

## Impact of Relationship Satisfaction on Marriage Attitudes among Adults

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### ABSTRACT

This quantitative correlational study investigates the relationship between relationship satisfaction and attitudes towards marriage among adults, aiming to understand how the quality of romantic relationships influences attitudes towards marriage. With shifting societal norms and increasing diversity in relationship dynamics, there is a need to explore whether relationship satisfaction is associated with attitudes towards marriage. To explore this relationship through a correlational research design, a snowball sample of 250 participants aged 18–30+ completed self-report measures, using the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS) and Marital Attitudes Scale (MAS) to measure relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes. The data were analysed statistically using Spearman's rank-order correlation, Independent samples t-test, and one-way ANOVA with post hoc comparison. The results of this study show a statistically significant positive correlation between relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes. The findings also show a statistically significant difference in relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes based on relationship status, with committed participants reporting higher scores than single participants with past relationship experiences. No statistically significant differences were found across age groups in relation to relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes. A statistically significant difference is found in relationship satisfaction between males and females, with females reporting higher satisfaction, but no significant gender difference is observed in marriage attitudes. Similarly, the findings reveal a statistically significant difference in relationship satisfaction based on locality, with urban participants reporting higher satisfaction, while no significant difference is found in marriage attitudes based on locality.

**Keywords:** *Relationship Satisfaction, Marriage Attitudes, Adults*

Marriage has been a milestone in life for centuries, conventionally linked with emotional closeness, commitment, and social stability. Yet, recent social trends indicate a remarkable shift in the way young adults view this institution. Economic insecurity, more emphasis on personal growth, and changing cultural values have led to

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postponed marriages, more cohabitation, and an overall redefinition of marital expectations (Arnett, 2004).

Even with these changes, romantic relationships remain a central aspect of adulthood. How much people get out of these relationships might have a major influence on how they perceive marriage. For some, a good relationship will enhance the attraction of marriage; for others, it can reinforce that emotional and psychological needs can be fulfilled without legally or socially sealing the bond. Relationship satisfaction plays a major role in shaping attitudes towards marriage.

Satisfaction with the relationship is measured as one's subjective evaluation of the positive and negative aspects of the relationship. It plays a crucial role in the formation of long-term commitment, beliefs, intentions, and marital expectations (Funk & Rogge, 2007). Adults who have supportive, satisfying, high-quality relationships are more likely to hold favourable attitudes toward marriage and view it as a significant and worthwhile union. Conversely, however, individuals who are dissatisfied, emotionally disengaged, or continuously conflicted in their relationships will develop negative attitudes toward marriage and may opt for other relationship structures or simply forego marriage (Amato & Booth, 2001).

This experience is especially crucial to adult growth in the modern world, since romantic encounters may have a significant impact on defining one's worldview and making life decisions. New research suggests that individual and observed relational experience, for example, seeing parental divorce or being exposed to a dissatisfying marriage helps to regulate this relationship. Those who have a history of romantic instability are more likely to generalise their experiences and acquire cynical or ambivalent attitudes towards marriage, even if they are in secure partnerships (Cui, Fincham, & Pasley, 2008).

Cultural beliefs, messages from media, and influence from peers also contribute to constructing the way that young people have thoughts regarding marriage, so attitudes become more multi-faceted. Satisfaction of the person within their romantic companionship can both affect and be impacted by their beliefs about marriage. In India, social customs and family expectations still impact how people think of marriage, yet contemporary notions are becoming more prominent. Research has indicated that among unmarried working men and women in India, their attitudes towards marriage are directly linked with how content they are with other aspects of life, such as their work and personal aspirations.

The transition from romantic involvement to marriage is rarely seen as a logical or uniform path. Rather, it is influenced by a complex interaction of emotional fulfilment, perceived match, and personal autonomy. Understanding the effect of relationship satisfaction on marriage views is not just academic but also socially relevant, especially for professionals in relationship counselling, family studies, and mental health.

