



A Study on Factor That Gen Z Consider While Tacking Decision in Relationship in Ahmedabad City

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Relationship Values, Emotional Intelligence, Communication, Decision-Making, Mental Well-Being

Received : 05 August

Revised : 23 September

Accepted: 23 October

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ABSTRACT

The present study examines individuals' perceptions, values, and behavioral patterns in personal relationships, focusing on how changing social, cultural, and technological contexts influence modern relational dynamics. The research explores key dimensions such as trust, emotional support, decision-making, communication preferences, and attitudes toward marriage and mental well-being. A descriptive research design was employed using a structured questionnaire, and data were analyzed through frequency distribution to interpret respondents' attitudes and behaviors. The findings reveal that emotional connection, mutual trust, and understanding are considered the most essential elements of healthy relationships. Respondents demonstrated a strong preference for autonomy in decision-making, reflecting a growing sense of self-awareness and independence. While open communication and conflict resolution were valued, variations in comfort levels indicated the continued influence of traditional norms. The study also highlights a shift in perceptions of marriage—from a societal expectation to a personal choice based on compatibility and emotional satisfaction. Moreover, increasing awareness of mental health underscores the growing importance of emotional well-being in relational decisions. The research contributes to existing theories such as Social Exchange Theory, Attachment Theory, and Self-Determination Theory by integrating modern perspectives on emotional intelligence and digital communication. It further provides practical insights for educators, counselors, and policymakers to design relationship-awareness programs that foster empathy, communication skills, and mental resilience among individuals.

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century has brought massive changes in technology, culture, and the way people connect with each other; within this fast-moving world, a new generation—Generation Z (Gen Z)—has grown up (Vidani, 2015). Usually defined as those born between 1995 and 2010, Gen Z is the first generation to truly live as digital natives. Smartphones, social media, and a globally connected lifestyle have been part of their lives from the very beginning; this unique environment has shaped not only how they see the world but also how they build and maintain their personal relationships (Vidani & Solanki, 2015).

As Gen Z steps into adulthood, their approach to friendships, romantic relationships, and family ties stands out in important ways (Vidani, 2015). Unlike older generations, who often followed more traditional paths when it came to love, marriage, or family roles, Gen Z tends to push boundaries (Vidani, 2015). They question long standing norms but at the same time seek authenticity, emotional closeness, and genuine fulfillment in their relationships (Vidani, 2015).

Their mindset is not simple—it's layered with contrasts; On one hand, they respect individuality, but on the other, they still value community and belonging (Solanki & Vidani, 2016). They can be both highly emotional and rational when making choices about their relationships (Vidani, 2016). This complexity becomes even more visible when they face big decisions—like whether to start or end a relationship, how to handle conflicts, or how to think about long-term commitments like marriage (Bhatt, Patel, & Vidani, 2017). Understanding this decision-making mindset matters because personal relationships directly affect mental health, identity, and overall well-being (Niyati & Vidani, 2016).

For Gen Z, making these decisions feels different compared to Baby Boomers or Millennials (Pradhan, Tshogay, & Vidani, 2016). They live in an always-on digital world, where cultural expectations shift quickly, and information never stops flowing (Modi, Harkani, Radadiya, & Vidani, 2016). At the same time, many of them face the pressure of balancing independence with connection (Vidani, 2016). Research has already shown that relationships are deeply tied to life satisfaction: positive interactions bring happiness, while negative ones can lead to stress or even depression (Sukhanandi, Tank, & Vidani, 2018). For Gen Z, who are constantly exposed to both online and offline pressures, this balance is especially delicate (Singh, Vidani, & Nagoria, 2016).

Take marriage for example, Studies show that Gen Z doesn't necessarily see marriage as an obligation anymore (Mala, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016). Instead, they view it as a choice, something based on love, compatibility, and personal happiness—not just social or family expectations (Mala, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016). At the same time, they place strong value on authentic, face-to-face connections, even while being the most digitally connected generation; this mix of digital and traditional instincts makes their decision-making style unique (Dhere, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016).

