

LOVE ATTITUDES AND CONFLICT STYLES AMONG MARRIED ADULTS

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the relationship between love attitudes and conflict styles among married adults. A total of 150 married individuals participated in the study. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the love attitudes and conflict styles, while Pearson correlation was used to examine their relationships. The results showed that Eros (passionate love) and Agape (selfless love) were the most common love attitudes, while Ludus (playful love) was the least common. For conflict styles, Compromise had the highest mean, indicating it was the most used method for resolving conflicts. The correlation analysis revealed that Eros, Storge (affectionate love), and Agape were positively correlated with Compromise, meaning people with these love attitudes tend to resolve conflicts through compromise. Ludus was linked to Separation, suggesting that people with a playful attitude may avoid or withdraw from conflicts. Pragma (practical love) was associated with Interactional Reactivity, indicating a problem-solving approach to conflicts. Lastly, Mania (obsessive love) was correlated with Submission, meaning people with obsessive love attitudes may tend to give in during conflicts. In conclusion, the study shows that love attitudes play an important role in how married individuals manage conflicts. These findings can help in understanding marital relationships and improving conflict resolution strategies.

Keywords: Love Attitude, Conflict Styles, Married Adults, Marital Relationships

INTRODUCTION

AIM

The aim of this study is to explore the relationship between love attitude and conflict styles among married adults.

American Psychological Association (APA) defines Love is a complex emotion that involves affection towards another individual, a sense of tenderness, sensitivity to their responses, experiencing pleasure due to another individual and devotion.

Love Attitude

Love attitude refers to a person's beliefs and feelings about love. This includes how individual approach and experience love. John Alan Lee, a Canadian Psychologist introduced in his book called *Colours of Love: An exploration of the ways of loving* in 1973, three primary love attitudes, three secondary love attitudes and nine tertiary love attitudes. The three primary love attitudes are Eros, Ludus and Storge. The three secondary love attitudes are Mania, Pragma and Agape. Nine Tertiary love attitude are Manic Eros, Manic Ludus, Manic Storge, Agapic Eros, Agapic Ludus, Agapic Storge, Pragmatic Eros, Pragmatic Ludus and Pragmatic Storge. Adaptive Love attitudes are Eros, Storge, Agape, Pragma and Maladaptive Love attitudes are Ludus and Mania.

Eros is the passionate, romantic love often characterized by intense feelings and a strong physical attraction. Ludus involves a playful, game like approach to love, where relationships are seen as fun and exciting rather than serious. Storge is characterized by calm, stable and committed love, often found in long- term friendships and family relationships. Mania is characterized by a strong need for attention and reassurance, often leading to jealousy and possessiveness. Pragma is a practical and rational approach love. Agape is a selfless, altruistic love where the focus is on the well-being of the partner without expecting anything in return.

Conflict style

The disagreements between individuals known as conflict. The reason for this may be their difference in opinion, experiences and perspectives. Rahim defined Conflict management as designing effective strategies to minimize dysfunction of conflict and enhancing the constructive functions of conflict in order to improve learning and effectiveness in an organization or relationship.

The six types of conflict management styles in romantic relationships include, Compromise, Dominance, Avoidance, Separation, Submission, Interactional Reactivity. These conflict styles may be either destructive or constructive. Destructive conflict styles include dominance, avoidance, separation and submission. Compromise is constructive conflict style. Interactional Reactivity is either constructive or destructive based on the situation. Compromise conflict style indicates a willingness to find a middle ground, balancing individual needs and desires to reach mutually agreeable solutions. Dominance conflict style refers to one partner prioritize their own needs and desires above their partner's, can negatively impact relationship satisfaction and potentially lead to conflict and dissatisfaction. Avoidance conflict style refers to when a person avoids discussing issues with

their partner to avoid confrontation or an argument. Separation conflict style refers to individuals withdrawing or distancing themselves emotionally or physically during conflict, often avoiding direct confrontation or resolution. Submission conflict style is also known as accommodating and this involves prioritizing the partner's needs and desires over one's own, often at the expenses of personal needs and desires. Interactional reactivity as a conflict style is characterized by verbal aggression, emotional volatility and lack of trust often leading to destructive patterns of communication.

