

## THE IMPACT OF STUBBORNNESS AND EGO DYNAMICS IN RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigates the influence of stubbornness and ego dynamics on relationship satisfaction in the framework of modern Indian relationships. As society transitions from collectivist to individualistic values, interpersonal dynamics have grown more intricate, rendering psychological traits like rigidity and emotional regulation essential factors in determining relational outcomes. The study employs a quantitative, cross-sectional research design, gathering data from 155 individuals aged 20 to 40 years who are involved in romantic or marital relationships. Key variables were measured using standardised tools like the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS), the Rigidity/Stubbornness Scale, and the Ego Dynamics Scale. The results show a strong negative link between being stubborn and being happy in a relationship ( $r = -0.657$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This means that being more rigid and unwilling to change makes relationships less satisfying. In contrast, ego dynamics exhibit a significant positive correlation with relationship satisfaction ( $r = 0.500$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that emotional regulation, adaptability, and ego strength improve relationship outcomes. Regression analysis corroborates that obstinacy adversely predicts relationship satisfaction, whereas ego dynamics favourably predict it. The study emphasises the necessity of equilibrating maladaptive traits with adaptive psychological resources to sustain healthy relationships. It adds to the small amount of Indian literature by giving a unified view of personality and how people interact with each other. The results have implications for counselling, relationship education, and future research focused on enhancing interpersonal well-being.

**Keywords:** Stubbornness; Ego Dynamics; Relationship Satisfaction; Emotional Regulation; Psychological Flexibility; Interpersonal Relationships; Indian Context.

### INTRODUCTION

Relationships have long been seen as a key part of human health and happiness, and they have changed a lot over time and in different cultures. In traditional societies, especially in India, relationships were based on collectivist values like adjusting to each other's needs, making sacrifices, and staying committed for a long time. Shared responsibilities, family involvement, and emotional endurance, rather than individual fulfilment, often helped keep romantic and marital relationships strong (Kumar & Sharma, 2021). In today's world, though, relationships are more and more based on individualistic values like self-expression, freedom, and personal happiness. As cities grow, people get more educated, and technology connects people, expectations in relationships have changed. Now, emotional compatibility and personal growth are more important (Verma & Singh, 2023). Even though these changes encourage equality and independence, they also make it harder for people to get along with each other, which could hurt the stability and happiness of relationships.

In this changing world of relationships, psychological ideas like ego and stubbornness have a big effect on how people get along with each other. In psychology, ego is the way a person sees themselves, their identity, and their worth. A healthy ego helps you feel confident, emotionally stable, and able to set limits in your relationships (Orth & Robins, 2022). But when the ego gets too big or too weak, it can make people defensive, want to be in charge, and have trouble accepting criticism. This can make it hard to talk to each other and be emotionally close. Stubbornness, which is often thought of as mental and emotional rigidity, is also a sign of resistance to change and an unwillingness to see things from other people's points of view. Being a little stubborn can show determination, but being too rigid can make it harder to resolve conflicts and make relationships less satisfying (Daks et al., 2020). When these traits are out of balance, they can make it hard for people to understand each other, empathise, and reach a compromise in relationships.

Relationships in India are changing a lot right now. There is a lot of tension between traditional collectivist norms and new individualistic goals. Modern Indian couples, especially those who live in cities, have to deal with the conflicting demands of keeping the peace in their families and asserting their own independence (Gupta & Mehta, 2022). Changing gender roles, more women working, and the rise of social media have all changed the way people interact with each other. Digital platforms have improved communication, but they have also added things like comparison, validation-seeking, and emotional distance (Sharma & Kaur, 2024). Consequently, interpersonal conflicts stemming from ego clashes, power struggles, and obstinate behaviour have intensified, frequently resulting in diminished relationship satisfaction and emotional disconnection.

