assessment Scale by Hendrik (1988) was used to measure relationship satisfaction. It is a 7 item scale which measure global relationship satisfaction. The participants indicated degree of agreement with each of items (e.g., "In general, how satisfied with your relationship?") on

5-point likert scale ranging from 1 (not satisfied) to 5 (extremely satisfied). The Cronbach alpha value for the present study was .852.

The continuation of the survey signified consent. Upon the completion of the survey, the participants were thanked for their time.

Procedure

280 young adults were approached through social media sites out of which only 89 young adults completed the forms and thus participated in the study. They completed measures of relationship satisfaction, communication style, conflict resolution and forgiveness which were available as an online form and shared with the participants via mail and social networking site. Instructions regarding the questionnaires, confidentiality of the responses and participants details as well as the participant's right to withdraw from the study were mentioned in the cover page of the survey.

Results

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0 was used for analysis of data.

For the purpose of analysis of data, Pearson's correlation, Simple and Multiple Regression was conducted. Pearson correlation found the association between relationship satisfaction and other relational constructs. Regression was conducted to find out the variance in relationship satisfaction due to length of relationship, communication style, conflict resolution style and tendency to forgive. The result tables are below.

Table 1: Summary of Regression Analysis of Length of Relationship for Criterion Variable Relationship Satisfaction

Model	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	F	Sig.	S.E. of Estimates
	Beta								
(Constant)		28.48	.000	.49	.19	.15	4.88	0.00	4.452
1									
3-6months	-.242	-2.19	.031						
6-12months	-.075	-.695	.489						
24-36 months	.276	2.56	.012						
36+ months	.145	1.26	.209						

Dependent Variable: Relationship Satisfaction

Independent Variable: Length Of Relationship

Multiple regression analyses suggest that length of relationship is a highly significant predictor of relationship satisfaction. Table 1 suggests that the adjusted R square value is .15, which indicates that 15% of the variance in relationship satisfaction can be explained by variations in length of relationship. The individual predictor's indicate that the individual's in a relationship for 3-6 months are less satisfied in their relationship

as compared to the ones in a relationship for 12-24months. Individuals in a relationship for 24-36 months are more satisfied in their relationship as compared to the ones in a relationship for 12-24 months.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Values among Relationship Satisfaction and other variables

Var	Af	Sm	Tr	Dom	Eq	Tsk	Fg	CE	PPS	SP	Ac
R.S.	.55**	.34**	.61**	.02	.37**	.22**	.32**	-.25*	.17	-.38**	-.14

Var Variables. *R.S.* Relationship Satisfaction, *Fg* Forgiveness, *Af* Affection, *Sm* Similarity, *Tr* Trust, *Dom* Dominance, *Eq* Equality, *Tsk* Task Orientation, *CE* Conflict Engagement, *PPS* Positive Problem Solving, *SP* Self Protecting, *AC* Acceptance

** Significant at 0.01 level, * Significant at .05 level.

The Pearson correlation values show a significant and positive relationship between various communication style and relationship satisfaction. It shows that affection, similarity, trust, equality and task orientation relational communication styles have a positive and

significant relationship with relationship satisfaction among young adults. A multiple regression analysis was conducted with the above relational communication styles as predictors and relationship satisfaction as criterion variable.

Table 3: Summary for Regression Analyses for criterion variable Relationship Satisfaction

Model	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	R	R ²	Adj R ²	F	Sig.	S.E. of Estimates
1 (Constant)		1.51	.14	.64	.41	.37	9.15	.00	3.71
Affection	.16	1.17	.25						
Similarity	.02	.18	.85						
Trust	.41	2.72	.00						
Dominance	.08	.89	.37						
Equality	.16	1.42	.15						
Task orientation	-.05	.05	.96						

Dependent/Criterion Variable: Relationship Satisfaction, **Independent/Predictor Variables:** Affection, Similarity, Trust, Dominance, Equality, Task Orientation Communication Style.

The multiple regression analyses indicate that relational communication style significantly and positively predicted 41% variance in relationship satisfaction. Out of all the relational communication style Trust as a

communication style is a significant predictor of relationship satisfaction. Out of six relational communication styles, Trust has a significant variation on relationship satisfaction.

Table 4: Summary of Regression Analyses for Criterion Variable Relationship Satisfaction

Model	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	R	R ²	Adj R ²	F	Sig.	S.E. of Estimates	
	Beta									
1	(Constant)		1.322	.19	.31	.10	.09	9.73	.002	4.57
	Forgiveness Scores	.31	2.981	.005						

Dependent Variable: Relationship Satisfaction, Independent Variable: Forgiveness Scores

Pearson correlation values indicate a significant and positive relationship between tendency to forgive and relationship satisfaction ($r = .32$, $p \leq .01$, Table 1). Linear Regression analysis revealed an extension of correlation

results. The findings indicate that tendency to forgive significantly and positively explain 10% variance in relationship satisfaction.