This research examines the effects of relationship satisfaction on adults' attitudes toward marriage and provides a picture of how the changing interpersonal patterns coincide with other social changes concerning marriage. It seeks to investigate this multifaceted relationship examining how satisfaction within romantic relationships might influence adults' thoughts regarding marriage. Through doing so, the research provides insight into how relationships are experienced by adults, and how such information can assist in developing healthier, more satisfying, and longer-lasting marriages.

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### *Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this study is to explore how relationship satisfaction influences marriage attitudes among adults.

### *Aims and Objectives*

#### **Aim**

“To examine the influence of relationship satisfaction on the attitudes towards marriage among adults.”

#### **Objectives**

- To analyse the relationship satisfaction levels among adults.
- To analyse the attitudes of adults towards marriage.
- To examine the impact of relationship satisfaction on marriage attitudes.
- To explore any demographic differences (e.g., age, gender) in relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Kaitlin A. Hippen (2016) carried out a longitudinal study of attitudes towards long-term relationships and marriage during emerging adulthood and how attitudes change over time. More than 900 college students' interest in marriage, long-term relationships, and how much they valued these ideas were analysed in this study using the College Life Study data. The results showed that most individuals valued committed relationships and marriage consistently, and that their attitudes got better as they went further in college. A change in attitude was explained by various factors, including parents' experiences, sexual history, gender, colour, and educational goals. The study highlighted the need for more research to understand completely these changes and how they affect long-term relationship outcomes and how attitudes towards relationships change as an individual enters emerging adulthood. Willoughby, Yorgason, James, and Holmes (2020) used self-report data from newlywed couples to investigate marital centrality—how highly newlywed couples score their marriage when compared with other areas of their lives—and tested its link with marital stability, satisfaction, and general happiness. They found that higher marital centrality, or the feeling that one's marriage is central to who you are and what you're living for, was positively linked to higher emotional closeness and relationship satisfaction. The study also established the roles of cultural heritage and personal values, as well as other environmental and personal variables, on the extent to which the marriage is deemed important.

Józefacka, Szpakiewicz, Lech, Guzowski, and Kania (2023) conducted a study that sought to determine predictors of relationship satisfaction for young adults. Among these predictors, age, sexual satisfaction, relationship duration, and closeness to the partner were found to be most relevant. In the study, sexual satisfaction and closeness to the partner emerged as the determinants of satisfaction with a relationship in general, and they had a significant connection with relational and emotional satisfaction. It also revealed that age and relationship duration moderate the impact of other variables over time. The authors posed these findings in order to complement the literature surrounding young adult relationships and that these could be employed by counsellors as a means of enhancing relationship satisfaction and emotional wellbeing.

Vishakha Choudhary et al. (2024) researched on the Relationship between Marriage Attitude and Life Satisfaction among Unmarried Working Professionals. The research examined the relationship between marital attitude and life satisfaction in unmarried professionals within

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the workforce. 105 participants were utilized for the research. Correlation and t-test results indicated a strong positive association between marital attitude and life satisfaction, indicating a reciprocal influence between the two variables. The results further indicated significant gender differences in the General Attitude towards Marriage Scale, reflecting a greater predisposition towards marriage among men than women. These results reflect the complex relationships between marital attitudes and life satisfaction, highlighting the importance of gender subtleties in understanding such relationships within the professional context.