Even though more and more people are becoming aware of these problems, most of the research that has been done so far has looked at general personality traits or communication patterns. There hasn't been much research on the specific roles of stubbornness and ego dynamics in relationships. Most studies have looked at these ideas on their own or in Western settings. There is still a gap in understanding how they work together in the Indian socio-cultural framework (Rajabi et al., 2024). Also, ego has been studied a lot in terms of self-esteem and identity, but its functional parts, like emotional control, adaptability, and resilience, haven't been studied as much in romantic relationships. People often don't think of stubbornness as a separate relational trait, even though it clearly affects how people interact with each other and how they resolve conflicts. Given these gaps, this study wants to look at how stubbornness and ego dynamics affect relationship satisfaction in people who are in romantic or marital relationships. The main goal of this study is to look at how these personality traits work together to affect relationships, especially in modern Indian society. The study aims to give a more complete picture of the things that help or hurt relationship satisfaction by looking at both negative (stubbornness) and positive (ego dynamics) psychological constructs.

The structure of this paper is designed to methodically tackle the research goals. The introduction offers a conceptual and contextual framework for the study. Next, there is a review of the literature that looks closely at previous research on stubbornness, ego dynamics, and satisfaction in relationships. The methodology section describes the research design, sample, tools, and statistical methods used to analyse the data. The results and discussion sections then show and explain how the findings relate to the proposed hypotheses. In conclusion, the paper presents implications, limitations, and recommendations for future research, providing both theoretical and practical contributions to the domain of relationship psychology.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The current study is based on an integrative psychological framework that combines personality theory, ego psychology, and relationship satisfaction models to show how ego dynamics and stubbornness affect the outcomes of relationships. Many people think of relationship satisfaction as having to do with emotional connection, good communication, and being able to adapt to other people. In this situation, personality traits like inflexibility and ego control are very important in shaping how relationships work.

From the standpoint of personality and behavioural theories, stubbornness signifies psychological inflexibility, marked by an aversion to change, inflexible cognition, and an incapacity to embrace a partner's perspective. The demand-withdraw pattern put forth by Christensen and Heavey (1990) offers a fundamental explanation, positing that inflexible interaction styles hinder communication and diminish emotional closeness. Daks et al. (2020) further corroborate that psychological inflexibility constrains adaptive coping and mutual understanding, consequently diminishing relationship satisfaction. Consequently, stubbornness may be conceptualised as a maladaptive characteristic that obstructs conflict resolution and relational harmony. Ego dynamics, on the other hand, are based on ego psychology and self-regulation theories. They stress the importance of ego strength, emotional regulation, and adaptability in keeping relationships healthy. A well-functioning ego allows people to find a balance between independence and closeness, which is what self-differentiation means (Skowron, 2000). People with stronger egos are more resilient, empathetic, and able to handle their emotions well, which makes them happier in their relationships (Rajabi et al., 2024). Erol and Orth (2014) also point out that self-esteem, which is an important part of how the ego works, helps relationships stay stable and happy over time.

The theoretical framework also uses systems theory, which sees relationships as dynamic systems where the traits of each person affect how the system works as a whole. This study does not look at ego dynamics and stubbornness separately, but as things that affect each other. Stubbornness makes things rigid and causes problems, but ego dynamics give us flexible ways to deal with these problems and protect against their bad effects. This two-sided view fits with modern relationship models that say both risk and protective factors play a role in how happy someone is. In general, the framework says that being stubborn is a bad sign for relationship satisfaction, while ego dynamics are a good sign. The study gives a full picture of how individual psychological processes affect relational well-being, especially in changing social and cultural settings like modern Indian relationships, by putting these ideas together.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE (ROL)**

### **Stubbornness and Relationship Satisfaction**

The role of stubbornness, frequently regarded as rigidity or psychological inflexibility, has garnered heightened interest in the analysis of relationship satisfaction. Christensen and Heavey (1990) did important early work that showed the demand-withdraw pattern, where one partner pressures the other while the other resists. This showed how rigid and unyielding behaviours can make a marriage less satisfying. This obstinacy in interactions hinders communication and emotional closeness, establishing a foundation for subsequent empirical research. Building on this perspective, Donato et al. (2014) performed a longitudinal study that revealed that enduring inflexible interaction patterns were significant predictors of diminishing relationship satisfaction over time, indicating a causal rather than solely correlational relationship.