Table 5: Summary of Regression Analyses for Criterion Variable Relationship Satisfaction

Model	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	R	R ²	Adj R ²	F	Sig.	S.E. of Estimates	
	Beta									
1	(Constant)		7.444	.000	.405	.16	.12	4.11	.004	4.49
	Conflict engagement	-.067	.564	.574						
	Positive problem solving	.072	.665	.508						
	Self Protecting	-.318	2.827	.006						
	Acceptance	-.101	.994	.323						

Independent/Predictor Variable: Conflict Engagement, Positive Problem Solving, Self Protecting, Acceptance

Pearson correlations revealed significant but negative correlation between conflict engagement conflict resolution style ($r = -.25$, $p \leq .05$ levels) and selfprotecting conflict resolution style ($r = .68$, $p \leq .01$). The multiple

regression analyses suggest that the conflict resolution style is a significant predictor of relationship satisfaction. It indicates that 16% variance in relationship satisfaction is due to Conflict resolution styles. The findings further

suggest that Self Protective conflict resolution style is significantly but negatively predict relationship satisfaction. The negative Beta value indicates that relationship satisfaction is low among people who exhibit self protecting conflict resolution style.

Discussion

Described as the very essence of human existence (Hendrick & Hendrick, 2000), a high quality, satisfying romantic relationship is linked to healthy development, good mood & emotional well being , academic and career success (Chung, Farmer, Grant, Newton, Payne, Perry, Saunders, Smith, & Stone, 2003 ;Meier, A., & Allen, G. 2009; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). However, troubled or conflicted relationships are associated with negative psychological and physical outcomes including risky sexual behaviour (Manning et al 2009). Romantic relationships help young adults discover aspects about themselves such as, what makes them attractive, what are they attracted to and what is it that they want from the relationship or help them explore what an ideal relationship should be like. These early romantic relationships often serve as a model for future relationships and it is particularly important to examine their implications for young people (Connolly, Furman, & Konarski, 2000). The current study made an attempt to identify the association and role of length of relationship, communication style, conflict resolution style, tendency to forgive towards relationship satisfaction among committed young adults residing in National Capital Territory, India

The results from correlation and regression analysis revealed that relationship satisfaction among young adults in a romantic relationship has various predictors. The first hypothesis of the study was to find out that how length of relationship impacted relationship satisfaction. The results indicated that length of

relationship had a significant and a positive correlation with relationship satisfaction. Also that length of relationship also significantly and positively predicts relationship satisfaction. Findings of the study supported the hypothesis. However there were no significant results found among the young adults who belonged to the 6-12 months and 36+ months group. Length of time is an aspect of relationship that is unchangeable; determining how this factor impacts relationship satisfaction could be useful in restructuring unhealthy relationships before dissolution. Possible reasons for the lack of significant relationships between length of relationship and relationship satisfaction in the above mentioned groups (6-12 months & 36+ months) could be due to the small sample size in those groups. A study conducted by Spott, Pyle & Carter (2010), on Non Verbal behaviours in relationship supported the findings of our study, they reported that length of relationship and overall satisfaction in the relationship has a significant positive correlation.

The second hypothesis of the study is that a more positive communication style would enhance relationship satisfaction and a hostile or dominating communication style would lead to decreased relationship satisfaction. There would be significant variance in relationship satisfaction due to communication style. The results demonstrated that positive communication style (eg, affection, similarity, task orientation, trust, equality) had a significant and positive relationship with relationship satisfaction though there is no significant relationship between dominance communication style and relationship satisfaction. Regression analysis further explained a positive and significant variance in relationship satisfaction due to relational communication style.

The third hypothesis is to study the relationship of different conflict resolution

styles with relationship satisfaction. There would be a significant variance of conflict resolution style on relationship satisfaction. The correlation analysis revealed that conflict engagement style and self protecting conflict resolution style are significantly but negatively associated with relationship satisfaction. Regression analyses revealed conflict resolution style to be a significant predictor of relationship satisfaction. Out of that only self protecting conflict resolution style was observed to cause significant variance in relationship dissatisfaction. Cramer (2002) examined conflict management behaviors and relationship satisfaction, found that the lack of resolution during conflict was a primary determinant of relationship dissatisfaction whereas conflict avoidance appeared to play a much weaker role in determining overall relationship satisfaction (Cramer, 2002). These findings suggest that the demand/withdraw pattern, which often leads to lack of resolution of the conflict, may significantly impact relationship satisfaction.