Youths' attitudes toward marriage are altering with societal roles and value adjustments. Shivalli, Chitagubbi, and Devendrappa (2012) studied shifting attitudes to equality, responsibility, and compatibility in marriage. Current trends show a reversal of support for conventional values of dowry and rigid gender roles. Young adults these days place increased importance on understanding each other, shared responsibility, and self-realization, where most find professional achievement more important than marriage. Gender differences exist in attitudes toward partner roles, sexual expectations, and motivations to marry, and the influence of contemporary values is being observed (Yadav, K., & Rakhee, 2018)

Ajisha Thasneem T, Fayize P V (2024) conducted a comparative analysis of interpersonal relationships and life satisfaction between people who are single and in a romantic relationship. The method of correlational design was used to find the results. The Relationship Scale Questionnaire (RSQ) was used for measuring interpersonal relationships, and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) for assessing life satisfaction. The results indicated that individuals in romantic relationships showed greater interpersonal relationships and life satisfaction than singles. There was a moderate positive correlation between interpersonal relationships and life satisfaction, i.e., those with more positive interpersonal relationships reported higher life satisfaction.

Marriage is often perceived as a pivotal milestone in adult life, frequently associated with enhanced well-being and life satisfaction. While relationship satisfaction may be high during early romantic stages, it often declines gradually as relationships mature (Karney & Bradbury, 1997; Glenn, 1998). Recent research by Dupuis et al. (2025) gives important insights into the dynamic changes in well-being and relationship satisfaction across the marriage. Drawing on a 14-year longitudinal dataset from the New Zealand Attitudes and Values Study (NZAVS), the paper analysed the responses from a sample of 1,520 diverse aged adults. Participants completed annual surveys reporting on various aspects of well-being (life satisfaction, subjective well-being, and sense of belonging) and relationship satisfaction. The study examined intra-individual changes in these variables during the years before marriage, the first year after marriage, and the subsequent post-marriage years. The results had a consistent pattern: well-being and relationship satisfaction increased steadily in the years leading up to marriage, followed by a significant decline shortly after marriage, and continued to decline in the years that followed. These results suggest that the initial boost in well-being and satisfaction associated with the anticipation and celebration of marriage may not be sustained over time.

Zehra İncedal and Nursel Üstündağ Öcal (2024) investigated young people's attitudes toward marriage, gender roles, and related factors. Data was collected through interviews, and a Cross-sectional study was designed. The data of 1082 participants were analysed with the help of Kruskal-Wallis Test and Pearson correlation analysis. The findings suggested the participants scored high on the Gender Roles Attitude Scale (GRAS) and the Ideal Marriage Attitude (IMAS), which reflected strong opinions on gender roles and marriage. The research

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also revealed that gender role beliefs correlated with participants' earnings, opinions on marriage authority, and perceptions of domestic violence. A moderate positive correlation between supportive marriage attitudes and equal gender role beliefs was found. Moderate negative correlation between favourable marriage attitudes and traditional gender role beliefs. The students had clear opinions regarding gender roles, and as they will be future parents, it is necessary to inculcate gender equality and good attitudes towards marriage among young individuals.

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### *Research Questions*

1. Is there a positive correlation between relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes among adults?
2. Is there a difference in relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes between males and females?
3. Is there a difference in relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes based on relationship status?
4. Is there a difference in relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes among different age groups of adults?
5. Is there a difference in relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes based on locality?

#### *Hypothesis*

- H01: There is no statistically significant relationship between relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes among adults.
- H02: There is no statistically significant difference in relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes between males and females.
- H03: There is no statistically significant difference in relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes based on relationship status.
- H04: There is no statistically significant difference in relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes among different age groups.
- H05: There is no statistically significant difference in relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes based on locality.

#### *Variables*

- Relationship Satisfaction
- Marriage Attitudes

#### *Demographic Variables*

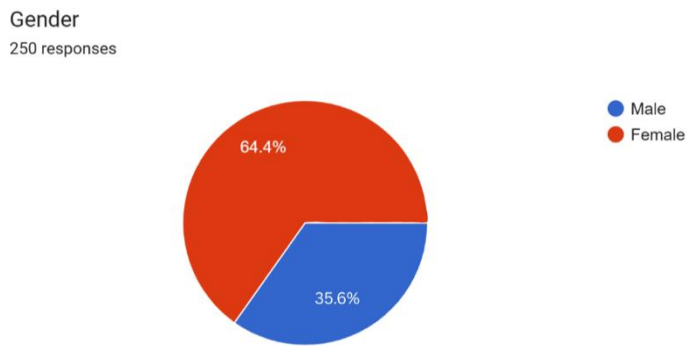
- Age
- Gender
- Locality
- Relationship Status