Recent literature bolsters this argument by associating stubbornness with psychological inflexibility. Daks et al. (2020), via a meta-analysis, established that individuals with rigid cognitive and emotional patterns generally encounter diminished relationship quality across various contexts. Ma et al. (2025) similarly illustrated that in high-stress contexts, such as chronic illness, inflexible coping mechanisms markedly diminish satisfaction levels, highlighting the widespread detrimental effects of obstinacy. These results are consistent with Hill (2009), who identified cognitive flexibility as a crucial factor in relationship satisfaction, suggesting that obstinate individuals find it difficult to adapt and consider different viewpoints.

Recent research has investigated obstinacy in digital and contemporary relational frameworks. Overall and McNulty (2022) noted that inflexible behavioural responses in conflict scenarios, particularly when exacerbated by digital communication, exacerbate misunderstandings and emotional detachment. Similarly, Joel et al. (2020) underscored that rigid personality traits impede long-term relationship stability by diminishing compromise and collaborative problem-solving. The literature consistently indicates that stubbornness serves as a substantial negative predictor of relationship satisfaction, primarily through hindered communication, diminished empathy, and unresolved conflicts.

### **Ego Dynamics and Relationship Satisfaction**

Ego dynamics, which include ego strength, emotional regulation, and self-awareness, are an example of adaptive psychological functioning, while stubbornness is not. Erol and Orth (2014) presented compelling longitudinal evidence indicating that elevated self-esteem, a fundamental aspect of healthy ego functioning forecasts enhanced and more enduring relationship satisfaction over time. Their findings indicate that individuals possessing robust ego structures are more adept at navigating relational challenges without succumbing to excessive defensiveness or insecurity. Skowron (2000) introduced the idea of self-differentiation, which builds on ego dynamics by stressing the need for both independence and emotional connection. People who are more self-differentiated are better able to adjust to and be happy in their marriages because they can keep their sense of self while still being emotionally involved. Lampis et al. (2018) substantiated this framework via structural equation modelling, demonstrating that well-regulated ego functioning positively forecasts dyadic adjustment and satisfaction, while emotional cutoff a manifestation of ego dysregulation that adversely affects relationships.

Recent research has broadened the applicability of ego dynamics across various populations and contexts. Sommantico et al. (2021) discovered that self-differentiation markedly improves relationship satisfaction among LGBTQ+ couples, underscoring the universal relevance of ego-related constructs. In a similar vein, Rajabi et al. (2024) illustrated that ego strength not only serves as a direct predictor of relationship satisfaction but also acts as a mediator between commitment and well-being. Kuster et al. (2021) also stressed that people with stable self-concepts use better ways to solve conflicts, which makes relationships more harmonious.

Moreover, growing research in emotional intelligence and self-regulation enhances ego dynamics. Brackett et al. (2021) contended that emotional regulation, a fundamental aspect of ego functioning that significantly contributes to the preservation of healthy relationships by promoting empathy and mitigating reactive behaviours. These findings collectively suggest that ego dynamics function as a significant positive predictor of relationship satisfaction by fostering resilience, adaptability, and proficient emotional regulation.

## **Integrated Perspective: Stubbornness, Ego Dynamics, and Relationship Outcomes**

While earlier studies frequently analysed negative and positive personality traits in isolation, contemporary research underscores the necessity of amalgamating both dimensions to enhance the comprehension of relationship satisfaction. The simultaneous presence of maladaptive stubbornness and adaptive ego dynamics offers a more thorough framework for the analysis of relational outcomes. Daks et al. (2020) posited that psychological flexibility (antithetical to stubbornness) and emotional regulation (fundamental to ego dynamics) collectively affect relationship functioning, suggesting an interplay between these constructs. Modern academics contend that ego dynamics might mitigate the adverse consequences of obstinacy. For example, Karney and Bradbury (2020) suggested that individuals possessing robust self-regulatory abilities can alleviate the adverse effects of inflexible tendencies through constructive communication and compromise. Likewise, Overall et al. (2022) discovered that emotionally intelligent individuals are more inclined to convert conflict into opportunities for growth, even in the presence of obstinate partners.