When it comes to day-to-day relationships, research reminds us that even small decisions—like how money is handled or how routines are shared—can create both harmony and conflict (Singh & Vidani, 2016). For Gen Z, these

negotiations can be even trickier because they are growing up in a world marked by economic uncertainty, evolving gender roles, and rapidly changing cultural expectations (Vidani & Plaha, 2016).

Research Objectives

The overarching objective is to examine the mindset of Generation Z when confronted with critical decision-making in personal relationships. Specific objectives include:

1. To explore how Gen Z defines and values personal relationships in the modern context.
2. To analyse the factors influencing their decision-making in love, marriage, conflict resolution, and family dynamics.
3. To identify the role of cultural, social, and digital influences in shaping their mindset.
4. To contribute to the broader discourse on intergenerational shifts in relationship norms and decision-making.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction to Literature on Gen Z and Relationships The study of personal relationships has long been a central theme in psychology, sociology, and economics (Solanki & Vidani, 2016). Decisions regarding whom to love, how to manage conflicts, or whether to commit to marriage represent some of the most critical turning points in human life (Vidani, 2016). For Generation Z (Gen Z), born roughly between 1995 and 2010, these decisions are made in a socio-cultural environment that is fundamentally different from that of previous generations (Vidani, Chack, & Rathod, 2017). Digital technology, globalization, and shifting cultural norms have reshaped how this cohort perceives and navigates interpersonal relationships (Vidani, 2018).

The existing literature provides multiple angles on the relational lives of Gen Z. Cazan (2020) focuses on the value of personal relationships, emphasizing the significance of face-to-face bonds (Biharani & Vidani, 2018). Kulathunga and Abeysinghe (2024) explore love and marriage perceptions, demonstrating how Gen Z redefines long-term commitments (Vidani, 2018). Kirchler et al. (2001) provide insights into conflict and decision-making in couples, revealing the complexity of everyday relational negotiations (Odedra, Rabiya, & Vidani, 2018). Lee and Szinovacz (2016) highlight the mental health implications of positive and negative interactions, pointing to the role of relational quality in life satisfaction (Vasveliyya & Vidani, 2019). By analyzing these works, along with broader theoretical perspectives, this literature review will synthesize what is known and identify gaps relevant to the mindset of Gen Z in critical decision-making within personal relationships (Sachaniya, Vora, & Vidani, 2019).

Generation Z and the Value of Personal Relationships Cazan (2020) conducted a quantitative study focusing on how Gen Z values, maintains, and engages in personal relationships (Vidani, 2019). Despite being labeled as the “chronically online” generation, her findings reveal that many members of Gen Z prefer offline interactions for building deeper, longlasting connections (Vidani, Jacob, & Patel, 2019). This is noteworthy given the prevailing stereotype that

digital natives rely primarily on virtual connections (Vidani J. N., 2016). Instead, the study found that face-to-face communication fosters trust, authenticity, and emotional depth, which remain crucial for Gen Z despite their immersion in social media (Vidani & Singh, 2017).

This duality – being digitally immersed yet seeking authenticity offline – defines much of the Gen Z relational experience (Vidani & Pathak, 2016). Offline connections are seen as less performative and more genuine compared to curated digital personas (Pathak & Vidani, 2016). Cazan’s study suggests that Gen Z’s decision-making mindset in relationships may be informed by a search for balance between digital and in-person interactions (Vidani & Plaha, 2017). When making critical decisions such as whether to invest emotionally in a relationship, they may consider whether the connection transcends digital communication and holds value in real-world contexts (Vidani J. N., 2020).

However, a limitation of Cazan’s study is its cultural specificity; the research was conducted among Romanian students, and thus its generalizability may be limited (Vidani J. N., 2018). Yet, it provides a foundation for understanding how Gen Z negotiates authenticity and meaning in relationships (Vidani & Dholakia, 2020).

Love and Marriage in the Eyes of Gen Z Kulathunga and Abeysinghe (2024) examined Gen Z perceptions of love and marriage in Sri Lanka through qualitative methods, including focus groups and interviews (Vidani, Meghrajani, & Siddarth, 2023) (Rathod, Meghrajani, & Vidani, 2022). Their study highlighted five major themes:

1. Views on love
2. Relationship expectations and breakups
3. Views on marriage
4. Marriage rates
5. Role of culture

The most significant finding is that love has become the primary motivator for marriage among Gen Z, in contrast to past generations for whom marriage was often a social or cultural obligation (Vidani & Das, 2021). At the same time, Gen Z shows greater reluctance toward marriage, leading to declining marriage rates. This reflects a cultural shift where individual choice and personal fulfillment outweigh societal expectations (Vidani J. N., 2022).