#### *Participants*

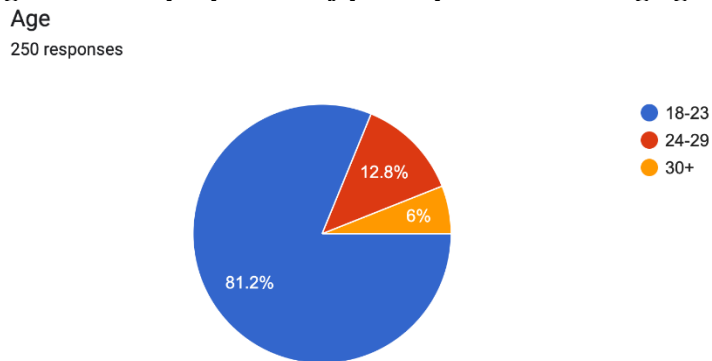
The sample consisted of 250 participants ranging from age 18-30+ years. The majority identified as 161 females and 89 males. The participants in the age group of 18-23 were 81.2 %, in the age group of 24-29 were 12.8 % and 30+ were 6%.

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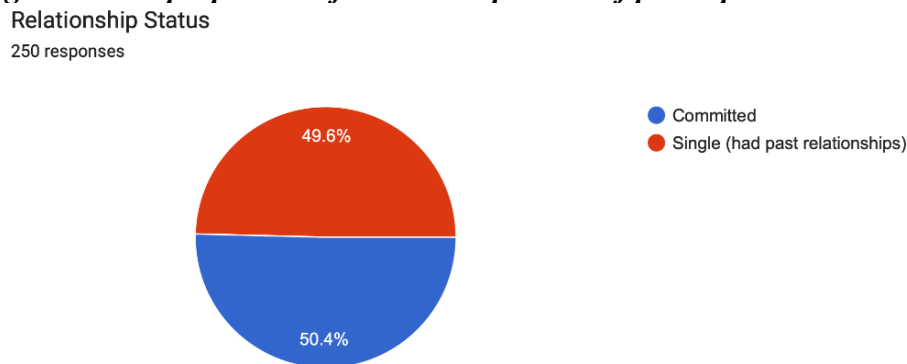
**Figure 1: The proportion of male and female participants**



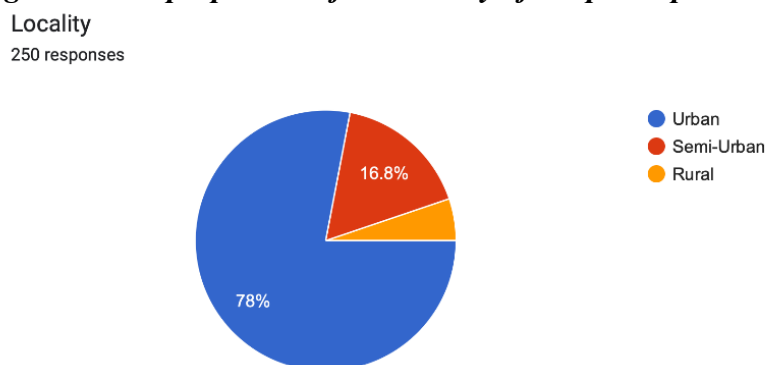
**Figure 2: The proportion of participants in each age group**



**Figure 3: The proportion of relationship status of participants**



**Figure 4: The proportion of the locality of the participants**



### Inclusion Criteria

- The participants are adults from age 18-30+ years.
- Participants must be currently in a relationship or have been in one in the past.