The fourth hypothesis is to study the association and contribution of forgiving a romantic partner in increasing the relationship satisfaction. The findings suggest that tendency to forgive is positively and significantly associated with relationship satisfaction and also significantly and positively cause variance in relationship satisfaction. The results of our study are supported by Kachadourian, Fincham, and Davila (2004), they reported that individuals who were willing to forgive their partners for transgressions were ultimately more satisfied with the relationship.

To summarize, it is important to understand the dynamics of romantic relationships among emerging adults. Trust, conflict resolution, communication, forgiveness are important elements of a romantic relationship. These close and intimate

relationships integrate all the aspects of an individual, namely mental, emotional and physical. It is considered to be most intense of all relationships and hence has a strong impact on the individual too. In an Indian context, where the romantic relationships among unmarried young adults are not much encouraged and viewed in a negative light yet are reluctantly accepted. It becomes rather critical to study the dynamics of relationships in such a context. The findings of our study would help us educate young adults upon modifying communication styles, adopting healthy conflict resolution styles and practicing forgiveness to enjoy a healthy and satisfying romantic relationship. It would further help them in resolving conflicts appropriately in their married life. The results have indicated that length of relationship; trust and forgiveness have emerged out to be significant contributors of relationship satisfaction among the young adults. It indicates that emerging adults place high importance to trust in their communication. It was observed that trust in communication would predict higher relationship satisfaction. Presence of trust becomes imperative in a satisfying relationship. Further, tendency to forgive also is essential to sustain and be happy in a relationship. In a relationship, partners often hurt one another consciously or unconsciously. In the absence of forgiveness, the hurt might have lingering impact on the quality of relationship. Also related is the aspect of withdrawal or self protecting behavior in the face of conflict. It has been observed to be detrimental for the relationships. Withdrawal or self protection can minimize constructive efforts towards relationship maintenance. So individuals withdrawing themselves from the conflict need to be sensitized towards the damage it causes in the relationship. The other partner should create a conforming climate which encourages an open and healthy

atmosphere for conversations and conflict resolution. The study even reveals the impact length of relationship has on satisfaction in a relationship. With time relationship satisfaction enhances.

Future researchers could benefit by investigating the communication style, conflict resolution style and tendency to forgive as a couple rather than individuals as unit of analysis. If both partners could be surveyed, the results could possibly be more accurate. It would be interesting to observe the relationship dynamics and how couples conduct themselves in relationship for its maintenance and survival. Also some exploration could be done to know whether or not both partners report the same satisfaction levels, communication and conflict styles. Whether either partner practice forgiveness equally or is one of them more forgiving? Withdrawal conflict resolution strategy is employed as a couple or is the resolution strategy of the dominant partner? It could also investigate that how does being in a relationship for a longer time enhance relationship satisfaction? Studying these behaviors among the couple will help grasp the dynamics of a relationship in depth.

The study has several limitations. The sample size was small and was not a representative sample of the emerging adults in India. The questionnaires were filled online and were quantitative, socially desirable responses could have been higher.

References

- Abraham L and Kumar KA, Sexual experiences and their correlates among college students in Mumbai City, India, *International Family Planning Perspectives*, 1999, 25(3):139–146.
- Arnett, J. J. (2004). Emerging adulthood: The winding road from the late teens through the twenties. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Awasthi S, Nichter M and Pande VK, Developing an interactive STD prevention program for youth: lessons from a north Indian slum, *Studies in Family Planning*, 2000, 31(2):138–150.
- Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 117, 497-529.
- Bumpass, L.L. 2002. Family-related attitudes, couple relationships, and union stability. in R. Lesthaeghe, ed. *Meaning and Choice - Value Orientations and Life Cycle Decisions*, Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute, Netherlands.).
- Burgoon, J. K., & Hale, J. I. (1987). Validation and measurement of the fundamental themes of relational communication. *Communication Monographs*, 54, 19-41.
- Chung, M.C., Farmer, S., Grant, K., Newton, R., Payne, S., Perry, M., Saunders, J., Smith, C., & Stone, N. (2003). Coping with post-traumatic stress symptoms following relationship dissolution. *Journal of the International Society for the Investigation of Stress*, 19, 27-36.
- Connolly, J., Furman, W., & Konarski, R. (2000). The role of peers in the emergence of heterosexual romantic relationships in adolescence. *Child Development*, 71(5), 1395-1408
- Cramer, D. (2002). Linking conflict management behaviors and relational satisfaction: The intervening role of conflict outcome satisfaction. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 19(3), 425-432. doi: 10.1177/0265407502193007