This study examines the link between love attitude and conflict styles in relationships, as unresolved conflicts can threaten marital stability. Despite existing research on communication and conflict management, limited attention has been given to the role of love attitudes. Understanding this connection can guide relationship advisors and psychologists in fostering healthier relationships.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Objectives

To examine the relationship between love attitude and conflict styles among married adults.

Hypotheses

There will be a significant relationship between all dimensions of love attitude and conflict styles among married adults.

Sample

The sample of this study comprised of 150 married adults. This study is relied on primary data.

Variables

- Independent Variable - Love Attitude
- Dependent Variable - Conflict Style

Measures

- The Love Attitude Scale – Short Form by Clyde Hendrick, Susan S, Hendrick and Amy Dicke (1998)
- The Romantic Partner Conflict Scale by Tammy L.Zachchilli (2009)

Procedure

The participants who have been as selected for my research the responses were collected from them. The responses were collected from the individuals after obtaining the participants consent. These questions intended to measure the variables: Love attitude and

Conflict styles. The participants were instructed to read each item carefully and choose appropriate option which comes to their mind first. They were informed that their responses will kept confidential. The participants took 15 to 20 minutes to complete the questions

Statistical Analysis

The collected data was analyzed statistically using Karl Pearson Correlation Coefficient to determine the relationship among research variables. The analyses were carried out with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) windows version 23.0.

Review of Literature

Javdan, M., Bahrapour, T., & Dehghani, M. (2023) conducted a study titled “The role of family relationships and conflict resolution styles in marital burnout of couples seeking divorce”. The sample of this study included 162 people. The result of this study showed that family relationships and conflict resolution style are significantly correlated with marital burnout.^[1]

Barman, J. D., Maheshwari, S., & Varma, P. (2022) conducted a study titled “The conflict and conflict management in stable middle class marriages: An Indian perspective” The sample of this study included 30 long -term married couples through interview. The result of this study showed that conflict management style of Indian middleclass couples has more relationship and partner centric and which contributes their marital stability.^[2]

Taghavi Dinani, P., Samkhaniyan, E., Hamidi, M., & Arkiyan, F. (2014) conducted a study titled “Study on relationship between love attitudes and marital satisfaction among married women”. The sample of this study included 150 married women. The result of this study showed that there was a significant and positive correlation between eros, storge, pragma, agape of love attitude with marital satisfaction and ludus had negative relationship with marital satisfaction.^[3]

Hammock, G., & Richardson, D. S. (2011) conducted a study titled “Love attitude and relationship experience”. The aim of this study was to examine the association of love attitude with the initiation, maintenance and dissolution of relationships. The result of this study showed that Ludus was relevant to all stages of relationship development. Pragma was associated with relationship initiation and agape and mania were associated with maintenance.^[4]

Richardson, D. R., Hammock, G. S., Lubben, T., & Mickler, S. (1989) conducted a study titled “The relationship between love attitudes and conflict responses” The sample of this study included 98 females and 50 males. The result of this study showed that integrating,

obliging and compromising conflict responses were related to eros and agape, both avoiding and dominating conflict responses were related to ludus and compromising is related to mania.^[5]

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1

Descriptive statistics of study variables

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Eros	17.19	2.66
Ludus	13.44	3.36
Storge	15.94	3.25
Pragma	16.37	3.05
Mania	14.64	2.94
Agape	16.78	2.98
Compromise	56.82	7.63
Dominance	20.88	5.01
Avoidance	11.18	2.50
Separation	18.28	3.58
Submission	19.06	3.90
Interactional Reactivity	21.08	5.0

The table 1 shows the descriptive analysis of the variables. The data displays the mean of dimensions of Love attitude: eros, ludus, storge, pragma, mania, agape are 17.19, 13.44, 15.94, 16.37, 14.64, 16.78 and dimensions of Conflict Styles : compromise, dominance, avoidance, separation, submission and interactional reactivity are 56.82, 20.88, 11.18, 18.28, 19.06 and 21.08 respectively. The standard deviation for dimensions of Love attitude are 2.66, 3.36, 3.25, 3.05, 2.94, 2.98 and the dimensions of Conflict styles are 7.63, 5.01, 2.50, 3.58, 3.90 and 5.07 respectively.

