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## Exploring the Link among Love Styles, Relationship Satisfaction And Self Disclosure

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### Abstract

*Love styles have a profound impact on the quality of relationships. Different love styles seem to be associated with varied levels of relationship satisfaction and self-disclosure. Thus, the main objective of the study was to understand the relationship of love styles with relationship satisfaction. It also aims to explore how the levels of disclosure between couples differ across different love styles. The research sample included a total of 91 participants, consisting of 54 females and 37 males, who are involved in a romantic, heterosexual relationship for at least one year. The study employed purposive and snowball sampling techniques. Correlation analysis was carried out after pooling the data. Results of the current study suggested that a significant negative correlation exists between relationship satisfaction and three love styles, i.e. Eros, Storage and Agape, in the total sample. Further, self-disclosure was found to be positively correlated with Ludus love style and Mania love style in the overall sample. Last but not the least, love styles were also found to be significantly correlated with relationship satisfaction and self disclosure in female and male participants.*

**Keywords:** Love Styles, Relationship Satisfaction, Self Disclosure

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### INTRODUCTION:

Love is a key emotion in people's lives and is essential to human well-being (Raffagnino & Puddu, 2018). Love has different levels of intensity and can evolve over time (Cherry, 2022). These are among the most crucial elements for a fulfilling relationship and its longevity. Yet, love relationships may also be a cause of strain, discomfort, struggle, pain, and negative emotions, which may have a detrimental impact on the nature and longevity of a relationship. (Raffagnino & Puddu, 2018).

Lee's classification of love styles is widely accepted. He suggests that there are six basic styles of love, each of which has a different perspective on love and is influenced by past family experiences (Fricker & Moore, 2002). Lee's taxonomy of love styles, also called 'colours of love' was further classified into two categories - primary and secondary. Eros (romantic and passionate love), Ludus (playful and game-playing love) and Storage (friendship love) constitute primary styles. On the other hand, styles that are a combination of two primary styles make up the secondary

styles. These include Mania (possessive or addictive love), a combination of Eros and Ludus; Pragma (practical and rational love), composed of Storage and Ludus; and lastly, Agape (altruistic and selfless love) love style is formed with a combination of Eros and Storage. The precise, structured and complete classification made by Lee further helped in the development of a tool known as the Love Attitudes Scale (LAS) (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986). This scale serves as a vital tool in research and in identifying the six love styles (Raffagnino & Puddu, 2018) which are discussed below.

Eros is a symbol for the emotionally intense person who seeks a passionately expressive connection as well as one that is psychologically intimate and open. Beauty and physical appeal are prioritized in this kind of partnership (Lee, 1988). Pragma is sensible love, in which reason takes precedence over emotions. Another love style Storage is a friendly love in which sexuality is kept in the background, and people genuinely care for and are interested in one another. In Mania

possessive, obsessional kind of love is seen. As they frequently feel insecure in a relationship, possessive lovers require assurance that their partner loves them (Lee, 1988). In Ludus love style lovers view love as a sophisticated game. Game-playing love is intimately associated with both infidelity and relationship cheating because it is a form of relationship where fun comes first. (Lee, 1988). Agape is a type of selfless love. The agapic lover seeks total spiritual and emotional identification, offers unconditional love, support, and significance, and places his loved one at the top of his priority list.

Other than love styles various factors such as communication with spouse, independence, support, respect, understanding etc. also affect relationship satisfaction. Two partners in a romantic relationship may have different levels of satisfaction (Keizer, 2014) because relationship satisfaction is subjective in nature. While relationship satisfaction being one part, self disclosure becomes another important component that can impact how love styles manifest in relationships, influencing intimacy, trust, and satisfaction. Self-disclosure involves the sharing of personal information, thoughts, feelings, and experiences with others.

Understanding the importance of building healthy relationships in today's world, the current study was formulated to explore the gender differences on love styles and to examine how self-disclosure and relationship satisfaction vary according to love styles.

#### **Objectives:**

1. To assess the relationship between love styles (i.e. Eros, Ludus, Storage, Pragma, Mania and Agape) and relationship satisfaction; love styles and self disclosure in the total sample.
2. To explore the relationship between love styles (Eros, Ludus, Storage, Pragma, Mania and Agape) and relationship satisfaction; love styles and self disclosure in females.

3. To examine the relationship between love styles (Eros, Ludus, Storage, Pragma, Mania and Agape) and relationship satisfaction; love styles and self disclosure in males.

#### **Hypotheses:**

H<sub>1</sub> - There is no significant relationship between love styles (Eros, Ludus, Storage, Pragma, Mania and Agape) and relationship satisfaction; love styles and self disclosure in the total sample.