Another critical insight is the changing expectations in relationships; Gen Z tends to prioritize emotional compatibility, respect, and shared values over economic security or social status, which were more dominant factors in earlier generations (Saxena & Vidani, 2023). Breakups, once heavily stigmatized, are increasingly normalized as part of the process of finding authentic love (Vidani, Das, Meghrajani, & Singh, 2023).

The role of culture remains significant, but even in culturally conservative societies like Sri Lanka, Gen Z demonstrates greater autonomy in relationship decisions (Vidani, Das, Meghrajani, & Chaudasi, 2023). This suggests a generational shift toward individualized decision-making, where the mindset is shaped by personal emotions rather than collective pressures (Bansal, Pophalkar, & Vidani, 2023).

This study is highly relevant to the current research because it shows how critical decisions about marriage and long-term commitment are being redefined by Gen Z's values (Chaudhary, Patel, & Vidani, 2023). However, as with Cazan's work, its cultural specificity means results may differ across societies; Still, the common theme of valuing love and authenticity appears consistent (Patel, Chaudhary, & Vidani, 2023).

Conflict and Decision-Making in Close Relationships Kirchler et al. (2001) conducted a diary study of 40 couples to explore decision-making in daily life, particularly regarding love, money, and routines. Although their research predates the Gen Z era, its insights into the dynamics of joint decision-making remain relevant (Sharma & Vidani, 2023). The study found that:

- Decision-making in relationships is complex and often involves changing goals during the process.
- Outcomes frequently differ from initial intentions, reflecting negotiation and compromise.
- Conflict levels vary depending on the issue at stake (e.g., money vs. leisure vs. children).
- Relationship quality and history influence how conflicts are resolved.

For Gen Z, these findings provide a framework to understand how critical relational decisions are not made in isolation but through an evolving process of negotiation (Sharma & Vidani, 2023). Given Gen Z's preference for authenticity and direct communication (Cazan, 2020), they may approach conflicts with a stronger emphasis on openness but also with a lower tolerance for unresolved dissatisfaction (Vidani, 2015).

Moreover, Kirchler's work highlights that decision-making often involves trade-offs between rational goals and emotional needs (Vidani & Solanki, 2015). Gen Z, raised in a culture emphasizing mental health awareness, may prioritize emotional well-being more strongly than previous generations when making relational choices (Vidani, 2015). For example, they might decide to end a relationship sooner if it jeopardizes their psychological health, even if practical considerations suggest otherwise (Solanki & Vidani, 2016).

The limitation of this work lies in its generational distance, but its theoretical contributions—conflict negotiation, dynamic decision-making, and the role of relationship quality—remain useful lenses for analyzing Gen Z (Bhatt, Patel, & Vidani, 2017).

Positive, Negative, and Ambivalent Interactions with Family and Friends Lee and Szinovacz (2016) examined how positive, negative, and ambivalent interactions with spouses, children, relatives, and friends influence life satisfaction and depressive symptoms (Niyati & Vidani, 2016). Their study, based on a large sample from the Health and Retirement Study, demonstrated that:

- Positive interactions improve mental health and life satisfaction.
- Negative or ambivalent interactions increase depressive symptoms.
- These effects are strongest in spousal and parent-child relationships.
- Gender differences exist, with women reporting different impacts on life satisfaction compared to men.

Although the study primarily involved older adults, its implications extend to younger generations like Gen Z (Pradhan, Tshogay, & Vidani, 2016). The central message—that the quality of interactions shapes well-being—resonates strongly with Gen Z’s focus on mental health (Modi, Harkani, Radadiya, & Vidani, 2016). For them, decisions about whether to continue or end a relationship are often tied to considerations of emotional impact (Vidani, 2016). Unlike earlier generations, who might have endured difficult relationships for the sake of stability or social conformity, Gen Z may be more inclined to withdraw from relationships that consistently produce negative or ambivalent emotions (Sukhanandi, Tank, & Vidani, 2018).

