
Exploration of the Dating App Motivation and the Commitment in Heterosexual Couple Relationships

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ABSTRACT

The present study is an attempt to study the Dating App Motivation and the commitment in the relationship in the heterosexual couples. In this study, qualitative analysis was conducted on the sample collected with the help of questionnaires of Commitment and Dating App Motivation scale. The sample consists of 50 men and 50 women who had been in relationship for at least four months. Statistical method applied on the data was t-test. A subscale of Sternberg's triangular theory love scale, Dating App Motivation scale developed by Orosz et al. are used to collect the sample data from the participants. There is significant gender differences in commitment levels and no gender difference in dating app motivation. Furthermore, the study suggests there is lack of a significant relationship between commitment levels and dating app motivation for either gender

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Introduction

Sternberg's triangular theory of love consists of three components. Intimacy, Passion, Commitment. The three components appear to be distinct, although, of course they are related. You can have any one



without either or both of the others. In contrast, other potential blocks for a theory of love- for example, nurturance and caring- tend to be difficult to separate, logically as well as psychologically.

The decision/commitment component of love consists of two aspects-one short-term and one long-term. The short-term aspect is the decision to love a certain other, whereas the long-term one is the commitment to maintain that love. These two aspects of the decision/commitment component of love do not necessarily occur together [RJ Sternberg (1998)].

Commitment is essential to maintain a relationship whether short-term or long-term. However, depending on the duration of the relationship the partner involvement in the relationship varies. In India, marriage is an institution which helps the partners to take decision for long-term commitment in the married relationship.

With the advent of dating apps like Tinder, Bumble, Hinge etc., it has become easy to search for prospective partners. Swiping right or left helps the users to search for their matches without face to face interaction. It is at the discretion of the users to say yes to a proposal which makes the users to go for dating applications.

The dating apps help users to meet face to face when both are comfortable reducing the anxiety associated with the judgements in face to face interactions. The dating apps provide various opportunities to the users like dating, casual relationships, situationship, open relationship etc. Dating apps like Hinge are meant for long term relationship who want to pursue their life partner. In relationships like casual relationships, partners pursue short-term commitment.

Commitment and dating apps usage necessarily need not have any relation as a person who is committed in a relationship may or may not use the dating apps as there are chances that users may use them for fun or to deal boredom.

Review of Literature

Temi Adejumo (2023) conducted research which has shown an increase in dating app usage. The research has also shown a decrease in committed relationships and a delay in age of marriage. Due to the various available individuals on dating apps, individuals have reported finding it hard to commit due to the wide variety of individuals using dating applications.



According to Melita Puklek Levpušček, et al. (2023) certain beliefs about romantic relationships and sexual attitudes are related to intentions and decisions to engage in actual romantic relationship behaviour.

Hassan Sahib (2020) conducted a study which show that dating applications are no longer associated with finding love only, but carry the purpose to enlarge the circle of friends and be more socially appreciated by the today's society standards.

Elisabeth Timmermans et al. (2018) findings indicate that Tinder is not “just a hookup app”, as often assumed in public discourse. Their study indicated that while men are slightly more likely to use dating apps for casual encounters, motivations such as socializing, entertainment.

Faby M.Gagné et al.(2003) study suggests that gender differences in relationship identities exist at a general level and that men need to identify with and then commit to a specific relationship before they exhibit pro-relationship thinking, which women exhibit as general dispositions.

Problem of study

“Exploration of the Dating App Motivation and the Commitment in Heterosexual Couple relationships.”

Objectives of the study:

The main objectives of the present study are:

1. To examine the gender differences in commitment.
2. To examine the gender differences in dating app motivation
3. To study the relationship between commitment and dating app motivation

Variables

1. Dependent variable: Gender (male, female)
2. Independent variable: a] Commitment
b] Dating app motivation

Hypothesis

1. Men and women exhibit different commitment levels in couple relationship
2. Men and women exhibit no difference in dating app motivation

Sample

A random sample of 50 females and 50 males from Hyderabad participated in the study. Each participant was in a relationship for at least four months.