In the Indian context, characterised by collectivist values and emerging individualistic tendencies, this interaction assumes significant relevance. Batra and Reio (2021) said that modern couples often have problems with balancing their need for independence with their need for dependence. To stay happy, they need to be flexible and keep their egos in check. The amalgamation of these variables rectifies substantial research deficiencies recognised in previous studies, notably the absence of culturally pertinent and integrated models. The literature suggests that stubbornness and ego dynamics are not independent constructs but interconnected factors affecting relationship satisfaction. Stubbornness disrupts relational harmony by promoting rigidity and resistance, while ego dynamics augment satisfaction by cultivating emotional maturity and adaptability. The interaction among these variables offers a sophisticated comprehension of relationship dynamics, underscoring the necessity for cohesive models in subsequent research.

### **Research Gap**

This study examines significant shortcomings in the current literature regarding relationship satisfaction. First, there aren't many studies that focus on stubbornness. Most of the research that has been done before has looked at bigger personality traits like agreeableness or neuroticism and only looked at stubbornness as a sub-dimension of those traits. This restricts comprehension of how quotidian inflexible and unyielding behaviours directly affect relational dynamics. Second, there isn't a lot of research on how ego dynamics work in close relationships. While concepts like ego strength, emotional regulation, and adaptability have been extensively examined in clinical and developmental psychology, their influence on relationship satisfaction has not been thoroughly investigated. Thirdly, current research predominantly lacks a unified model that incorporates both adverse traits, such as obstinacy, and beneficial psychological resources, including ego dynamics. Most studies have looked at these variables separately, missing the chance to see how they might work together or make up for each other in terms of relationship outcomes. Lastly, there isn't much evidence from India, since most studies are based on people from the West. Indian relationships are shaped by collectivist values, familial expectations, and changing socio-cultural norms, which limits the relevance of Western findings. So, this study tries to fill in the gaps by giving a more complete and culturally relevant picture of how stubbornness and ego dynamics work together to affect relationship satisfaction.

## Need and Significance of the Study

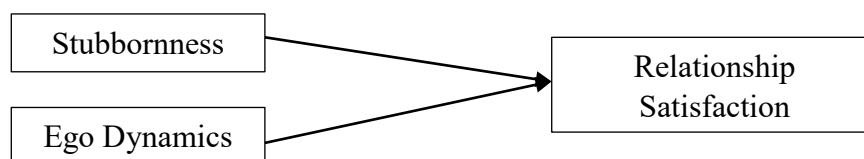
The current study is very important for understanding relationship satisfaction in terms of theory, practice, and society. From a theoretical point of view, it adds to the body of psychological literature by bringing together two important but not well-studied ideas—stubbornness and ego dynamics—into a single framework. Previous research has looked at personality traits and ego functioning separately, but this study fills that gap by looking at how they work together and how they affect relationship satisfaction. It adds to theories about personality and relationships by showing how traits that aren't helpful, like being rigid, can work with traits that are helpful, like being able to control your emotions and having a strong ego, to affect how relationships turn out. The study has useful implications for counselling and therapy in the real world. By identifying stubbornness as a possible barrier and ego dynamics as a helpful factor in relationship satisfaction, psychologists and relationship counsellors can create targeted interventions. Couples therapy and premarital counselling programs can include techniques that help people control their emotions, be flexible, communicate, and be aware of themselves. This can help people and couples deal with conflicts better, be less defensive, and have healthier relationships with others.

The study is very relevant to Indian society because relationships are shaped by a mix of traditional collectivist values and new individualistic ideas. As gender roles change, more couples are working together, and digital communication makes things worse, conflicts caused by ego clashes and stubborn behaviour are becoming more common. This study raises awareness about how important emotional maturity, flexibility, and understanding each other are for keeping relationships strong. It also gives ideas that can help community health programs and promote healthier relationship habits in modern Indian society.

## Objectives of the Study

- 1) To examine the relationship between stubbornness and relationship satisfaction.
- 2) To study the relationship between ego dynamics and relationship satisfaction.
- 3) To analyse whether stubbornness negatively predicts relationship satisfaction.
- 4) To assess whether ego dynamics positively predict relationship satisfaction.