Thus, Lee and Szinovacz’s findings support the idea that Gen Z’s decision-making mindset is deeply intertwined with psychological well-being and self-care (Singh, Vidani, & Nagoria, 2016).

Research Gap

While a substantial body of literature exists on interpersonal relationships, emotional intelligence, and communication behavior, much of it focuses on Western societies, leaving a significant gap in understanding these dynamics within the Indian socio-cultural context. The majority of prior studies emphasize marital satisfaction, romantic attachment, or conflict resolution, but few have explored how evolving social norms, education, and technology collectively shape the perceptions, values, and behavioral patterns of young adults in urban India.

Existing research also tends to isolate emotional or behavioral factors without integrating broader influences such as autonomy, mental health awareness, and digital communication. With social media now playing a central role in shaping relational ideals and expectations, there is a pressing need to study how online interactions impact emotional connection and trust-building in modern relationships. Furthermore, traditional studies often overlook the role of individual decision-making and self-determination in relationship choices, focusing instead on collective or family-driven frameworks.

Another research gap lies in the limited exploration of the intersection between psychological well-being and relationship satisfaction among youth. Few studies have examined how emotional resilience and mental health awareness influence relational stability and conflict management.

Thus, this study bridges these gaps by examining the multidimensional aspects of modern relationships—emotional, psychological, and technological—within the Indian context. It aims to provide a more holistic understanding of how individuals today perceive, value, and manage their relationships in a rapidly changing cultural and digital environment.

Hypothesis

- H₁: There is a significant association between gender of respondents and their preferred method of resolving conflicts in personal relationships.
- H₂: There is a significant association between age group of Gen Z respondents and what they value most in personal relationships.
- H₃: There is a significant association between educational background and the perception of the purpose of marriage.

- H4: There is a significant association between current status (student/working) and preferred communication method.
- H5: There is a significant association between influence of family opinions and the main factor guiding relationship decisions.

Table 1. Validation of Questionnaire

Statements	
Which of the following do you value most in personal relationships?	(Vidani, 2015)
When making important decisions in personal relationships, whose opinion influences you the most?	(Mala, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016)
How do you usually prefer to resolve conflicts in close relationships?	(Dhere, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016)
What is your preferred way of communicating in personal relationships?	(Singh & Vidani, 2016)
What is your main priority when choosing a long-term partner?	(Vidani & Plaha, 2016)
What do you think is the main purpose of marriage in today's time?	(Solanki & Vidani, 2016)
If a personal relationship affects your mental health negatively, what are you most likely to do?	(Vidani, Chack, & Rathod, 2017)
Which factor influences your relationship decisions the most?	(Biharani & Vidani, 2018)
Which source shapes your understanding of love and relationships the most?	(Vidani, 2018)
In your opinion, what is the most important quality for a strong personal relationship?	(Odedra, Rabadiya, & Vidani, 2018)

*Source: Author's compilation

METHODOLOGY

Table 2. Research Methodology

Research Design	Descriptive
Sample Method	Non-Probability - Convenient Sampling method
Data Collection Method	Primary method
Data Collection Method	Structured Questionnaire
Type of Questions	Close ended
Data Collection mode	Online through Google Form
Data Analysis methods	Tables
Data Analysis Tools	SPSS and Excel
Sampling Size	166
Survey Area	Ahmedabad

Sampling Unit	Students, Private and government Job employees, Businessmen, Home maker, Professionals like CA, Doctor etc.
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*Source: Author's compilation

RESULTS

Demographic Summary

The demographic summary of the respondents indicates a diverse representation across gender, age, education, and occupation. Out of 166 participants, 56.6% were female and 43.4% were male, showing a slightly higher participation of females in the study. In terms of age, the majority of respondents (56.6%) belonged to the 26–32 years age group, while 43.4% were between 18–25 years, reflecting a predominantly young adult population. Regarding educational qualification, 44.6% of respondents were graduates, followed by 38.6% postgraduates and 16.9% who had completed HSC, indicating that most respondents were well-educated. Occupationally, 71.1% were students, 22.9% were employed, while small proportions were businessmen (2.4%), professionals (2.4%), and housewives (1.2%). Overall, the sample represents a youthful and educated group, primarily composed of students and young professionals.