H<sub>2</sub> - There is no significant relationship between love styles (Eros, Ludus, Storage, Pragma, Mania and Agape) and relationship satisfaction; love styles and self disclosure in females.

H<sub>3</sub> - There is no significant relationship between love styles (Eros, Ludus, Storage, Pragma, Mania and Agape) and relationship satisfaction; love styles and self disclosure in males.

#### **METHODOLOGY:**

##### **Design**

Quantitative cross-sectional study was followed for the present research. The main objective of the study was to understand the relationship of love styles with relationship satisfaction and self disclosure. love styles were the independent variables in the study, while relationship satisfaction and self-disclosure were dependent variables. Apart from this, the age of the participants, the length of the relationship and the sexual orientation of the participants were controlled. Correlation analysis was used to find the relationship of love styles with relationship satisfaction and self-disclosure.

##### **Sample:**

Non probability sampling techniques i.e purposive and snowball sampling, was used to collect data from the participants. The total number of participants in the study was 91, consisting of 37 males and 54 females. The participants chosen for the study were heterosexual couples, who have been dating for at least one year and fall in the age bracket of 18-25 years.

**Tools:*****Love Attitudes Scale (SF)***

Love Attitudes Scale (Short Form), by Hendrick et al., (1998) contains 24 items, which compose the following six subscales: Eros, Ludus, Storge, Pragma, Mania, and Agape. According to the interpretation of six subscales, low scores on a particular subscale signify that an individual scores higher on the corresponding love style while high scores on a subscale implies that an individual is low on that love style. All six subscales exhibited fairly good reliability and validity. Cronbach's alpha value was 0.82 for the Eros subscale, 0.77 for the Ludus subscale, 0.87 for the Storage subscale, 0.64 for the Pragma subscale, 0.73 for the Mania subscale and 0.83 for the Agape subscale (Meskó et al., 2021).

***Relationship Assessment Scale***

Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS; Hendrick et al., 1998) is a seven item scale that gives an overall measure of relationship satisfaction. Coefficient alpha for RAS total scores was found to be .91, with inter item correlations ranging from .35 to .80. Also, the RAS and DAS are highly correlated, demonstrating convergent validity (Vaughn & Baier, 1999).

***Self-disclosure Index***

Miller, Berg, and Archer's (1983) 10-item Self-disclosure Index was used to assess self-disclosure. Total self-disclosure scores varied from 10 to 50, with higher values suggesting greater self-disclosure and smaller values indicating lower self-disclosure. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for internal consistency of the scale is 0.79. The test-retest reliability is  $r = 0.69$ . The Index also displays construct validity with the Openers Scale to the notion that high openers exhibited greater self-disclosure and vice versa (Miller et al., 1983).

**Procedure**

The aim of the present study was to explore the link among love styles, relationship satisfaction and self disclosure. The study was conducted among individuals between 18-25 years of age who have been dating for at least one year. Once the demographic parameters were set and scales were finalized, a Google form was created incorporating the three scales. A pilot study was conducted to check and rule out any discrepancies in the form. After data collection correlation analysis was applied. The results obtained were then used for interpretation of the data.

**RESULTS:****Table 1**

*Correlation table for six love styles, relationship satisfaction and self disclosure in the total sample*

	Eros Love Style	Ludus Love Style	Storage Love Style	Pragma Love Style	Mania Love Style	Agape Love Style
Relationship Satisfaction	-0.67***	0.11	-0.24*	-0.01	0.19	-0.24*
Self Disclosure	-0.06	0.40***	0.10	0.18	0.30**	0.20

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

Table 1 indicates that negative correlation with relationship satisfaction has been found for three love styles, namely, Eros ( $r = -0.67$ ,  $p < .001$ ), Storage ( $r = -0.24$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and Agape ( $r = -0.24$ ,  $p < .05$ ) in total sample. Positive correlation with self disclosure was observed in case of Ludus love style ( $r = 0.40$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and Mania love style ( $r = 0.30$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

**Table 2***Correlation table for six love styles, relationship satisfaction and self disclosure in females*

	Eros Love Style	Ludus Love Style	Storage Love Style	Pragma Love Style	Mania Love Style	Agape Love Style
Relationship Satisfaction	-0.74***	0.16	-0.25	-0.25	0.23	-0.42**
Self Disclosure	-0.12	0.07	0.05	-0.03	0.15	0.03

Note : \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

Table 2 represents negative correlation with relationship satisfaction for Eros love style ( $r = -0.74$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and Agape love style ( $r = -0.42$ ,  $p < .01$ ) in female. No significant correlation was found between other four love styles i.e., Ludus, Storage, Pragma and Mania and relationship satisfaction. Further, no significant correlation was found between six love styles and self disclosure.