## Conceptual Framework of the Study



**Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the Study**

The conceptual model of this study aims to investigate the impact of two primary independent variables, namely stubbornness and ego dynamics, on the dependent variable of relationship satisfaction. In this model, stubbornness is defined as a detrimental personality trait marked by inflexibility, an aversion to change, and challenges in reaching compromises. This trait is anticipated to adversely affect relationship satisfaction by obstructing effective communication, emotional comprehension, and conflict resolution. On the other hand, ego dynamics, which include ego strength, emotional regulation, and adaptability, are seen as a good psychological construct that helps a person deal with problems with other people, keep their emotional balance, and respond in a positive way during conflicts, which makes

relationships more satisfying. The model posits that both variables function concurrently, with stubbornness potentially diminishing satisfaction levels, while ego dynamics serve as a protective or enhancing factor that fosters harmony and stability in relationships. Moreover, the framework underscores a predictive relationship rather than a mere correlation, indicating that variations in these personality traits can profoundly influence the quality of romantic or marital relationships. The model, situated within the Indian socio-cultural framework, implicitly recognises the interplay between traditional values and contemporary individualistic inclinations, which may influence the manifestation of these variables in actual relationships. In general, the conceptual model gives us a way to systematically think about how maladaptive and adaptive personality traits work together to affect relationship outcomes. Based on the preceding Conceptual Model of the Study, the following hypotheses are formulated:

**H1:** Higher levels of stubbornness will be associated with lower relationship satisfaction.

**H2:** Higher levels of ego dynamics will be associated with higher relationship satisfaction.

**H3:** Stubbornness will be a negative predictor of relationship satisfaction.

**H4:** Ego dynamics will be a positive predictor of relationship satisfaction.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The current study employs a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to investigate the influence of stubbornness and ego dynamics on relationship satisfaction among adults in romantic or marital relationships. This design is suitable as it facilitates the systematic measurement and statistical analysis of relationships among variables at a singular point in time. The study is both correlational and predictive, examining the relationships between variables and evaluating how stubbornness and ego dynamics forecast relationship satisfaction. Standardised instruments and statistical methodologies, including correlation and regression analysis, are utilised to guarantee the objectivity, reliability, and validity of results.

### **Population and sample Design of the study**

The study's participants are adults currently involved in romantic or marital relationships, specifically within the age range of 20 to 40 years. The research primarily examines individuals from urban environments, encompassing college students and employed professionals. A sample size of 155 respondents is thought to be big enough to make sure that the results are statistically significant and can be applied to the whole population. The study employs a non-probability sampling methodology, utilising purposive and snowball sampling techniques. Purposive sampling allows for the selection of participants who satisfy particular inclusion criteria, such as being in a committed relationship for a minimum of six months, whereas snowball sampling facilitates the expansion of the sample via participant referrals. This combination is especially helpful for getting responses from people in relational settings where direct sampling might be hard.

### **Data collection procedure**

The way the data was collected for this study was planned out and done in an ethical way to make sure that the answers were accurate and reliable. At first, participants were contacted through both online and offline means, such as social media, academic networks, and personal contacts. Potential respondents were given a short introduction that explained what the study was about and why it was important. Before taking part, participants gave their informed consent, which meant that they were fully aware of their rights, including the right

to privacy and the right to leave the study at any time without any consequences. The study focused on individuals aged 20 to 40 years who were presently engaged in a romantic or marital relationship lasting a minimum of six months. Google Forms were used for online respondents and paper-and-pencil formats were used for offline respondents. This made it easier for people to respond and increased the number of responses. Participants were given clear instructions to make sure they understood each item before answering. To reduce response bias, steps were taken to protect the respondents' privacy and encourage them to be honest. After gathering the data, the answers were carefully checked to make sure they were complete and consistent. To keep the quality of the data high, responses that were incomplete or not valid were not included. After that, the finished dataset was coded and put into statistical software (SPSS) for more study. This structured process made sure that the data collected was accurate, valid, and good for testing hypotheses.