Cronbach Alpha

The reliability of the research instrument was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. The obtained Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.939 for the 49 items indicates an excellent level of internal consistency among the variables. This suggests that the items used in the questionnaire are highly reliable and consistently measure the same underlying construct. In social science research, a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.7 is generally considered acceptable; therefore, the value of 0.939 confirms that the scale used in this study is both dependable and valid for further analysis.

Table 3. Results of Hypothesis Testing

Sr. No.	Alternate Hypothesis	Result (p =)	> / < 0.05	Accept / Reject Null Hypothesis	R Value	Relationship
1	There is a significant relationship between age and what individuals value most in personal relationships.	0.059	> 0.05	Accept Null Hypothesis	0.095	No significant relationship
2	There is a significant relationship between age and preferred way of communication in relationships.	0.082	> 0.05	Accept Null Hypothesis	0.087	No significant relationship

Sr. No.	Alternate Hypothesis	Result (p =)	>/< 0.05	Accept/Reject Null Hypothesis	R Value	Relationship
3	There is a significant relationship between age and how individuals resolve conflicts in relationships.	0.033	< 0.05	Reject Null Hypothesis	0.162	Weak positive relationship
4	There is a significant relationship between age and whose opinion influences individuals in decision-making.	0.036	< 0.05	Reject Null Hypothesis	0.157	Weak positive relationship

*Source: Author's compilation

DISCUSSION

The study aimed to understand individuals' perceptions, values, and behavioral patterns in personal relationships by analyzing demographic characteristics and attitudinal responses across various dimensions such as decision-making, conflict resolution, communication preferences, and understanding of love and marriage. The findings highlight distinctive trends among different demographic groups, reflecting both traditional and modern relationship orientations.

The demographic composition of the respondents shows that females (56.6%) slightly outnumbered males (43.4%), indicating a relatively balanced gender representation. The majority of participants were within the age group of 26–32 years (56.6%), suggesting a mature and more relationship-experienced sample. Regarding educational background, a large proportion of respondents were graduates (44.6%) and postgraduates (38.6%), implying a well-educated population. Occupation-wise, 71.1% were students, while 22.9% were employed, indicating that a significant portion of the respondents are in the early stages of their professional and relational development.

When assessing what respondents value most in personal relationships, the majority “almost always” emphasized key relational values such as trust, understanding, and emotional support. Over 60%–85% of respondents rated these as highly valued attributes, indicating that emotional depth and reliability are central to sustaining relationships. This finding aligns with prior research suggesting that modern young adults prioritize emotional security and empathy over materialistic or social status-based considerations.

In decision-making within personal relationships, a noteworthy trend emerged – a significant proportion of respondents reported being strongly not influenced (71.1%) by others' opinions when making decisions, suggesting a strong sense of self-autonomy and independence in relationship choices. However, some variation was observed across different decision contexts,

indicating that while individuals prefer self-dependence, they may still seek advice or validation in certain sensitive matters.

In terms of conflict resolution, responses revealed diverse approaches. While some respondents (48.2%) rated open discussion and compromise as “highly preferable,” a notable portion leaned towards neutral or less preferable responses, indicating discomfort with confrontation. This pattern suggests that while many individuals acknowledge the importance of communication, a substantial segment avoids direct conflict, possibly to maintain harmony or avoid emotional strain.

Communication preferences further reinforce this observation. A majority (78.3%) rated certain communication modes as “unpreferable,” reflecting varying comfort levels with digital or face-to-face communication. Younger respondents appeared more flexible, preferring both personal and digital means depending on the context. These findings underline the evolving dynamics of interpersonal communication shaped by technology and lifestyle factors.

When exploring the purpose of marriage, responses showed a split between traditional and contemporary perspectives. While around one-fourth viewed marriage as “very likely” or “likely” a significant life goal, nearly half considered it “neutral” or “not at all likely,” highlighting changing societal attitudes toward the institution of marriage. This shift reflects growing acceptance of individual choice, companionship-based relationships, and prioritization of personal growth before marital commitment.

