

Research Paper

## Relationship between Sexual Attitude, Quality of Life and Couple Satisfaction in Unmarried Young Adults

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### ABSTRACT

Couple satisfaction is influenced by many aspects which are part of human daily living, but this study focus on sexual attitude and quality of life in today's generation. Societal acceptance is not modernize on openly talking about sex, sexual habits, attitude and judging committed couples. The focus is to deliver a different perspective in society to normalize on the same as not an issue but something which is essential for one to learn and grow. The present study is conducted to assess the relation between sexual attitude, quality of life and couple satisfaction in unmarried young adults as well as to find out differences in male & females on all three variables. The sample is based on 110 university students both males and females of Delhi- NCR region using the tools Brief Sexual Attitude Scale (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1987), WHO Quality of Life (1995) and Couple Satisfaction Index (Funk and Rogge, 2007). The sample represents 55 males and 55 females of age group (18-30 years) who are unmarried university students, committed in a relationship. Pearson correlation & t-test was applied to find out the result. The analysis reveals an insignificant correlation between sexual attitude, quality of life and couple satisfaction. Men displays a higher rate of sexual attitude, sexual habit and couple satisfaction when compared against women.

**Keywords:** *Sexual Attitude, Quality of Life, Couple satisfaction, Couple Satisfaction Index (CSI), unmarried young adults*

Couple satisfaction is very important when it comes to measure the intimacy level, the level of comfort a couple feels around and relation happiness. Indian society has modernize itself over years in many different aspects, but still there are some taboos left that makes people judge others. Awkwardness while talking about sex informative, sexual habits, the open nature to present thoughts is still missing in our society. Irrespective of living in a close family in Indian society, one do not feel comfortable to talk about this topic with one's elders, siblings, cousins or parents, it is just "friends" we all are easy going on this topic making it too sensitive for addressing. This practice is now affecting the youth

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more because of that they aren't able to put their thoughts and inner- feelings diverting towards rising of new discriminative behaviour.

Sexual attitude and quality of life has been very ignorant factors while we made studies for couple satisfaction. It has been seen that with this changing society and mind-set people have somewhere shifted from inner bonding to bonding over benefits, from love to being together for physical intimacy. The generation we are living with has somewhere demolished the idea of happiness, togetherness, love and has shifted more towards jealousy, showing off etc. Young adults are the most powerful group through whom we can deliver a message as our nation holds the maximum population from this age group, as they can easily idolize people.

The overarching theme of Western sexuality during the last 60 years has clearly been for sex amusement and pleasure, with reproductive sex becoming a secondary concern. This marks a significant departure from organised religion's moral rules and those followed during the agrarian period of world history. The sexualisation of popular culture has been gradual. In the decades after the mid-twentieth century, sexual themes became more explicit and captured the public's attention in a more graphic and provocative manner. The search of increased sexual pleasure became the objective because of easily available resources in current scenarios. Sexual activities, discussions about sexuality, and reading about it were more accessible to all people than at any other point in human history (Rokach & Patel, 2021).

In context with India, the perspectives about sexual attitude in society has changed in today's scenario when in comparison with Indian history. Not a very high noticeable change but somewhere people's thoughts have shifted towards accepting this practice. In comparison to western culture there has not been a greater shift but, people have starting adapting it slowly. Taboos related to not doing sex talks, discussing sexual practice with our elders is still not accepted in many parts of our country, though how educated you are.

Sexual attitudes influence partner's sex and sexual interest: people who think about sex more frequently and regard sex as essential or extremely important in their life have sex more frequently (Kenneth F. Ferraro, & Carr D. (Eds.), 2021), thus it impacts their romantic relationship and quality of life too. Of course, individuals who indulge in sex more frequently are more likely to reflect on their recent experience and, as a result, to think about sex more than those who have not had this experience. (Kenneth F. Ferraro, & Carr D. (Eds.), 2021). Sexual knowledge is the understanding of sexuality, myths and misconceptions. The attitude one has toward sexuality or sexual practises is known as one's sexual attitude, which can be liberal or conservative. Sexual attitudes and knowledge are frequently investigated in tandem (Dutt & Manjula, 2017). There has been a positive directional relationship between sexual attitude, sexual knowledge and sexual satisfaction. So as there is an increase in the knowledge and attitude about the sexual issues it is directly related to the amplification of sexual satisfaction (Soltani et al, 2017).