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- The participants have an average understanding of the English Language and basic knowledge of using Google Forms.

### **Exclusion Criteria**

- The participants should not be below 18 years.
- Participants who had never been in a romantic relationship.

### **Research Design**

The study utilises a correlational research design. The survey method was used for data collection. The research studies whether there is an impact of relationship satisfaction on marriage attitudes among adults.

### **Sampling Method**

The Snowball Sampling Method was used to collect the data. Snowball sampling, a non-probability sampling technique, involves the recruitment of new participants by existing ones to constitute a sample. This approach proves beneficial in researching individuals with particular characteristics that may be challenging to identify through other means.

### **Research Instrumentation**

The research used two measurement tools, namely, The Relationship Assessment Scale and Marital Attitude Scale.

1. The Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS): (RAS; Hendrick, 1988) is a seven item Likert scale which is used to measure global relationship satisfaction.
2. The Marital Attitude Scale (MAS): (Braaten & Rosén, 1998) is a 23 item-Likert scale which is used to measure attitudes towards marriage.

### **Procedure**

The data were collected through online mode by circulating the Google form using snowball sampling method. Only those participants who met the set inclusion criteria were considered. Firstly, their consent was taken, then they were asked to fill the questionnaire circulated through Google form and at last they were debriefed about the study.

### **Data Analysis**

The study used Spearman's Rank Order Correlation, Independent Sample t-tests, and one-way Anova with post hoc comparison using Turkey HSD, analysed using SPSS Software.

**RESULTS**

*Table 1: Spearman’s Rank Order Correlation between relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes*

			RAS	MAS
Spearman's rho	RAS	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.356**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	250	250
	MAS	Correlation Coefficient	.356**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	250	250

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 Spearman’s rho revealed a statistically significant positive correlation ( $\rho = .356, p < .01$ ) between Relationship Satisfaction (RAS) and Marriage Attitudes (MAS) at the 0.01 level of significance, leading to the rejection of the first hypothesis.

*Table 2: Difference between relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes among males and females.*

Independent Samples t test								
	GENDER	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t Value	df	P-Value
RAS	FEMALE	161	25.58	5.998	.473	2.098	248	.037
	MALE	89	23.85	6.603	.700			
MAS	FEMALE	161	37.35	6.797	.536	-2.56	248	.798
	MALE	89	37.61	8.532	.904			

Table 2 presents gender differences in relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes using Independent samples t-test. Females ( $M = 25.58, SD = 5.998$ ) scored significantly higher than males ( $M = 23.85, SD = 6.603$ ) in relationship satisfaction,  $t(248) = 2.098, p = .037$ . However, no significant difference was found in marriage attitudes, with females ( $M = 37.35, SD = 6.797$ ) and males ( $M = 37.61, SD = 8.532$ );  $t(248) = -0.256, p = .798$ . Thus, the hypothesis stating that there is no statistically significant gender differences in relationship satisfaction are rejected, while the hypothesis for marriage attitudes is retained.

*Table 3: Difference in relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes based on relationship status*

Independent Sample t-test								
	Restatus	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T Value	Df	P- Value
RAS	Committed	126	28.41	4.007	.357	10.543	248	.000
	Single (Had Past Relationship)	124	21.41	6.204	.557			
MAS	Committed	126	38.96	6.825	.608	3.310	248	.001
	Single (Had Past Relationship)	124	35.90	7.754	.696			

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Table 3 shows the differences in relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes based on relationship status using Independent samples t-test. Committed participants ( $M = 28.41$ ,  $SD = 4.007$ ) reported significantly higher relationship satisfaction than single participants with past relationships ( $M = 21.41$ ,  $SD = 6.204$ );  $t(248) = 10.543$ ,  $p < .001$ . Similarly, committed individuals ( $M = 38.96$ ,  $SD = 6.825$ ) had more positive marriage attitudes than singles with past relationships ( $M = 35.90$ ,  $SD = 7.754$ );  $t(248) = 3.310$ ,  $p = .001$ . Thus, the hypothesis of no significant difference based on relationship status is rejected.