Regarding mental health, a considerable number of respondents indicated that they would take proactive steps if a relationship negatively affected their well-being, emphasizing the growing awareness of emotional health among youth. Finally, sources shaping understanding of love and relationships were predominantly social media and personal experiences, reflecting the influence of digital exposure in shaping relational ideals.

Overall, the findings reveal that respondents value emotional connection, independence, and mental well-being over societal expectations in relationships. The data suggests a generational shift towards self-awareness, equality, and communication-based understanding, representing a blend of traditional values and contemporary relationship ideologies.

Theoretical Implications

The findings of this study offer significant theoretical implications for understanding contemporary relationship dynamics, particularly within the context of changing social, cultural, and psychological frameworks. The results contribute to existing theories of interpersonal relationships, social exchange, and decision-making by highlighting how young adults today balance emotional needs, independence, and mental well-being in their personal connections.

From the perspective of Social Exchange Theory (Homans, 1958), the study reinforces the notion that individuals assess relationships based on perceived rewards and costs. Respondents’ strong preference for trust, understanding, and emotional support indicates that emotional fulfillment acts as a key “reward” in maintaining relationships, while conflict, stress, and emotional instability are perceived as “costs.” This understanding enhances

theoretical insights into how individuals evaluate their relational satisfaction and determine the sustainability of a partnership.

The findings also align with Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969), which emphasizes the role of emotional security in forming healthy relationships. Participants' prioritization of trust and emotional comfort suggests that secure attachment patterns remain essential for relational stability, even in modern, digitally influenced contexts. The inclination toward open communication and emotional awareness indicates a transition from dependence-based attachment to more interdependent and mutually respectful relationships, reflecting the evolution of attachment dynamics in the current generation.

Additionally, the study contributes to Decision-Making Theory, particularly in the realm of personal autonomy. The observation that a majority of individuals prefer to make relationship-related decisions independently signifies a theoretical shift toward self-determination and autonomy, consistent with Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985). This implies that modern individuals prioritize intrinsic motivation and personal values over external pressures when making relational choices. Theoretical models on decision-making in relationships may thus need to account for the rising influence of individual agency, particularly among educated and urban populations.

The role of Communication Theories is also reaffirmed through the findings. The study indicates that while open communication is valued, individuals exhibit varying levels of comfort in expressing emotions or resolving conflicts. This supports the Interpersonal Communication Theory (Watzlawick, Beavin & Jackson, 1967), which posits that relationship satisfaction depends on the clarity, context, and reciprocity of communication. Furthermore, the increasing influence of digital communication platforms suggests that theoretical models must now incorporate technological mediation as a core dimension influencing relational behavior.

From a sociological standpoint, the findings contribute to the theoretical understanding of Changing Marital and Relationship Norms. The mixed perceptions regarding marriage reflect the gradual shift from collectivist to individualist orientations in Indian society. This aligns with Modernization Theory, which explains how economic development, education, and exposure to global culture alter traditional family structures and value systems. The study thus broadens theoretical perspectives by showing how modernization affects not just behavior but also the cognitive frameworks guiding relational expectations.

Finally, the recognition of mental health as an integral part of relationships underscores the growing convergence of Psychological Well-Being Theories with relationship research. Respondents' awareness of emotional strain and their willingness to prioritize well-being reveal an emergent theoretical linkage between relational satisfaction and psychological resilience.

In conclusion, the study expands existing theoretical frameworks by integrating emotional intelligence, digital communication, and self-determination into the understanding of modern interpersonal relationships. It suggests a hybrid relational model characterized by emotional interdependence,

individual autonomy, and cognitive awareness – offering valuable directions for future theoretical refinement and empirical exploration.

Practical Implications

The findings of this study have several practical implications for individuals, educators, counselors, and policymakers concerned with fostering healthy, balanced, and emotionally intelligent relationships in today's rapidly evolving social environment. As the results highlight changing attitudes toward autonomy, emotional support, and communication, these insights can be applied in real-world contexts to enhance relationship quality, promote mental well-being, and guide social development programs.

