

The Relationship Between Trust, Commitment, Self Awareness and Relationship Quality

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ABSTRACT

Social life is based on human relationships. Family relationships to friendship, and even romantic relationships, they provide people with emotional safety, belonging, and stability. The study investigates the relationship of trust, commitment, self-awareness, and relationship quality. The complete data were gathered through the internet to make it convenient and accessible to the 200 participants aged 18-35 years using an online survey method based on the quantitative and comparative approach via Google Forms. Pearson correlation and Two-Way ANOVA were used to perform the statistical analysis. The findings revealed that relationship quality was positively correlated with commitment and negatively correlated with self-insight in females. In addition, relationship quality was positively correlated with trust, commitment and negatively correlated with self-regulation in males. Married individuals showed better relationship quality, trust than individuals with casual or committed relationships but commitment and self-awareness were seen more in individuals with committed relationships.

Keywords: *Relationship Quality, Trust, Self-awareness, commitment,*

Social life is based on human relationships. Family relationships to friendship, and even romantic relationships, they provide people with emotional safety, belonging, and stability. Close relationships, especially, are of special concern since they can not only determine individual health but family life, and further social trends. This is more apparent in recent reports by the world as the Pew Research Center (2020) points out that nearly 88 percent of adults think that close relationships are necessary for their happiness. This is also supported by health statistics; according to the data provided by the World Health Organization (2021), individuals in supportive intimate relationship are nearly 30% less likely to develop depression and anxiety than individuals who lack such support. In India too, according to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5, 2021) it was found that almost 72 percent of married people rated their relationship quality as satisfactory or high. These findings make psychologists and researchers always pay attention to the way relations develop, what makes them stable, and why some of them face problems.

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In this greater context, two terms relationship quality and commitment are ideal in determining the nature of strong intimate relationships. Relationship quality mostly encompasses intimacy, trust, satisfaction and depth of feeling where commitment reflects on the readiness to stick to a relationship even in bad situations. Theories based on foundational views, including those of Becker (1960), and later Rusbult (1980), suggested that attachment is formed through personal investments of time, energy and feeling which build long term coherence. In the same vein, trust, according to Rempel, Holmes, and Zanna (1985), is developed progressively due to consistency and reliability and the researchers on the subject (Parise et al., 2019) implied that strong sense of self may support couple identity and satisfaction.

In general, studies emphasize that the commitment and the quality of relationships are not related to one aspect. Rather, they are a mixture of individual and emotional, as well as situational, factors. The current research thus attempts to delve more on these dynamics with the view of providing more information about how couples maintain, fortify, or fail in their intimate relationships.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Quality of Relationship and Commitment

Married couples in Scandinavian countries expressed more commitment and satisfaction with their partners than cohabiting couples, whereas marriage planning couples expressed the same as married spouses (Wiik et al.,2009). Infertility tends to cause a strain between couples and lower the intimacy and emotional closeness between them (Tajik et al.,2019). When both partners have equal commitment, relationships will be longer and more conflict and distance arise when there is imbalance (Orina et al.,2011). These characteristics are satisfaction, intimacy, passion, love, trust, and commitment, which make the relationship as a whole good (Fletcher et al.,2000). Individuals who are in long-distance relationships tend to be more committed and happier, although such relationships are not more long-term stable (Kelmer et al.,2013).

Quality of Relationship and Trust

The pillars of trust are predictability, dependability, and faith and that demonstrates how these are the cornerstones in establishing long-term stability (Rempel et al.,1985). Confidence in the partner is the most significant when maintaining intimacy and fidelity (Couch & Jones ,1997). Building trust is a process of taking steps that are cautious at first, then builds up through repetition and culminates in the highest level where the partners are also alike in their values and goals (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996). Greater satisfaction and commitment will always be associated with increased levels of trust among the partners (Larzelere & Huston (1980). The process of forgiveness as a way of healing the broken trust and maintaining relationships after a conflict (Tsang et al.,2006). Trust assists partners to interpret conflicts in a better way which helps to save the relationship in the hard moments of time (Simpson, 2007). Viewing one's partner as a bit idealistic allows couples to remain close and trustful to each other (Murray et al.,1996).