### **Research Instruments**

The research employed standardised and validated psychological instruments to assess the variables of interest, thereby ensuring the reliability and validity of the data. The Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS), created by Hendrick in 1988, was used to measure relationship satisfaction, which is the dependent variable. There are 7 items on this scale, and each one is rated on a 5-point Likert scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." It assesses overall satisfaction, emotional fulfilment, and perceived relationship quality, with elevated scores reflecting increased satisfaction. The study utilised the Rigidity/Stubbornness Scale, created by Brown and Goodman (1971), to evaluate stubbornness. This scale has about 20 to 25 questions that are meant to measure how resistant someone is to change, how inflexible they are, and how rigid their behaviour is. People rate how much they agree on a Likert scale, and higher scores mean they are more stubborn. This instrument is especially effective in assessing interpersonal rigidity within relational contexts. The Ego Dynamics Scale created by Palsane and Sharma in 1989 was used to measure ego dynamics. This scale has about 30–40 questions and looks at important areas like ego strength, emotional regulation, and adaptability. It aids in comprehending how individuals navigate stress, emotions, and relational difficulties. Higher scores signify enhanced and more adaptable ego functioning. All instruments employed in the study have exhibited robust internal consistency and reliability in prior research, rendering them suitable for evaluating psychological constructs in the current context.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

The current study uses both descriptive and inferential statistical methods to analyse the data so that we can fully understand how the variables are related to each other. First, the data that was collected is checked, coded, and put into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for a thorough analysis. We use descriptive statistics like mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage to summarise the demographic information of the respondents and to get a sense of how the variables, like stubbornness, ego dynamics, and relationship satisfaction, are spread out in general. Inferential statistical methods are utilised for hypothesis testing. Pearson's correlation analysis is employed to assess the strength and direction of the relationships among stubbornness, ego dynamics, and relationship satisfaction. This helps figure out if the variables are linked in a good or bad way. Additionally, multiple regression analysis is performed to assess the predictive efficacy of independent variables (stubbornness and ego dynamics) on the dependent variable (relationship satisfaction). This method lets the researcher see how much each predictor helps explain differences in relationship satisfaction. All statistical tests are done with a significance level of 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ), which makes sure that the results are accurate and

reliable. These analytical methods give strong real-world evidence for testing the study's hypotheses.

## RESULTS

### 1.1 Demographic Profile

**Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

S No.	Demographic Profile	Category	N	Percent
1	Age	20-30 years	141	91.0
		31-40 years	14	9.0
2	Gender	Female	84	54.2
		Male	71	45.8
3	Education Level	Undergraduate	97	62.6
		Graduate	98	63.2
		Post graduate	57	36.8
4	Relationship Level	In a committed relationship	129	83.2
		Engaged	2	1.3
		Married	20	12.9
		Divorced or separated	4	2.6
5	Type of relationship	Dating	95	61.3
		Live -in relationship	8	5.2
		Long distance relationship	32	20.6
		Marriage	20	12.9
6	Area of residence	Rural	1	0.6
		Semi urban	13	8.4
		Urban	141	91.0
7	Family Type	Joint family	54	34.8
		Nuclear family	101	65.2

The demographic profile of the respondents shows that most of them are young people. In fact, 91% of them are between the ages of 20 and 30, and only 9% are between the ages of 31 and 40. There are slightly more women than men in the sample, with 54.2% of respondents being women and 45.8% being men. This suggests that the sample is fairly balanced. In terms of education, most of the people who answered the question are well-educated. A large number of them (62.6%) have completed undergraduate (62.6%) and graduate (63.2%) levels, and 36.8% hold postgraduate degrees. This shows that there is a lot of overlap in the education levels of the participants. According to the relationship status, most of the people who answered (83.2%) are in committed relationships. The next largest group is married (12.9%), then engaged (1.3%), and finally divorced or separated (2.6%). Dating (61.3%) is the most common type of relationship, followed by long-distance relationships (20.6%),

marriage (12.9%), and live-in relationships (5.2%). The area of residence shows that cities are very important, since 91% of respondents live in cities, 8.4% live in semi-urban areas, and 0.6% live in rural areas. Finally, the family structure shows that most people (65.2%) live in nuclear families, while 34.8% live in joint family systems. The sample is mostly young, lives in cities, is well-educated, and is involved in modern relationship dynamics, which could affect the results of the study.