- Creasey, G., Kershaw, K., & Boston, A. (1999). Conflict management with friends and romantic partners: The role of attachment and negative mood regulation expectancies. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 28, 523–543.
- Creasey, G., & Hesson-McInnis, M. (2001). Affective responses, cognitive appraisals, and conflict tactics in late adolescent romantic relationships: Associations with attachment orientations. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 48, 85–96.
- Derne, S. (2000). Culture, family structure, and psyche in Hindu India : the “fit” and the “inconsistencies”. *International Journal of Group Tensions*, 29 (3/4), 323–348. Retrieved from <http://www.springerlink.com/content/v16023w236716417/>.
- Emeneau, M. B. (1962). Kālidāsa's Śakuntalā and the Mahābhārata. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 82(1), 41–44. Retrieved on from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/595977>
- Gottman, J. M. (1994). *What predicts divorce? The relationship between marital processes and marital outcomes*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum
- Guerrero, L. K., Anderson, P. A., & Afifi, W. A. (2011). *Close Encounters: Communication in Relationships* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Hendrick, S.S (1988). A generic measure of relationship satisfaction. *Journal Of Marriage & The Family*, 50(1), 93-98. Doi:10.2307/352430 (R.A. Scale)
- Hendrick, C., & Hendrick, S.S. (2000). *Close Relationships: A sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Holman, T. B., & Jarvis, M. O. (2003). Hostile, volatile, avoiding, and validating couple-conflict types: An investigation of Gottman's couple-conflict types. *Personal Relationships*, 10(2), 267-282. doi:10.1111/1475-6811.00049
- Jejeebhoy SJ and Sebastian MP, Young people's sexual and reproductive health, in: Jejeebhoy SJ, ed., *Looking Back, Looking Forward: A Profile of Sexual and Reproductive Health in India*, New Delhi: Population Council, and Jaipur, India: Rawat Publications, 2004, pp. 138–168.
- Kachadourian, L. K., Fincham, F., & Davila, J. (2004). The tendency to forgive in dating and married couples: The role of attachment and relationship satisfaction. *Personal Relationships*, 11(3), 373-393. doi: 10.1111/j.1475-6811.2004.00088.x
- Kaur U et al.(1996) ., Sexual behaviour, drug use and hepatitis B infection in Chandigarh students, *National Medical Journal of India*, 9(4): 156–159.
- Kurdek, L.A. (1994). Conflict resolution styles in gay, lesbian, heterosexual nonparent, and heterosexual parent couples. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 56,7-5-722.
- Luong, G., Charles, S. T., & Fingerman, K. L. (2011). Better with age: Social relationships across adulthood. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 28 (1) , 9 - 23 . doi : 10.1177/0265407510391362
- Mehra S, Savithri R and Coutinho L(2002), Sexual behavior among unmarried adolescents in Delhi, India: opportunities despite parental controls, paper presented at the 2002 IUSSP Regional Population Conference, Bangkok, June 10–13, 2002.
- Meier, A., & Allen, G. (2009). Romantic relationships from adolescence to adulthood: Evidence from the National

- Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 50, 308-335.
- Manning, W., Flanigan, C., Giordano, P., & Longmore, M. A. (2009). Relationship dynamics and consistency of condom use among adolescents. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 41(3), 181-190.
- News Editor, P. (2011). Materialistic Couples Have More Problems, Poorer Quality Relationship. *Psych Central*. Retrieved on May 9, 2015, from <http://psychcentral.com/news/2011/10/13/materialistic-couples-have-more-problems-poorer-quality-relationship/30311.html>
- Potdar R and Koenig MA, Does Audio-CASI improve reports of risky behavior? Evidence from a randomized field trial among urban men in India, *Studies in Family Planning*, 2005, 36(2):107–116.
- Punja, S. (1992). *Divine ecstasy: The story of Khajuraho*. New Delhi: Viking.
- Rusbult, C. E., & Buunk, B. P. (1993). Commitment processes in close relationships: An interdependence analysis, *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 10, 175-204.
- Steinberg L, Morris AS. 2001. Adolescent development. *Annual Review Psychology* 52:83–110
- Smith, L. M. (2007). Intimate relationship communication: Response patterns in marital sexual relations. *Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, South Dakota State University*
- Spott, J., Pyle, C., & Punyanunt-Carter, N. M. (2010). Positive and Negative Nonverbal Behaviors in Relationships: A Study of Relationship Satisfaction and Longevity. *Human Communication*, 13, 29-41
- Thompson, L. Y., Snyder, C. R., Hoffman, L., Michael, S. T., Rasmussen, H. N., Billings, L. S., Heinze, L., Neufeld, J. E., Shorey, H. S., Roberts, J. C., & Roberts, D. E. (2005). Dispositional forgiveness of self, others, and situations. *Journal of Personality*, 73, 313-359.

