

# Relationship Between Interpersonal Dependency And General Relationship Satisfaction Among Young Adults

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## ABSTRACT

In recent years, surveys show an increase of divorce rates globally. There are numerous reasons that could play a role in this change of relationship dynamics. The present study investigates the Relationship between interpersonal dependency and relationship satisfaction among young adults. An interpersonal evaluation which consists of feelings for one's partner and positive attraction to the relationship is termed as Relationship Satisfaction. The sample size consists of 50 college students both undergraduate and postgraduate who are in a relationship in India. The process of data collection was carried out by the means of questionnaires and personal information that was gathered through google forms. The two questionnaires used for this process are - Relationship assessment scale and Interpersonal dependency inventory. The study found that there is no significant relationship between emotional reliance, lack of self-confidence, assertion of autonomy, and general relationship satisfaction. The study also found that there is no significant difference in interpersonal dependency and general relationship satisfaction among first-born and second-born young adults.

## INTRODUCTION:

Relationships are the basis of happiness and living a full life because they come with a variety of rewards. Relationships provide us with people who can help us out in tough times like friends and family whom we can share our life's. They are the ones who bring us plenty of laughs and as a result lots of joy too. Social psychology describes an interpersonal relation as a social association, connection, or affiliation between two or more persons.

Theories suggest that prominent qualities like the ability to resolve conflicts, commitment, love, intimacy, trust etc. led to satisfaction in a relationship. It is not just the qualities that determine satisfaction in a relationship, but also the degree to which these expectations are met by their actual experiences.

Relationship satisfaction is defined as an interpersonal assessment of one's partner's positive feelings and attractiveness to the relationship.

A satisfying relationship is essential for the health status and quality of life of both the partners. Relationship satisfaction means functioning and well-being and adjustment.

Birth order is the numerical place of a person in the order of births in their family. Birth order has been relevant in many research studies in which each rank, the oldest, middle, youngest, and only, generally have similar characteristics that are common in different people of the same birth order. It

is logical to conclude that these similar characteristics will affect other aspects of life like interpersonal relationships. If the birth order factor has a major influence on an individual's personality, and different people of the same birth order have similar personality traits, then this research will conclude as birth order has a major influence on the types of interpersonal relationships people have. Even though much research has been done involving birth order, the research is inconclusive.

The observable characteristics of the young adults of this century is their determination to become an independent personality. But for the same they depend on one another.

The very nature of young adults in this century is noticeable that they are struggling to move forward with their lives independently and they do put in a lot of effort in order to explore and pursue new adventures. And in order to achieve said independence, they depend considerably on the people around them initially. Interpersonal dependency means a complex of thoughts, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors revolving around needs to associate closely with valued other people. Its conceptual sources are psychoanalytic theory of object relations, social learning theories of dependency, and the ethological theory of attachment.

The Relationship Assessment Scale ("RAS") is used as an instrument to measure general relationship satisfaction. The RAS is appropriate for using in any individuals who are in an intimate relationship, such as married couples, cohabiting couples, engaged couples, or dating couples. This instrument is 7 questions long. Its brevity increases its utility in clinical settings, and research has shown the scale to be correlated with measures of love, marital satisfaction, sexual attitudes, self-disclosure, investment in a relationship and commitment.

A likert-scale for relationship satisfaction is a 7-item scale designed to measure general relationship satisfaction. Respondents answer each item using a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (low satisfaction) to 5 (high satisfaction).

The interpersonal dependency inventory comprised three subscales called Emotional reliance of another person (ER), lack of social self-confidence (LSS) and Assertion of autonomy (AUT).

ER is a complex issue that is tied to the dynamics of psychological needs within specific relationships. In particular, we suggest that people's choices about whether to seek emotional support from specific others depend on the functional significance of such support with respect to the recipient's basic psychological needs (Butzel & Ryan, 1997; Ryan & Solky, 1996).

Research shows that self-esteem can influence your relationship satisfaction just as much as it affects your partner's. When you feel bad about yourself, your insecurities can start to creep into the way you act with your significant other and that can have a negative impact on both of you.

What's ideal in close relationships is balancing each party's different needs. So, what we ought to strive for is equalizing our innate desire for both dependency and its complementary opposite, autonomy. And not just for practical survival but also for our ultimate happiness and fulfillment. Finding a balance between depending on your partner and standing on your own can be a struggle. Healthy dependency involves a willingness to be vulnerable, admit flaws, and explore a partner's perspective.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

- To find out the significant relation between emotional reliance and General relationship satisfaction.
- To find out the significant relation between self-confidence and General relationship satisfaction.
- To find out the significant relation between assertion of autonomy and General relationship satisfaction.
- To find out the significant difference in interpersonal dependency and General relationship satisfaction among 1st born and 2nd born young adults.