**Table 4: Difference in relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes among different age groups**

ANOVA							
	AGE	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	F-Value	P-Value
RAS	18-23	203	25.02	6.118	.429	.328	.721
	24-29	32	24.25	7.278	1.287		
	30+	15	25.73	6.170	1.593		
	Total	250	24.96	6.262	.396		
MAS	18-23	203	37.20	7.084	.497	.611	.543
	24-29	32	38.66	9.657	1.707		
	31+	15	38.20	7.093	1.831		
	Total	250	37.44	7.445	.471		

Table 4 presents the one-way ANOVA results for relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes across age groups. Relationship satisfaction scores—18–23 ( $M = 25.02$ ,  $SD = 6.118$ ), 24–29 ( $M = 24.25$ ,  $SD = 7.278$ ), 30+ ( $M = 24.96$ ,  $SD = 6.262$ );  $F = 0.328$ ,  $p = .721$ —showed no significant differences. Similarly, marriage attitudes—18–23 ( $M = 37.20$ ,  $SD = 7.084$ ), 24–29 ( $M = 38.66$ ,  $SD = 9.657$ ), 30+ ( $M = 38.20$ ,  $SD = 7.093$ );  $F = 0.611$ ,  $p = .543$ —also showed no significant differences. Thus, the fourth hypothesis is retained.

**Table 5: Difference in relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes based on locality**

ANOVA							
	Locality	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	F-value	P-value
RAS	URBAN	195	25.61	6.068	.435	6.036	.003
	SEMI-URBAN	42	23.40	5.764	.889		
	RURAL	13	20.38	8.181	2.269		
	Total	250	24.96	6.262	.396		
MAS	URBAN	195	37.79	7.580	.543	1.792	.169
	SEMI-URBAN	42	36.90	6.570	1.014		
	RURAL	13	33.92	7.577	2.101		
	Total	250	37.44	7.445	.471		

Table 5 shows one-way ANOVA results for relationship satisfaction (RAS) and marriage attitudes (MAS) across urban, semi-urban, and rural localities. Relationship satisfaction scores—urban ( $M = 25.61$ ,  $SD = 6.068$ ), semi-urban ( $M = 23.40$ ,  $SD = 5.764$ ), rural ( $M = 20.38$ ,  $SD = 8.181$ );  $F = 6.036$ ,  $p = .003$ —indicate a statistically significant difference among locality groups.

**Table 5 (i): Multiple Comparisons using Tukey HSD**

DEPENDENT VARIABLE	LOCALITY	LOCALITY	SIG.
RAS	URBAN	SEMI-URBAN	.090
		RURAL	.009
	SEMIURBAN	URBAN	.090
		RURAL	.269
	RURAL	URBAN	.009
		SEMI-URBAN	.269

Table 5 (i) (Turkey HSD post hoc) revealed that the mean score for Urban ( $M=25.61$ ,  $SD = 6.068$ ) is statistically different from Rural ( $M= 20.38$ ,  $SD= 8.181$ ), but not between semi-urban and the other groups. On the other hand, Marriage attitude scores—urban ( $M = 37.79$ ,  $SD = 7.580$ ), semi-urban ( $M = 36.90$ ,  $SD = 6.570$ ), rural ( $M = 33.92$ ,  $SD = 7.577$ );  $F = 1.792$ ,  $p = .169$ —showed no significant difference. Hence, the hypothesis for relationship satisfaction is rejected, while the one for marriage attitudes is retained. (Table 5)

## DISCUSSION

The analysis revealed several noteworthy findings. Firstly, Spearman’s Rank Order correlation showed a statistically significant positive correlation between relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes (significant at the 0.01 level) indicating that individuals who are more satisfied in their relationships tend to hold more favourable attitudes towards marriage, leading to the rejection of the first hypothesis. This aligns with Willoughby et al. (2020), who found that higher marital centrality was positively associated with emotional intimacy and relationship satisfaction, reinforcing the idea that satisfying relationships foster positive views on marriage.