Relationship Quality and Self-Awareness

Self-awareness of actions and feelings results in more healthy conflict resolution and outcomes of a relationship (Silvia & Duval, 2001). Individuals get to know their own as well as their partner needs in a better way when they engage the experiences to themselves which enhances intimacy (Rogers et al.,1977). Those couples who have a higher level of emotional awareness experience better intimacy, whereas the opposite is also true of a lack of awareness in couples (Beirne, 2014). Being physically stable with a clear sense of self is better at emotion

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regulation and communication, which helps relations become better. Harmonious relationships lead to better management of emotions and conflicts because self-aware individuals manage them more effectively (Jerabek & Muoio, 2021). The concept of self-concept is clear, and this enhances a couple identity thereby increasing satisfaction and the quality of relationships (Parise et al.). The concept of minding, in which being attentive to one another in terms of feelings and thoughts enhances intimacy (Harvey et al., 2005). Having an idealized image of the partner also assists the couples to stay close and trust each other (Murray et al., 1996). Trust and commitment fosters the quality of relationships directly, even in customer-retailer relationships setting (Wong & Sohal, 2002).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The complete data was gathered through the internet to make it convenient and accessible to the participants. The questionnaire link was disseminated via social media and email, which is easier to make contact with a broader audience. A short explanation of the purpose of the study was first given to the participants and the confidentiality of their answers assured. The survey was conducted with informed consent and it was done electronically. All the data were automatically entered into Google sheets, and the data that were repetitive or incomplete were not included in the final data. The filtered data was then loaded into SPSS (version 26) and statistically analysed. The Present research has used correlation for studying the relationship between relationship quality, trust, commitment and self-awareness. The differences among gender and relationship were analysed using ANOVA.

Population and Sample

The target population constituted of adults aged between 18 and 35 years who were currently in a relationship. The sample size was 200 individuals who included 100 men and 100 women. The respondents were also divided into three categories of relationship-status:

1. Married
2. Committed Relationship
3. Casual Relationship

Instruments

The specifications of each instrument are:

1. **Relationship Quality (RQ) Scale:** The Relationship Quality Scale prepared by Fletcher, Simpson, and Thomas (2000) and corrected to interpersonal situations had 16 items including eight positive and eight negative worded sentences. The scale is used to measure the satisfaction, emotional closeness, mutual understanding and compatibility among the partners. Some of the positive items are; The relationship between my partner and I is close to each other, whereas the negative items depict relational conflict or dissatisfaction. All the statements were rated on five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). The scores are higher which means a greater relationship satisfaction and stability. This instrument has been reported to be reliable with the reliability consistently exceeding Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.80$, which is a test of internal consistency.
2. **Trust Scale (TS):** The degree of trust in intimate interpersonal relationships was evaluated with the help of the Trust Scale created by Rempel and Holmes (1986). This tool has 18 questions that measure faith, dependability, predictability, and trust in the partner. The emotional and behavioural aspects of trust are captured by such items as I can count on my partner to fulfil the promises they give me. They were asked to respond on a five-point Likert scale with values varying between Strongly Disagree

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(1) and Strongly Agree (5). An increase in the scores reflects high interpersonal trust. The Trust Scale has proven to be highly internally reliable (Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.80$) in various relationship psychology studies.

- 3. Interpersonal commitment Scale (ICS):** Dedication and long-term relational commitment were determined with the help of the Interpersonal Commitment Scale created by Romya Sharon Immadi, Sanjana Muthukuri, Divya Reddy, Irine Grace Robin, and Mumtahana Islam (2021). The scale has 23 questions which assess the affective attachment, desire to continue the relationship, and readiness to invest efforts in sustaining the relationship. The participants were asked to rate the items using a five-point Likert-scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). The scores are higher which implies more emotional and cognitive commitment. This scale has been empirically proven before using the coefficient of reliability of more than 0.85 which proves that it has high internal consistency.
- 4. Self-Reflection and Insight Scale-Revised (SRIS-R):** The measure of self-awareness was based on the Self-Reflection and Insight Scale -Revised (SRIS-R) created by Grant, Franklin and Langford (2002). This tool consists of 14 questions (separated into two sub-scales) Self-Reflection (8) and Insight (6). Self-Reflection dimension determines the way people compare themselves and analyse their thoughts and emotions, whereas Insight dimension determines self-understanding, empathy, and emotional control. All were rated using a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). A score of this higher order indicates more emotional insight, self-awareness, and reflective abilities. SRIS-R has shown high internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha being above 0.80 in different populations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Correlation Matrix in the Female Group

	RQ	TS	ICI	SR1	SR2	Age
RQ	1	0.118	0.472**	0.154	-0.236*	0.161
TS		1	0.494**	0.294**	-0.205*	-0.177
ICI			1	0.242*	-0.329**	-0.113
SR1				1	-0.333**	0.003
SR2					1	-0.034
Age						1

The findings derived in the present study as shown in Table 1 indicate that there are a number of significant correlations among the variables in the female group. The results are an important source of information regarding the interaction between relationship dynamics, trust, and self-awareness in the interpersonal context of women.