1. Relationship Counseling and Therapy:

The results suggest that individuals highly value trust, emotional understanding, and mental health awareness in relationships. Counselors and therapists can leverage these insights to design more relevant relationship counseling modules that focus on emotional literacy, conflict management, and the cultivation of empathy. Training individuals and couples in effective communication strategies and emotional regulation can help minimize misunderstandings and improve relationship satisfaction. Mental health professionals can also integrate digital behavior patterns and communication styles into their sessions, as online interactions now play a central role in relationship dynamics.

2. Educational and Institutional Application:

Educational institutions, especially universities and colleges, can utilize these findings to introduce workshops and seminars on emotional intelligence, interpersonal communication, and decision-making in personal and professional life. Since a large proportion of respondents are students, academic environments can play a proactive role in helping young adults develop self-awareness and empathy. Life skills programs emphasizing relationship ethics, consent, and emotional boundaries can equip students to navigate relationships responsibly in both personal and workplace settings.

3. Social Media and Digital Awareness Campaigns:

Given that a majority of respondents cited social media and personal experiences as their primary sources of understanding relationships, there is a strong need for awareness programs that promote healthy digital behavior. Influencers, educators, and organizations can collaborate to create campaigns that emphasize authenticity, respect, and emotional balance in digital relationships. This could reduce the tendency toward superficial validation and online conflicts, fostering more meaningful interactions.

4. Family and Parental Guidance:

Parents and family systems can use these insights to understand the evolving mindset of the younger generation. The shift from dependence to independence and the preference for emotional well-being over societal expectations signal a need for open, non-judgmental family communication. Awareness programs for parents can help them support their children's choices in relationships and marriage, promoting acceptance and emotional safety within families.

5. Workplace Implications:

As emotional intelligence and interpersonal sensitivity play crucial roles in professional success, organizations can incorporate relationship-management and communication skills into their employee development and wellness programs. Encouraging empathy, collaboration, and respectful communication at work not only improves team performance but also reduces interpersonal conflicts and stress levels. HR professionals can use these insights to design engagement strategies that consider employees' emotional and relational needs.

6. Policy and Community Development:

At a broader level, policymakers and social organizations can use the findings to design youth-centric initiatives promoting relationship well-being and mental health. Campaigns encouraging gender sensitivity, equal partnership, and awareness of emotional abuse can be particularly impactful in community settings.

In summary, the study's findings can be practically implemented across counseling, education, family systems, workplaces, and social policies to enhance relationship health. Promoting emotional intelligence, autonomy, and open communication can help individuals build more fulfilling, balanced, and resilient relationships in an increasingly complex social landscape.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study aimed to explore individuals' perceptions, values, and behavioral patterns within personal relationships, focusing on how modern society's changing social, cultural, and technological dynamics influence relationship decisions, communication styles, and emotional priorities. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that young adults today exhibit a balanced integration of traditional values and contemporary ideals, reflecting a generational transformation in how relationships are understood, maintained, and valued.

The demographic analysis revealed that most respondents were young, educated, and urban, suggesting that this group represents a segment of society that is both socially aware and emotionally expressive. This demographic is experiencing the convergence of digital communication, changing gender roles, and increasing emphasis on mental well-being, all of which shape their relational perspectives. The responses highlighted that emotional support, trust, and understanding are considered the most valuable elements in personal relationships. These factors signify that while social and material expectations may have evolved, emotional connection continues to be the cornerstone of meaningful human relationships.

The study also uncovered that individuals prefer making relationship-related decisions independently, showing a growing trend of self-reliance and personal autonomy. This independence does not necessarily indicate detachment but rather reflects an evolved sense of self-awareness and accountability in emotional choices. Respondents' comfort in expressing emotions and resolving conflicts varied, indicating that while open communication is valued, certain cultural and personal inhibitions still limit transparent dialogue in some

relationships. This finding underscores the importance of promoting emotional intelligence and communication training to strengthen relational stability.

Interestingly, perceptions about marriage revealed a notable shift in societal outlook. While some respondents still view marriage as a significant milestone, many expressed neutrality or indifference, emphasizing companionship, understanding, and compatibility over traditional social obligations. This suggests that the concept of marriage is being redefined – moving from a societal expectation to a personal choice rooted in mutual respect and emotional compatibility. Such evolving perceptions reflect India's gradual transition from collectivist values toward individualistic, choice-based orientations.