**Table 3***Correlation table for six love styles, relationship satisfaction and self-disclosure in males*

	Eros Love Style	Ludus Love Style	Storage Love Style	Pragma Love Style	Mania Love Style	Agape Love Style
Relationship Satisfaction	-0.60***	0.05	-0.26	0.02	0.14	-0.13
Self Disclosure	-0.03	0.63***	0.10	0.27	0.47**	0.23

Note : \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

Table 3 represents negative correlation with relationship satisfaction has been found for Eros love style ( $r = -0.60$ ,  $p < .001$ ) only in males. No significant correlation was found with other love styles. Also, positive correlation with self disclosure was observed in case of Ludus love style ( $r = 0.63$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and Mania love style ( $r = 0.47$ ,  $p < .01$ ) only.

## DISCUSSION:

The aim of the present study was to explore the link among love styles, relationship satisfaction and self disclosure.

Table 1 shows that three love styles i.e Eros, Storage and Agape have been found to be negatively correlated with relationship satisfaction. Thus, the hypothesis  $H_1$  is rejected in the context of Eros, Storage and Agape and it is accepted in the context of other love styles (Ludus, Pragma and Mania) as no significant correlation emerged in the total sample. As per the scale's scoring, the lower the score on Eros love style, the more passionate is the love. Hence, it seems to be connected to the positive aspects of a relationship and marriage (Zadeh & Bozorgi, 2016).

A negative correlation exists between relationship satisfaction and two of the love styles i.e. Storage and Agape. According to scale's scoring, lower scores on Storage love style means stronger friendship love whereas low scores on Agape love style are associated with feelings of selflessness. A study by Zadeh & Bozorgi (2016) also found that Storage love style is associated with better married life and greater satisfaction. Similarly, Agape individuals also tend to be more appreciative in their relationship and can emotionally rely on their partners if they are in the right relationship (Tan & Tung, 2007).

Table 1 also shows that two love styles i.e Ludus and Mania have been found to be positively correlated with self disclosure. Thus,

the hypothesis  $H_1$  is rejected in the context of Ludus and Mania and it is retained in the context of other love styles. As per the scale's scoring, high score on Ludus love style means that a person is less likely to engage in game playing love. Thus, as an individual moves away from Ludus love style and reduces his/her connection with multiple partners, then loyalty and self disclosure is likely to increase to one's partner. High scores on Mania love style means that a person is less likely to be obsessed and possessive of their partner. Thus, as an individual moves away from Mania love style, they are less likely to feel insecure about their partner and might not fear revealing their secrets to their partners.

Table 2 depicts the correlation between love styles and relationship satisfaction in females. Two love styles i.e., Eros and Agape have been found to be negatively correlated with relationship satisfaction. Thus, the hypothesis  $H_2$  is rejected in the context of Eros, and Agape and it is retained in the context of other love styles.

A strong negative correlation has been found between Eros love style and relationship satisfaction in females. As per the scale's scoring, the lower the score on Eros love style, the more passionate the love. In the patriarchal society, passionate love is more likely to be viewed positively and may contribute in relationship satisfaction. Similarly, Low scores on Agape are linked with a higher sense of emotional maturity and selflessness and might contribute in relationship satisfaction. Table 2 further shows no significant correlation between love styles and self disclosure in females, leading us to retain the null hypothesis  $H_2$ .

Table 3 displays that only Eros love style has been found to be negatively correlated with relationship satisfaction in males. Thus, the hypothesis  $H_3$  is rejected in the context of Eros and it is accepted in the context of other love styles. Negative correlation is explained by low scores on Eros love style (low scores on Eros love style is indicative of deep and passionate love) and higher scores on

relationship satisfaction. One possible explanation could be that men who are passionate in the relationship are admired by their partner. Even, a study by Morrow et al., (1995) found men who endorse Eros love style tend to perceive their relationship as more rewarding and experience greater level of relationship satisfaction. Results further revealed that two love styles i.e Ludus and Mania have been found to be positively correlated with self disclosure. Thus, the hypothesis  $H_3$  is rejected in the context of Ludus and Mania and it is retained in the context of other love styles.

As per the scale's scoring, high score on Ludus love style means that a person is less likely to engage in game playing love. Men, in India are less likely to exhibit Ludus love because of cultural norms and are often expected to be providers and protectors, and may look up to create stable and long-lasting relationships. Whereas, when it comes to Mania love style (high scores on Mania love style means that a person is less likely to be obsessed and possessive of their partner) low level of obsession might make them more comfortable with their partner and may increase self expression.

Small sample size, bias in self report measures and fatigue due to extensive questionnaire are some of the limitations. Nevertheless, the present study makes an important contribution to the scarce availability of combined research that tells the link of love styles with both relationship satisfaction and self disclosure, along with gender differences. Future research can include a more diverse range of participants in terms of gender, sexual orientation and culture.

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