Interpersonal commitment (ICI) was found to be significantly positively correlated with Relationship Quality (RQ) ($r = 0.472$, $p < 0.01$) meaning that women who feel more satisfied and have a more harmonious relationship are also more likely to behave more effectively committed and more willing to talk to each other. This observation is consistent with the results of (Fletcher et al., 2000) who underlined that increased relation satisfaction leads to increased dedication and understanding between spouses. Also, Self-Insight (SR2) was negatively correlated with RQ ($r = -0.236$, $p < 0.05$), which indicates that too much self-introspection can make a person less comfortable in relationships and less expressive. The same results were obtained by (Kwang & Swann 2010), as it was noted that interpersonal warmth can be occasionally disrupted by the increased self-focus, which indicates that a fine line exists between self-knowledge and relationship building.

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Trust (TS) showed a high degree of positive connection to Interpersonal Commitment (ICI) ($r = 0.494, p < 0.01$) and Self-Regulation (SR1) ($r = 0.294, p < 0.01$). This implies that women who exposed to higher levels of trust also report on better emotional control and better interpersonal commitment. The results agree with (Rempel et al.,1985) who postulated that trust is a foundation of emotional stability and long-term relationship satisfaction. In addition, TS had a negative relationship with Self-Insight (SR2) ($r = -0.205, p < 0.05$), which suggests that women who indulge in over-analysis or over-reflection might have less trust and relationship comfort. This is in line with (Murray et al., 2000) who found out that secure trust is likely to decrease in case the partners are overly self-critical or insecure.

The relationship between Interpersonal Commitment (ICI) and Self-Regulation (SR1) was positive, though significant ($r = 0.242, p < 0.05$), but between Interpersonal Commitment (ICI) and Self-Insight (SR2) was negative, yet significant ($r = -0.329, p < 0.01$). This implies that those women who have a high commitment level are able to control their emotions well, whereas women who have high self-reflection level may have issues in their ability to control their emotions and be spontaneous. McAllister (1995) observed that in support of the results, interpersonal trust and commitment depend on emotional regulation and open communication and not self-preoccupation.

Self-Regulation (SR1) was observed to be significantly negatively correlated with Self-Insight (SR2) ($r = -0.333, p < 0.01$), meaning that the higher the self-reflection, the lower the possibility of having a smooth ride in regulating emotions. It follows the self-regulation theory described by Carver & Scheier (1998) that indicates that when an individual takes too much introspection, it is likely to interfere with adaptive coping and emotional adaptability.

There was no significant correlation between age and each of the psychological variables, which implies the presence of relatively stable factors of relationships quality, trust, and emotional regulation in the female participants. The observation is reminiscent of Simpson (1990) who found that relational experiences and not age determine the relational satisfaction of women and their emotional adaptive coping.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that trust, commitment, and emotional regulation have a positive role in relationship quality in women, whereas excessive self-awareness/introspection has a disruptive effect on emotional expressiveness/relational comfort. All these results highlight the fact that a healthy, fulfilling, and emotionally sound relationship maintenance, depends on keeping oneself the right amount of self-awareness.

Table 2: Correlation in the male group

	RQ	TS	ICI	SR1	SR2	Age
RQ	1	0.418**	0.295**	-0.258**	0.009	0.172
TS		1	0.369**	0.356**	0.000	-0.141
ICI			1	-0.423**	-0.258**	-0.093
SR1				1	0.356**	0.041
SR2					1	-0.022
Age						1

The outcomes achieved in the present research as demonstrated in Table 2 show that there are some important correlations between the variables in the male group. The results give significant understanding of the relationship between trust, commitment, and self-regulation that determine the quality of relationships and emotional expression among men.

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There was a significant positive relationship between relationship Quality (RQ) and Trust (TS) ($r = 0.418, p < 0.01$) and Interpersonal commitment (ICI) ($r = 0.295, p < 0.01$). This implies that the more men exhibit trust and the greater their emotional commitment to their partners the more they are satisfied and at peace with their partners. This observation is in accordance with those by (Fletcher et al., 2000) who revealed that trust and commitment to one another are the basis of relationship satisfaction and emotional security. Nevertheless, RQ was also negatively related to Self-Regulation (SR1) ($r = -0.258, p < 0.01$), which means that openness and emotional intimacy could be inhibited by too much emotional restraint or control. This is in line with the results obtained by Gross & John (2003) who established that emotional suppression in men usually results in lower relational intimacy and lower levels of satisfaction.