Furthermore, the study found that mental health awareness has become an integral aspect of relationship evaluation. A significant portion of participants expressed willingness to prioritize emotional well-being over the continuity of a stressful or toxic relationship. This indicates a commendable shift toward self-care and emotional resilience, emphasizing that modern individuals view mental stability as non-negotiable in personal connections. The influence of social media on understanding love and relationships was also evident, demonstrating that online exposure has become a powerful teacher of relationship ideals – both positive and negative.

Overall, the findings conclude that today's generation seeks emotional balance, equality, and authenticity in relationships. They value communication, self-respect, and mental peace as essential dimensions of love and companionship. While technology and changing lifestyles have introduced new complexities, they have also fostered awareness, empowerment, and flexibility in managing relationships.

In conclusion, this study contributes to understanding the evolving psychology of relationships in the modern era. It reinforces that emotional intelligence, mutual respect, and psychological well-being form the foundation of fulfilling relationships. The insights gained here can serve as a guiding framework for educators, counselors, and policymakers to nurture emotionally aware, respectful, and mentally healthy individuals capable of forming strong and sustainable human bonds.

FURTHER STUDY

The findings of this study provide a strong foundation for understanding the evolving perceptions, values, and behavioral patterns that shape modern personal relationships. However, given the complexity and dynamic nature of human relationships, there remains considerable scope for future research to deepen and broaden these insights. The following recommendations are proposed to enhance understanding and contribute to future academic and practical advancements in this area.

Firstly, future research should include a larger and more diverse sample size to enhance the generalizability of findings. The present study primarily included young, urban, and educated respondents, which may not fully represent the views of individuals from different age groups, educational backgrounds, or rural areas. Expanding the study to include participants from

varied socio-economic and cultural contexts would allow researchers to identify differences and similarities in relational values and behavior across demographics. This would help to build a more comprehensive understanding of how social background influences emotional and relational decision-making.

Secondly, future studies could adopt a longitudinal research design to examine how relationship perceptions evolve over time. Since attitudes toward love, marriage, communication, and conflict resolution may shift with life experiences, age, or social exposure, a long-term study could track these changes to provide deeper theoretical and practical insights. This approach would help in understanding how relationship maturity develops and how evolving societal trends continuously reshape interpersonal dynamics.

Thirdly, future research can explore the role of technology and social media in greater detail. Given the increasing digitalization of social interactions, online communication platforms, dating apps, and virtual relationships play a major role in shaping emotional expectations and behavior. Researchers could investigate how these platforms affect trust, emotional intimacy, and long-term commitment. The psychological impacts of digital validation, comparison, and dependency on virtual interactions could be further explored to address both the benefits and potential drawbacks of technology-mediated relationships.

Additionally, cross-cultural comparative studies can be conducted to examine how cultural values influence relationship dynamics. As globalization continues to blend traditional and modern belief systems, comparing relational behaviors in different cultural settings can reveal how individuals adapt emotional expression and decision-making across societal frameworks. Such research would also help to understand the balance between individualistic and collectivist orientations in relationships worldwide.

Future studies could also focus on gender-based and psychological dimensions of relationships. Researchers may investigate how gender identity, emotional intelligence, attachment styles, and personality traits influence communication patterns and relationship satisfaction. Exploring these psychological constructs could help counselors and educators design targeted interventions to strengthen emotional well-being and relationship quality.

Moreover, the study highlights the growing emphasis on mental health and emotional resilience in relationships. Hence, future research could integrate mental health assessment tools to quantitatively measure the connection between psychological well-being and relationship satisfaction. This would not only enrich theoretical understanding but also guide the development of counseling frameworks and wellness programs.

Lastly, researchers could examine the impact of education and relationship awareness programs on young adults. Implementing workshops on emotional intelligence, communication, and decision-making in schools and colleges, followed by impact assessments, can provide actionable data on how such interventions improve relational maturity.

In conclusion, future research should adopt interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, and technologically inclusive approaches to explore relationships in their full complexity. By combining psychological, sociological, and digital

perspectives, scholars can build more holistic frameworks that explain how love, trust, and emotional health evolve in an increasingly interconnected and fast-changing world.

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