Quality of life (QoL) is characterized by the World Health Organization as 'people' impression of their situation in life with regards to the way of life and worth frameworks in which they live, and according to their objectives, assumptions, norms and concerns'. QoL has emerged as a critical aim in modern health care. It is frequently mistaken with the standard of living. The availability of money and material items, on the other hand, is

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referred to as standard of life. QoL judgments are now regarded as a rich interaction and balance between how individuals perceive their internal states, such as muscular tension or happiness, and the external events that impact them from their surroundings, such as moving jobs or being widowed (Fink G. (Eds.), 2007).

In close partnerships, contentment is described as the subjective attitude (satisfied) and affective experience (happy) in evaluating one's relationship. Subjective satisfaction is a significant indication of relationship quality and has implications for relationship lifespan, since dissatisfied relationships are more likely to end. One primary finding is that it is the correspondence style between the accomplices, and not the quantity of contentions essentially, that predicts suffering relationship fulfilment (International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences, 2021).

Change in sexual attitude or sexual satisfaction of an individual tends to make a change in relationship satisfaction (Byers, 2010). Though studies even find sexual attitude to correlate significantly positive with quality of life in married women. (Sheykholeslami, Azarniyoor & Mohammadi, 2015) (Ashoori, Karajvandani, Kokaneh, 2015). Various studies conducted on male and female also portrays that men and women had an almost equal mean when compared each other on relationship satisfaction. (Ubando M. 2016). Hendrick & Hendrick et al, (1985) reveals that women are conservative when tested on sexual attitude while men are more permissive.

Many researches have been conducted on this topic in western society but in Indian culture it is the first time that these variables have been used together to find a correlation on young adults population of unmarried university students who were committed in a relationship. Hence this research focuses upon the literature of sexual attitude, quality of life and couple satisfaction, thus, studying the behavioural patterns of unmarried young adults on these variables and find a solution to drive results.

### *Objective*

The purpose of the study is:

- To study the relationship between sexual attitude, quality of life and couple satisfaction.
- To find out the difference between males and females for sexual attitude, quality of life and couple satisfaction.

### *Hypothesis*

- Sexual attitude, quality of life and couple satisfaction will have a significant correlation.
- Males and females will have a significant difference for sexual attitude, quality of life and couple satisfaction.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### *Participants*

A sample of 110 males and females between the age group of 18-30 years were taken. It was made sure that the sample ratio was equal. The participants were university students in North India majorly from Delhi- NCR, no married participant was taken. To meet the criteria of our couple satisfaction scale it was made sure that the participants were either in a

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relationship with someone or just had an intimate relation. Data was collected through purposive sampling using Google Forms.

### Inclusion criteria

- Unmarried university students who are committed in a relationship,
- Literate population.
- Age group 18- 30 years old

### Exclusion criteria

- Married young adults,
- Working young adults
- Transgender,
- People suffering from any psychological illness.

### Tools used

- **Brief Sexual Attitude Scale**-Hendrick and Hendrick (1987) designed the Sexual Attitude Scale to measure multi-dimensional attitudes towards sex. Measurement of sexual attitudes is critical, and ease of use of scale is a key feature of measurement. This paper details three experiments performed to establish a shorter and thus more effective version of the Multidimensional Sexual Attitude Scale (43 items). The first two experiments (I and II) used existing data sets to create a 23-item variant of the Sexual Attitude Scale, using Study I exploratory factor analysis and Study II confirmatory factor analysis. The previous four sub-scales were permissiveness, birth control, communion, instrumentality all were kept in the 23-item version, called Brief Sexual Attitude Scale. Study III was a prospective data set using just 23 elements on the Brief Sexual Attitude Scale. The four subscales were assumed to correspond with a variety of partnership indicators in a predictable manner. Results showed that the Brief Sexual Attitude Scale is an accurate and valid indicator of the four sexual attitudes and has good psychometric properties. It can be safe and effective for both scientific and therapeutic use
- **WHO Quality of Life- BREF**-The WHOQOL-100 was used to assess the individual relating to quality of life. The initial test contained 100 items which was lengthy to conduct. Later on the revised version was developed which used a bit of pilot data of WHOQOL-100, initial for the field test version. Then WHOQOL-BREF was developed with 26-items in 1995. To provide vast and complete assess, one item from the 24 feature of WHOQOL-100 was included in this along with the Overall quality of Life and General Health.
- **Couple Satisfaction Index**-Funk and Rogge in 2007 developed this test. Couple Satisfaction Index is a 32-item test designed to assess the relationship satisfaction among couple who are married, cohabiting or dating. Later on, CSI-16 was also developed for a more easy assessment.