**HYPOTHESES:**

1. There is a significant relation between emotional reliance and General relationship satisfaction.
2. There is a significant relation between self-confidence and General relationship satisfaction.
3. There is a significant relation between assertion of autonomy and General relationship satisfaction.
4. There is a significant difference in interpersonal dependency and General relationship satisfaction among 1st born and 2nd born adults.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE:**

- Wang, S. et al (2014) conducted a study on Interpersonal dependency and emotion in everyday life among a population of 184 university students. They used a 7-day diary study, reporting on how they perceived their interaction with partners and emotions during that interaction. Multilevel regression models were used in study to examine the associations between interpersonal perceptions and emotions, using interpersonal dependency scale. The result suggests that a significant amount of variance exists at within person level.
- Lemay, E. P. & Venaglia, R. B. (2016) conducted a research on Relationship expectations and relationship quality. The findings suggest that expectations for the future of relationships shape relationship functioning. The majority of the published studies suggest that positive expectations for the future quality of relationships enhance the functioning of relationships, as indicated by increased relationship persistence, more positive evaluations of relationships, greater commitment, pro relationship behavior, and forgiveness, and reduced destructive emotions, such as contempt.
- Schilling, R. M. () conducted a study on "The effect of Birth order on interpersonal relations" in a population of 91 participants. A fifteen question survey was used to collect data. The results indicate that the highest number of unsuccessful partnerships occurred when that ex-partner was of the same/similar birth order of the participant. Also, this study proves that there is no significance of birth order in opposite sex friendship and opposite sex romantic relationship.
- James, S .M et al. (2013) conducted research on "Female interpersonal dependency". The scale used was Interpersonal Dependency Inventory. Data were obtained from 4427 females in the form of questionnaire. The findings have estimated nearly half of the variance in female interpersonal dependency is genetic in origin.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

This particular study was carried out on a sample of 50 committed UG/PG college students studying various courses of commerce, business, geology, psychology, literature etc. at Kristu Jyoti College of Management and Technology. Of the collected sample 25 are first born, 20 are second born, 5 are only children and the data was collected from these participants via questionnaires that were distributed through digitized platforms.

To assess general relationship satisfaction, Hendricks Relationship Assessment Scale (1988) was undertaken which is a 7- item instrument which asks respondents to rate various aspects of their relationship, such as satisfaction, happiness, and overall quality. The scale is typically scored on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), with higher scores indicating a more positive assessment of the relationship.

To assess the extent to which a person relies on others for emotional support, decision-making, and self-esteem regulation, Hirschfeld et al., Interpersonal Dependency Inventory (1977) was undertaken. It consists of a 48-item instrument comprising three subscales called Emotional reliance of another person (ER), lack of social self-confidence (LSS) and Assertion of autonomy (AUT). According to Hirschfeld et al., the first factor 'emotional reliance', reflects the notions of attachment and dependency. The second factor 'lack of self-confidence', expresses one's wish for help in decision making, in social situations, and in taking initiatives. The third factor 'assertion of autonomy', tends to deny either attachment or dependency.

The respondents rate each item on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The 3 subscales are scored separately and then combined together for the final IDI score. Higher scores indicate higher levels of interpersonal dependency. In addition to this the participants personal data were collected through an online Google Form that was circulated.

The independent variable in the study is interpersonal dependency and the dependent variable is relationship satisfaction.

The data collected from this study was statistically analyzed using the SPSS version 25. The statistical procedures used in this study were the Bivariate correlation and Pearson correlation. Correlation is the degree of a relationship between two variables.

### RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

Interpersonal dependency is a complex, personality trait that has adaptive and maladaptive variants (Bornstein et al. 2003; Bornstein 2005). Both adaptive and maladaptive forms of dependency involve relying on others for nurturance, support, and/or guidance. In a time like current scenario there are significant changes in interpersonal dependency and our study was to find whether interpersonal dependency affects relationship satisfaction. This study mainly includes the unmarried couples. Relationship satisfaction is the subjective evaluation of one's relationship.