**Descriptive Statistics**

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Constructs of the Study**

Descriptive Statistics							
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
				Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
<b>Relationship Assessment Scale</b>							
I am satisfied with my relationship.	155	3.1677	1.01814	-.455	.195	-.609	.387
My relationship meets my expectations.	155	3.2581	1.06197	-.533	.195	-.648	.387
My partner meets my needs.	155	3.2516	1.14865	-.455	.195	-.730	.387
I wish there were no problems in my relationship.	155	3.5032	1.04057	-.779	.195	-.183	.387
I feel happy in my relationship.	155	3.4129	.97891	-.868	.195	.079	.387
I feel committed to my relationship.	155	3.4129	.95201	-1.005	.195	.265	.387
Overall, I feel positively about my relationship.	155	3.3742	.95447	-.814	.195	.342	.387
<b>Stubbornness Scale</b>							

I find it difficult to change my opinions once they are formed.	155	3.2258	1.06630	-.594	.195	-.741	.387
I prefer routines and dislike sudden changes.	155	3.2387	.98088	-.580	.195	-.308	.387
I resist new ideas even if they seem useful.	155	3.6452	.99832	-.904	.195	.397	.387
I feel uncomfortable when things do not go as planned.	155	3.1871	1.03062	-.564	.195	-.614	.387
I stick to my decisions even when proven wrong.	155	3.3548	.96525	-.458	.195	-.562	.387
I avoid situations that require flexibility.	155	3.2839	1.06145	-.458	.195	-.614	.387
I prefer doing things the same way every time.	155	3.4065	1.10898	-.773	.195	-.239	.387
I am unwilling to compromise in disagreements.	155	2.9806	1.10765	.097	.195	-1.022	.387

I feel stressed when adapting to new environments.	155	3.5032	1.06524	-.792	.195	.042	.387
I believe my way of doing things is usually the best.	155	3.2968	1.17426	-.451	.195	-.828	.387
I find it hard to accept criticism.	155	2.8194	1.17036	.259	.195	-.885	.387
I avoid changing my habits.	155	3.4387	.92641	-.290	.195	-.703	.387
I prefer stability over change.	155	3.6323	.90467	-.642	.195	.525	.387
I get frustrated when plans change unexpectedly.	155	3.3613	1.06224	-.305	.195	-.813	.387
I find it difficult to consider alternative viewpoints.	155	3.5097	.87064	-.658	.195	.221	.387
I tend to reject unfamiliar ideas.	155	3.2516	1.06657	-.454	.195	-.753	.387
I like strict rules and structure.	155	3.2452	1.13012	-.360	.195	-.742	.387
I am uncomfortable with ambiguity.	155	3.2129	1.11067	-.316	.195	-.889	.387

I rarely change my behavior based on feedback.	155	3.2452	1.13585	-.361	.195	-.485	.387
I insist on sticking to my preferences.	155	3.1548	1.08796	-.344	.195	-.528	.387
I am resistant to innovation.	155	3.4000	1.12006	-.533	.195	-.663	.387
I prefer predictability in all situations.	155	3.5677	.85295	-1.009	.195	.938	.387
<b>Ego Dynamics Scale</b>							
I can handle stressful situations effectively.	155	3.2968	1.04555	-.656	.195	-.353	.387
I remain confident even in difficult situations.	155	3.6581	.99635	-.745	.195	.178	.387
I recover quickly from failures or setbacks.	155	3.4968	1.07736	-.528	.195	-.421	.387
I stay mentally strong during challenging times.	155	3.2968	.95465	-.492	.195	-.525	.387
I can face problems without feeling overwhelmed.	155	3.4839	.96937	-.669	.195	.095	.387