### Procedure

The sample consisted of 116 people 50% male and 50% female. The subject was reached out through social media, they were informed about the on-going research and with their consent, the prepared questionnaire along with the instructions written was sent to them over google forms. Availability for any doubt clarification and instructions was surely there. The

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tool was administered individually. Time taken for all three questionnaires was approximately 10-15 minutes.

**Statistical Analysis-** Pearson Correlational analysis was used to find out the relationship between all three variables and Independent t- test was used to find out differences between males and females for all three variables.

### RESULT

The purpose of the study is:

- To study the relationship between sexual attitude, quality of life and couple satisfaction.
- To study the difference between males and females for sexual attitude, quality of life and couple satisfaction.

**Table 1: Showing correlation among sexual attitude, quality of life and couple satisfaction on unmarried young adults with N= 110**

		Sexual Attitude				Quality of life				CSI
		Permissive	Birth-control	Comm.	Instrum	Phy. health	Psy.	Soc. Relation	Env.	CSI
Sexual Attitude	Permissive	1	.229*	.345**	.424**	-.065	-.107	-.099	.038	-.131
	Birth-control	.229**	1	.330**	.078	.047	-.056	-.105	.110	.165
	Comm.	.345**	.330**	1	.310**	.148	.126	.102	.158	-.008
	Instrum	.424**	.078	.310**	1	.069	.000	-.060	.036	-.048
Quality of life	Phy. Health	-.065	.047	.148	.069	1	.654**	.459**	.101**	.039
	Psy.	-.107	-.056	.126	.000	.654**	1	.551**	.134	.019
	Soc. relations	-.099	-.105	.102	-.060	.459**	.551**	1	.175	-.025
	Env.	.038	.110	.158	.036	.101**	.134	.175	1	.084
CSI	CSI	-.131	.165	-.008	-.048	.039	.019	-.025	.084	1

\*correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\*correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2- tailed)

Table 1 shows no significant relationship between the variables of sexual attitude (permissiveness, birth- control, communion and instrumentality), quality of life (physical health, psychological, social relationship and environment) and CSI i.e., couple satisfaction. The subscales of one variable shows significance with its own subscale like permissiveness, birth- control and communion are significant among each other and in for quality-of-life physical health, psychological and social relationship shows significance. Rest all of the variables portray either a positive or a negative correlation.

**Table 2: Result showing difference between male and female (Independent t-test)**

		Gender	Df	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig.
Sexual Attitude	Permissiveness	Male	108	3.076	.6850	5.262	.001
		Female		2.349	.7625		
	Birth- control	Male	108	3.945	.7020	-.336	.738
		Female		3.994	.8076		
	Communion	Male	108	3.960	.7174	3.232	.002
		Female		3.520	.7103		
	Instrumentality	Male	108	3.196	.7277	.553	.581
		Female		3.127	.5727		
	Physical health	Male	108	28.09	3.373	1.437	.153

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		Gender	Df	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig.
<i>Quality of Life</i>	<i>Psychological</i>	Female		27.13	3.652		
		Male	108	22.91	3.545	1.022	.309
		Female		22.20	3.729		
	<i>Social relationships</i>	Male	108	12.18	2.074	.389	.698
		Female		12.02	2.329		
	<i>Environment</i>	Male	108	32.11	4.605	.309	.758
Female		31.84		4.638			
CSI	Male	108	98.98	37.943	-1.896	.061	
	Female		112.40	36.253			

Table 2 showing the comparison results of males and female reveals on the scale of permissiveness with t-score of 5.262 significant at 0.01 level, male have a mean score of (M= 3.076) and female (M= 2.349). On the scale of communion with t- score of 3.232 significant at 0.05 level, male have a mean of (M= 3.960) and female (M= 3.520). While with any other variables birth- control, instrumentality, physical health, psychological, social relationships, environment and CSI there is no significant relation though whereas the compared mean is high.