Gender differences were observed, with females scoring significantly higher in relationship satisfaction, suggesting that gender plays a role. The second hypothesis, which stated no gender differences, was partially supported. Independent samples t-test results showed a significant difference in relationship satisfaction between males and females, but no significant difference in marriage attitudes. This matches findings from Whisman & Balzert (2024), who found females reported greater variability in relationship satisfaction. Similarly, Bhavana and Roopa (2015) found no significant gender difference in marriage attitudes among youth.

Relationship status also played a significant role, rejecting the third hypothesis. Participants in committed relationships reported significantly higher relationship satisfaction and more positive marriage attitudes than single participants with past relationship experience. This could be due to the emotional and psychological fulfilment present relationships provide, whereas past unresolved conflicts among singles may lead to dissatisfaction and negative attitudes. These findings align with Ajisha & Fayize (2024), who found romantically involved individuals had better interpersonal relationships and life satisfaction than singles. It also supports Hippen (2016), who noted college students developed more favourable attitudes towards marriage over time.

Age groups showed no statistically significant differences in relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes, supporting the fourth hypothesis. This stability might be due to the narrow age range of participants (18–23 years), limiting age-related variability.

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The fifth hypothesis, tested using one-way ANOVA, showed mixed results. There was a significant difference in relationship satisfaction based on locality, but no difference in marriage attitudes. Post hoc analysis (Tukey HSD) showed that individuals in urban areas had significantly higher relationship satisfaction than those in rural areas. This suggests that while social and environmental contexts may affect relationship satisfaction, they do not significantly influence attitudes towards marriage. These findings are supported by Khadirnavar & Lakshmana (2024), who found urban couples had higher marital quality and life satisfaction compared to rural couples, possibly due to the advantages offered by the urban environment.

### CONCLUSION

The aim of the study is to investigate whether relationship satisfaction impacts attitudes towards marriage among adults. The sample includes 250 adults aged 18–30+ years. A correlational research design uses the survey method. The relationship is analysed using Spearman's rho correlation method, and differences are examined through independent samples t-test and one-way ANOVA. The analysis indicates that relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes are positively correlated and statistically significant.

The results of the Independent samples t-test show no significant difference in marriage attitudes between males and females. However, a statistically significant difference appears in relationship satisfaction, with females reporting higher satisfaction than males. Statistically significant differences are also found in both relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes based on relationship status. Participants in committed relationships report greater relationship satisfaction and more positive attitudes towards marriage than single participants with past relationship experiences.

Based on ANOVA, no significant differences emerge across age groups for relationship satisfaction and marriage attitudes. However, mixed results appear based on locality. Individuals in urban areas report significantly higher relationship satisfaction than those in rural areas. No significant difference is found in marriage attitudes based on locality. These findings contribute to the growing body of literature on interpersonal relationships and marital perceptions in the Indian context.

#### *Limitations*

There are a few limitations of the study that can be investigated in future research. Firstly, the data were collected by circulating the Google form and it was measured through self-report measures. So, there are chances of getting biased data which can affect the results. Secondly, the sample for the study was adults from age 18-30+ years, in which the participants were mostly young adults from the age group 18-23. The inclusion criteria were either single (in a past relationship) or committed. Longitudinal research is needed to explore the temporal sequence of these relationships.

#### *Suggestions For Future Research*

For future research, instead of using Google form for data collection, paper pencil test can be used to get accurate responses. The duration of the relationship can be a major factor that can be taken into consideration. A Qualitative study can be used along with quantitative study. Studies can be performed on different age groups with same number of participants.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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