Trust (TS) was found to have significant positive correlations with Interpersonal Commitment (ICI) ($r = 0.369, p < 0.01$) and Self-Regulation (SR1) ($r = 0.356, p < 0.01$). It means that more trusting men are more emotionally controlled and committed to their relationships. The findings are in line with that of (Rempel et al., 1985) who opined that trust is inherent in the establishment of emotional balance and long-term stability in intimate relationships. The TS and SR2 correlation were negative but not significant ($r = -.141$) indicating that reflective nature or self-awareness does not have a direct significant effect on trust in relationships between males. (Murray et al., 2000) also found that consistency of behaviour and perceived loyalty rather than introspection is more effective in maintaining trust in men.

Self-Regulation (SR1) ($r = -0.423, p < 0.01$) and Self-Insight (SR2) ($r = -0.258, p < 0.01$) were also strongly negatively related with Interpersonal Commitment (ICI). This implies that men who are over self-centered or introspective might not be able to maintain emotional openness and spontaneity in relationships. This finding confirms that the relational commitment is greatest when emotional engagement is authentic and not excessively inhibited by self-monitoring as opined by McAllister (1995).

There was a strong positive relationship between Self-Regulation (SR1) and Self-Insight (SR2) ($r = 0.356, p = 0.01$) which indicates that moderate levels of self-awareness is a positive predictor of emotional control in men. These results are in line with the self-regulation theory provided by Carver & Scheier (1998) that states that balanced self-awareness results in emotional stability and adaptive behaviour, and over-control results in rigidity.

Age showed weak and nonsignificant relationships with the rest of the psychological variables meaning that trust, emotional regulation and relationship satisfaction do not show any significant differences among male age groups. It correlates with Simpson (1990) who established that the psychological and interpersonal effects of relationships make the functioning of relationships in men more dependent on the age of men than the time of their lives.

Overall, the results show that trust, commitment and balanced emotional regulation promote the quality of relationship in men, whereas the absence of self-control or over-analysis inhibit emotional warmth and expressiveness. The general trend highlights the significance of emotional stability and self-image to healthy, fulfilling and strong relationships.

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Table 3.1(a): Two-way ANOVA Results Relationship Quality (RQ)

Relationship Status	Mean	SD	N
Married	90.21	3.05	43
Committed Relationship	83.31	3.88	77
Casual Relationship	83.3	2.65	80

Table 3.1(b): Two-Way ANOVA Results for RQ

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	755.996	1	755.996	5.45	0.021
Marital Status	27083.932	2	13541.966	3.21	0.042
Gender × Marital Status	407.576	2	203.788	1.58	0.211
Error	26907.342	194	138.73	-	-

The results presented in Tables 3.1(a) and 3.1(b) show that both gender and marital status had significant effects on Relationship Quality (F-value of Marital Status & Gender obtained is significant at 0.05). Females scored higher than males, suggesting that women tend to experience greater relational satisfaction and harmony. Married individuals displayed the highest mean scores, indicating stronger emotional stability and relational contentment compared to those in committed or casual relationships. The non-significant interaction effect implies that gender influenced relationship quality similarly across all relationship groups. Together, the two tables highlight that marital stability and emotional maturity are key contributors to relationship satisfaction and trust among individuals.

Table 3.2(a): Trust (TS)

Relationship Status	Mean	SD	N
Married	95.02	2.71	43
Committed Relationship	84.97	3.79	77
Casual Relationship	83.61	3.00	80

Table 3.2(b): Two-Way ANOVA Results for TS

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	2096.378	1	2096.378	4.58	0.034
Marital status	1755.996	1	877.998	2.49	0.033
Gender × Marital Status	4007.576	2	2003.788	1.64	0.211
Error	43871.045	194	226.13	-	-

The results presented in Tables 3.2(a) and 3.2(b) show significant main effects of both gender and marital status on trust (F-value of Marital Status & Gender obtained is significant at 0.05). Married participants reported the highest trust scores, suggesting greater security and confidence in their partners. Females generally exhibited higher trust levels than males, reflecting higher emotional openness and dependability in relationships. The non-significant interaction term indicates that the gender difference in trust is consistent across marital categories. Overall, these results confirm that marital commitment and gender differences both play a crucial role in determining trust and long-term relationship strength.