The IDI/ interpersonal dependency inventory is a 48-item instrument designed to measure the thoughts, behaviors, and feelings revolving around the need to associate closely with valued people. It has three subscales which assess Emotional reliance on others, lack of self-confidence and assertion of autonomy. Relationship assessment scale/Ras is a 7-item scale designed to measure general relationship satisfaction. The study found that there is no significant relationship between interpersonal dependency and general relationship satisfaction. It depends on an individual's perception and evaluation of the current state of romantic relationships. The study also found that there is no significant difference in interpersonal dependency and general relationship satisfaction among first-born and second-born young adults. Schilling, R. M. conducted a study on "The effect of Birth order on interpersonal relations" in a population of 91 participants. This study also proves that there is no significance of birth order in opposite sex friendships and opposite sex romantic relationships.

The hypothesis of the study was that there is a significant relationship between emotional reliance, lack of self-confidence, assertion of autonomy, and general relationship satisfaction and there is a significant difference in interpersonal dependency and general relationship satisfaction among first-born and second-born young adults. The sample of the test study was 50 college students pursuing undergraduate or postgraduate degree. The test used to conduct the study was the Relationship Assessment scale (RAS; Hendrick, 1988,) to assess relationship satisfaction which consisted of 7 questions. Interpersonal Dependency Inventory (IDI; Hirschfeld et al. 1977,) is another test used to assess the levels of dependency which consist of 48 questions. It uses three separate scales- emotional reliance, lack of self-confidence, assertion of autonomy, that may be scored individually or collectively.

The analysis for the study was done using the Bivariate and Pearson correlation method. From the scores obtained it was observed that there is no significant relationship between emotional reliance, lack of self-confidence, assertion of autonomy, and general relationship satisfaction. The study also found that there is no significant difference in interpersonal dependency and general relationship satisfaction among first-born and second-born young adults.

Table 1.1

		ER	RAS
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.022
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.880

Table 1.1 shows Spearman's rho and significant p-value of emotional reliance and relationship assessment scale among undergraduate and postgraduate students. Between the variables emotional reliance and relationship assessment scale, the Spearman's rho is -0.22 and the associated p- value is .880 The correlation is not significant. There is no significant relationship between the emotional reliance and relationship assessment scale. Hence the hypothesis is rejected

**Table 1.2**

		RAS	LSC
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.035
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.808

Table 1.2 shows Spearman's rho and significant p-value of relationship assessment scale and lack of self confidence among undergraduate and postgraduate students. Between the variables relationship assessment scale and lack of self-confidence the Spearman's rho is -.035 and the associated p- value is .808 The correlation is not significant. There is no significant relationship between the relationship assessment scale and lack of self-confidence. Hence the hypothesis is rejected.

**Table 1.3**

		RAS	AA
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.150
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.299

Table 1.3 shows Spearman's rho and significant p-value of relationship assessment scale and assertive of autonomy among undergraduate and postgraduate students. Between the variables relationship assessment scale and assertive of autonomy the Spearman's rho is -.105 and the associated p- value is .299 The correlation is not significant. There is no significant relationship between the relationship assessment scale and assertive of autonomy. Hence the hypothesis is rejected.

**Table 1.4**

		IDItotal	RAS
Mann-Whitney U		247.500	219.000
Wilcoxon W		572.500	544.000
Z		-.057	-.711
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.954	.477

Table 1.4 shows Mann-whitney U value for interpersonal dependency inventory as 247.500 and relationship assessment scale as 219.000. The significance for interpersonal dependency inventory is .954 and relationship assessment scale is .477. There is no significant relationship between the interpersonal dependency and relationship satisfaction. Hence the hypothesis is rejected.

**CONCLUSION:**

The hypothesis of the study was that there is a significant relationship between emotional reliance, lack of self-confidence, assertion of autonomy, and general relationship satisfaction and there is a significant difference in interpersonal dependency and general relationship satisfaction among first-

born and second-born young adults. The sample of the test study was 50 college students pursuing undergraduate or postgraduate degree. The test used to conduct the study was Relationship Assessment scale (RAS; Hendrick, 1988,) to assess relationship satisfaction which consist of 7 questions. Interpersonal Dependency Inventory (IDI; Hirschfeld et al. 1977,) is another test used to assess the levels of dependency which consist of 48 questions. It uses three separate scales- emotional reliance, lack of self-confidence, assertion of autonomy, that maybe scored individually or collectively.

The analysis for the study was done using the Bivariate and Pearson correlation method. From the scores obtained it was observed that there is no significant relationship between emotional reliance, lack of self-confidence, assertion of autonomy, and general relationship satisfaction. The study also found that there is no significant difference in interpersonal dependency and general relationship satisfaction among first-born and second-born young adults.

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