Table 2

The correlation between the dimensions of love attitude and conflict style

Compromise	Dominance	Avoidance	Separation	Submission	Interactional Reactivity
	e				

Eros	.446**	-.104	.237**	.053	.369**	-.074
Ludus	-.062	.228**	-.098	.370**	.366**	.362**
Storge	.364**	.141	.200*	.008	-.061	-.023
Pragma	.300**	.292**	.020	.419*	.442**	.450**
Mania	.180	.178*	.174*	.214**	.274**	.173*
Agape	.323**	-.081	.093	.028	.236**	.054

* $p < 0.05$

* $p < 0.01$

The Table 2 reveals the relationship between the dimensions of Love Attitude and Conflict Styles. This table shows that there exists a highly positive and significant correlation between Eros with compromise; Ludus with separation; Storge with compromise; Pragma with interactional reactivity; Mania with submission; Agape with compromise at the significant level of $p < 0.01$. At $p < 0.05$ significance there exists a positive relationship between Storge and avoidance; Pragma and separation; Mania with dominance. There exists no significant relationship between the other dimensions

Discussion

Table1 shows that descriptive statistics of the study which reveals that the mean scores of love attitudes vary depending on the dimension, with Agape (16.78) and Eros (17.19) being comparatively high. This may indicates that most prevalent love attitude used by participants are passionate love and selfless love. In compared to other love styles Ludus has lower mean (13.44). Ludus refers to game playing love. According to the mean results of dimensions of conflict styles compromise has highest mean 56.82. From the mean we can also infer that majority of the married individuals have compromise as their conflict style in their romantic relationships.

Table 2 shows that relationship between love attitude and conflict styles. According to this some of the variables are highly correlated with conflict styles. Eros is highly positively correlated with Compromise conflict style. This may indicate that people who exhibit passionate, romantic and deeply affectionate love tend to prefer resolving conflicts through compromise. Ludus love attitude is correlated with separation. This may indicate that people with this love style often view love as a game, prioritizing personal freedom and avoiding deep attachment. Consequently, when conflicts arise, they may prefer separation as a conflict resolution style because it allows them to maintain their independence without becoming overly involved in emotional confrontations. Storge and Agape are correlated with Compromise conflict style. People with storge conflict style wants to maintain the harmony

in relationships, when conflict arise, they may approach conflicts and disagreements rationally, aiming for mutually acceptable solutions. Agape love is driven by a desire to nurture and support their partner and they may use compromise this conflict style to preserve their relationships. Agape love is associated with functional strategies to resolve marital conflicts, such as compromise conflict style.^[6] Pragma love attitude is correlated with Interactional reactivity this may indicates that they may respond actively and emotionally during disagreements, especially if their practical expectations are not met. Pragmatic partners emphasize on practical aspects can lead to specific conflict behaviours, potentially involving interactional reactivity.^[7] Mania is correlated with submission. Mania love style is involved with insecurity and fear of losing their partners and this may lead to submission conflict style. In this submission serves as a coping mechanism.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between love attitude and conflict styles among married adults. The independent variable of the study was love attitude and conflict style was the dependent variable. The sample was obtained through Purposive sampling method. The participants of the study included 150 married adults. Data was collected both by using google forms and by collecting in person. The responses were gathered from both male and females. In this research the standardized tools used are the Love Attitude Scale – Short Form by Clyde Hendrick, Susan S, Hendrick and Amy Dicke (1998) and the Romantic Partner Conflict Scale by Tammy L. Zachchilli (2009). The collected data was analysed statistically using Karl Pearson's correlation coefficient to determine the relationship among the research variables. The analyses were carried out with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software (SPSS) version 23.0. The conclusion drawn from the study is that, there is a significant relationship between various love attitudes and conflict styles among married adults.

Limitations

The study involved 150 participants, which may not fully represent all types of married people, limiting how widely the findings can be applied. Participants answered questions about their own behaviours, which may lead to biased responses or inaccuracies.

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