## **DISCUSSION**

As per observing the data instrumentality, perspective towards physical intimacy (Hendrick et al, 2006), has no significance with birth- control, the way a person thinks about physical intimacy doesn't affect the birth- control measures while getting sexually intimate. Environment positively correlates with psychological and social relationship aspect though it has no significance with them, this show that the psychological health, the social- cultural norms, relations people follow does not get affected by the environment. As being young adults', people start getting mature enough everyone is well- versed with controlling the external factors by various means of meditation, yoga etc., hence not letting the environmental factors affect one's mental health which can ultimately lead to disturbance in their social relations.

As hypothesis 1 sexual attitude, quality of life and couple satisfaction will have a significant correlation got rejected, no significant relation was seen among these variables, as this generation of Gen-Z we are surrounded with does not values emotions of others. Everything that people nowadays want it pleasure whether that is in physical intimacy, sexual intimacy, flirting with someone etc. Likewise we do have a high t-test mean value on table 2 for the scale of permissiveness between male and female, permissiveness in sexual aspect means causality people are open about in having sex with multiple partners. So, if a person who is committed in a relationship, despite of being sexually active with his/ her partner if they are enjoying their sexual satisfaction outside of their relationship will definitely show a positive healthy couple satisfaction. Sexual attitude and quality of life show a positive significant relationship (Sheykholeslami, Azarniyoor & Mohammadi, 2015) but in married women, as our sample has population of unmarried college students hence this can infer insignificant relationship between quality of life and sexual attitude in this research.

The data shows that couple satisfaction positively correlates with only birth- control out of all the other subscales of sexual attitude, as our data has unmarried individual hence this proves there is high awareness regarding birth- control measures, sexual activity among

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couples and individuals both. Communion show a low positive correlation with environment, this means that with the changing environment one's thoughts for sexual intimacy keeps on changing. It has been observed that sexual attitude and quality of life show a significant relation with its own subscales and not with other variable or their subscales. And all variables have either a positive or negative correlation with each other.

Overall, the results show significance for permissiveness and communion i.e., determine how people consider sex and what behaviours they'll practice. Permissive attitude about sex are defined as condoning casual sex and sex with multiple partners, whether one engages in these activities or not. Communion is interchanging of thoughts and feelings when in an intimate space (Hendrick et al, 2006). Irrespective of having a high mean between males and females, there is no significance in subscale of birth- control as the sample has unmarried males and females, which signifies that they have a protective thinking towards birth-control and know its importance. Instrumentality has no significance i.e. perspective held in intimate space keeping in mind the soft, emotional nature of women they are more inclined on romantic side as compared to men. This society treats men and women both equally without any gender disparity, so when we give male and female same level of importance and respect why to expect a different quality of life for both of them.

### **CONCLUSION**

Therefore, data shows an insignificant relationship between sexual attitude, quality of life and couple satisfaction, hence the null hypothesis gets rejected. Conclusions drawn from above discussion is that our pattern of thinking when focused in respect to intimate space gets affected by the environment, we live in. And on comparing males and females of unmarried young adults population it was found that men are bit more open in sharing intersexual thoughts, feelings and on majority they are likely to practice sex activities on casual basis maybe with multiple partners.

### ***Limitations***

After conducting any research, we find some points that could be studied but are left out, as not everything could not be included in one research. Hence this research too includes some limitations, the sample was just restricted to university unmarried students who are committed in a relationship. In future a more diverse category of participants can be chosen, more preferably couples, married population, job working could also be included. A data with responses from both the partners can be effective in widespread study. The sample size can be expanded as with wider sample more generalization will be offered.

### ***Directions of Future Research***

In future studies having more category of participants along with college students can increase the effectiveness of the study. Couples can be used in next study and taking down response of both the partners, the data collected could be broken down further to specify each individual couple's scores per item per category. Influence of married individuals, job working on these variables can also be studied.

Here the ratio of both men and women are equal, yet the average relationship satisfaction was high in men. To study the gender affecting couple satisfaction a further part of study can be conducted.

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### Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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