Materials

1. Commitment scale: A 15-item subscale from Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love is used. It is a 9-point Likert scale. Each participant responds on a scale of 1-9.
2. Dating app motivation scale is an adapted version of "Tinder use motivation scale". It is a 16-item questionnaire for measuring the motivation behind dating app usage. It was developed by Tóth-Király, Bóthe, Tóth-Fáber, Hága & Orosz (2017).

Statistical analysis

A t-test was conducted to assess gender differences in commitment and dating app motivation.

1) **Table 1:** Gender Differences in Commitment

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t (Sig.)
Male	50	97.85	31.43	0.001
Female	50	115.07	25.17	

Table 1 shows mean, standard deviation, t test between 50 males and 50 females in commitment in a relationship. The data supports the hypothesis 1 that there is gender difference in commitment level tested.

2) **Table 2 :** Gender Differences in Dating App Motivation

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t (Sig.)
Male	50	10.24	12.67	0.05
Female	50	6.48	8.85	

Table 2 shows mean, standard deviation, t test between 50 males and 50 females in dating app motivation scale. The data proves the hypothesis 2 that there is no significant gender difference in dating app motivation.



3) **Table 3:** T-test between Commitment and Dating App Motivation

Gender	N	t test
Male	50	1.638
Female	50	6.827

Table 3 shows t test between commitment and dating app motivation between 50 males and 50 females. The data shows that there is no significant relationship between commitment levels and dating app motivation in either males or females.

Discussion

The purpose of the study is to compare the level of commitment in a relationship and dating app motivation between males and females. Commitment is the desire to stay in the relationship either for short-term or long-term. The dating apps made it easier for users to search for matches often described as swipe right or left to get the matching profile for the user.

According to Investment model of Commitment theory of Rusbult, (1983), commitment is influenced by satisfaction, investment size, and quality of alternatives. It also states that women generally invest more emotionally and relationally in partnerships and may perceive fewer attractive alternatives, leading to greater commitment. Hazan & Shaver (1987) findings suggest that secure attachment is positively associated with relationship commitment, which may help explain why females, who are more likely to develop secure attachment styles, tend to show higher levels of commitment in relationships.

According to Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) of Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, people use media (including dating apps) to fulfil specific needs such as companionship, entertainment or social connection.

The first research question was men and women exhibit different commitment levels. Obtained values for 50 females and 50 males on commitment levels are mean value of females is 115.07, standard deviation is 25.17 whereas males score 97.85 and 31.42 respectively. These figures indicate that on average, females report higher commitment than males. The t-test value of 0.001 suggests a statistically significant difference between males and females.



The second research question was exhibit no difference in dating app motivation. Obtained values on dating app motivation scale are males mean is 10.24 whereas females score is 6.48. Standard deviation of males is 12.67 whereas for females it is 8.85. It shows greater variability in the responses. As t-test value is 0.05 implies the data shows that there is no gender difference in dating app motivation.

The study also tried to analyse the relationship between commitment and dating app motivation among 50 males and 50 females. Males score of t-value of 1.638 and females score on t-value of 6.827 indicates that the relationship between commitment and dating app motivation is not statistically significant. The absence of a significant relation between commitment and dating app motivation suggests that commitment levels do not necessarily predict app usage.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that women give more importance to commitment in a relationship compared to men. This may be due to cultural and psychological factors. It is very important to enhance the commitment in the couple to maintain a relationship as commitment is the bedrock of a relationship. However, both genders display similar levels of dating app motivation, indicating that usage is not inherently linked to commitment. The motivation to use them could be to seek love, to deal the boredom, to deal loneliness and there is no gender difference in the utilisation of the apps. The study highlights the need for further exploration of relationship dynamics and dating app behaviour in larger samples.

Further research

This study was conducted through random selection of 50 males and 50 females from Hyderabad. Further studies should include a larger, more diverse sample and consider additional variables such as relationship satisfaction and attachment styles to provide more comprehensive understanding of these dynamics.

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