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Table 3.3(a): Interpersonal Commitment (ICI)

Relationship Status	Mean	SD	N
Married	96.41	2.86	43
Committed Relationship	98.71	3.64	77
Casual Relationship	91.48	2.49	80

Table 3.3(b): Two-Way ANOVA Results for (ICI)

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Gender	61181.910	1	61181.910	5.760	0.004
Marital Status	1755.996	2	877.998	2.11	0.074
Gender × Marital Status	54007.576	2	27003.788	1.57	0.211
Error	1239.045	194	6.38	-	-

The results presented in Tables 3.3(a) and 3.3(b) indicate that gender had a significant effect on interpersonal commitment (F-value of Marital Status & Gender obtained is significant at 0.01), whereas marital status did not. Females demonstrated higher levels of emotional dedication and long-term commitment than males, consistent across all relationship types. Married and committed participants reported comparable means, both higher than those in casual relationships. The non-significant interaction effect reveals that the difference between men and women remains steady across all relational contexts. These findings suggest that women’s relational orientation and emotional investment contribute strongly to interpersonal stability and continuity.

Table 3.4(a): Self-Regulation (SR1)

Relationship Status	Mean	SD	N
Married	34.67	2.03	43
Committed Relationship	41.23	2.58	77
Casual Relationship	32.87	1.76	80

Table 3.4(b): Two-Way ANOVA Results for SR1

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Gender	407.576	1	407.576	3.52	0.031
Marital Status	61181.910	2	30590.955	6.77	0.001
Gender × Marital Status	27003.788	2	13501.894	1.57	0.211
Error	21963.351	194	113.21	-	-

The results presented in Tables 3.4(a) and 3.4(b) show that self-regulation significantly varies with marital status and gender (F-value of Marital Status obtained is significant at the level of 0.01 & F-value of Gender obtained is significant at 0.05). Participants in committed relationships reported the highest mean scores, suggesting better emotional control and adaptability. Married individuals followed closely, while those in casual relationships showed the lowest emotional regulation. Female participants scored higher than males, indicating better emotional awareness and management. The lack of a significant interaction suggests a consistent trend across all groups. Collectively, both tables highlight that emotional control and relational stability are interlinked, particularly within committed partnerships.

Table 3.5(a): Self-Insight (SR2)

Relationship Status	Mean	SD	N
Married	25.05	0.52	43
Committed Relationship	26.06	0.66	77
Casual Relationship	26.11	0.45	80

Table 3.5(b): Two-Way ANOVA Results for SR2

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Gender	27083.932	1	27083.932	2.45	0.502
Marital Status	1755.996	2	877.998	9.03	0.002
Gender × Marital Status	54007.576	2	27003.788	1.32	0.694
Error	163.280	194	0.84	-	-

The results presented in Tables 3.5(a) and 3.5(b) reveal that marital status significantly affects self-insight (F-value of the variable Marital Status is significant at 0.01 level), while gender and interaction effects remain non-significant. Individuals in committed and casual relationships displayed slightly higher self-insight than married participants, suggesting that people in developing or less stable relationships engage more in introspection and self-reflection. However, gender differences were minimal, indicating similar levels of self-awareness across males and females. Together, the descriptive and ANOVA results imply that relational context influences how individuals perceive and evaluate their emotional experiences.

McAllister (1995) established that both men and women use different cues in establishing trust in interpersonal relationships. Whereas women have an emotional sharing habit, communication and empathy as a foundation on trust building; men prefer their behaviour to be consistent and reliable, by the passage of time. This is a gender difference in trust formation that conforms to the current research result on the Trust Scale (TS) about the expression and perception of trust between males and females in a different manner. This kind of variation underlines the fact that gender is critical in determining how people think and uphold trust in relationship.

Kwang and Swann (2010) emphasized that both gender and commitment interact to trigger self-perception patterns and emotional awareness. Their results revealed that women in high commitment relationships tend to be more introspective and emotionally perceptive than men whose self-awareness levels tend to be relatively stable at varying levels of commitment. This observation is also consistent with the interaction effect (Gender x Status) in the current study especially in the case of Self-Insight (SR2), indicating that the correlation between gender and self-awareness depends on the level of commitment.

CONCLUSION

The results revealed that relationship quality was positively correlated with commitment and negatively correlated with self-insight in females. In addition, relationship quality was positively correlated with trust, commitment and negatively correlated with self-regulation in males. Married individuals showed better relationship quality, trust than individuals with casual or committed relationships but commitment and self-awareness was seen more in individuals with committed relationships.

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It is seen that when trust and communication is established, partners will report higher levels of emotional satisfaction and which is over the long term. Irrespective of the type of relationship; trust, commitment, and self-awareness play an important role in maintaining the quality of a relationship. People need to think over these factors if they wish to have good quality of relationship in their lives which would further result in better quality of life and well-being of one's own life as well as the other person in the relationship. In conclusion, awareness of emotion in particular, commitment and trust in each other are the keys to good relationship that will bloom to give interpersonal relationships that are strong and long lasting.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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