I maintain self-discipline in my daily activities.	155	3.4452	.94760	-.351	.195	.016	.387
I take responsibility for my actions.	155	3.4000	.93697	-.545	.195	.333	.387
I stay motivated despite obstacles.	155	3.8129	.94517	-.738	.195	.350	.387
I believe in my ability to overcome difficulties.	155	3.4645	1.01468	-.658	.195	.034	.387
I can manage pressure without losing focus.	155	3.3548	1.01765	-.385	.195	-.493	.387
I can control my emotions when needed.	155	3.9613	.69211	-1.020	.195	2.042	.387
I remain calm during conflicts.	155	3.5548	1.31496	-.624	.195	-.787	.387
I manage my anger effectively.	155	3.1548	1.25430	-.037	.195	-1.188	.387
I do not let emotions affect my decisions.	155	4.1742	.83081	-1.094	.195	1.390	.387
I stay emotionally balanced in stressful situations.	155	3.9097	.84797	-.279	.195	-.380	.387
I respond rationally rather than emotionally.	155	3.9484	.93832	-.947	.195	.819	.387

I can control impulsive reactions.	155	3.3806	1.12971	-.493	.195	-.650	.387
I remain composed during disagreements.	155	3.4516	.95478	-.472	.195	-.243	.387
I can manage anxiety in difficult situations.	155	3.5032	.87812	-.535	.195	-.125	.387
I maintain emotional stability most of the time.	155	3.7613	1.01983	-.770	.195	.056	.387
I adjust easily to new situations.	155	3.5355	.88477	-.194	.195	-.672	.387
I am open to change in my life.	155	3.8129	.63232	-.609	.195	1.010	.387
I can adapt my behaviour according to different situations.	155	3.9484	.60080	-.527	.195	1.476	.387
I accept new ideas and perspectives.	155	3.7355	1.02614	-.581	.195	-.190	.387
I feel comfortable dealing with uncertainty.	155	3.5355	1.00180	-.962	.195	.369	.387
I can change my plans when required.	155	3.3806	1.07069	-.553	.195	-.432	.387
I am flexible in my thinking.	155	3.6968	.97617	-.970	.195	.572	.387

I adapt quickly to new environments.	155	3.5097	.96945	-.482	.195	-.207	.387
I learn from my experiences and improve.	155	3.6194	1.05849	-.718	.195	-.022	.387
I adjust my expectations when situations change.	155	3.7484	1.01029	-.663	.195	-.324	.387
Valid N (listwise)	155						

The study's descriptive statistics show that all of the constructs—Relationship Assessment, Stubbornness, and Ego Dynamics—have mean values that are moderate to moderately high. This suggests that the respondents generally have a balanced view. The mean scores for the Relationship Assessment Scale are between 3.16 and 3.50, which means that people are moderately happy, satisfied, and committed to their relationships. They also agree a little more that there are no problems. The Stubbornness Scale has mean values between 2.81 and 3.64, which means that people are somewhat resistant to change, prefer stability, and stick to their own views. However, they are not very stubborn. The Ego Dynamics Scale, on the other hand, shows higher average scores, especially for items about emotional regulation and adaptability (for example, emotional control and rational decision-making scores over 3.9). This means that the participants had strong ego functioning, resilience, and flexibility. The standard deviation values for all items are between 0.8 and 1.1, which means that the responses are not too different from each other. Also, most of the skewness values are negative, which means that most of the responses are likely to agree. Most of the kurtosis values are also within acceptable limits, which means that the distribution is close to normal. The data shows that the people who answered the questions have good relationship quality, moderate stubbornness, and relatively strong ego strength, emotional regulation, and adaptability. This means that the dataset is good for further inferential statistical analysis.

### Reliability Testing

**Table 3: Reliability Statistics of Questionnaire of the Study**

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.850	59

Table 3 shows a reliability analysis that shows the questionnaire used in the study has a high level of internal consistency, with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.850 across 59 items. This number is higher than the usual cut-off of 0.70, which means that the items in the instrument are well-correlated and consistently measure the study's underlying constructs. A Cronbach's

Alpha value exceeding 0.80 is typically regarded as favourable, signifying robust reliability and confirming the scale's appropriateness for subsequent statistical analysis and hypothesis testing. Lee Cronbach (1951) says that higher alpha values mean that the items on the scale are more consistent with each other. Joseph F. Hair Jr. et al. (2019) say that reliability coefficients above 0.70 are acceptable and those above 0.80 are better in social science research. So, the alpha value of 0.850 shows that the questionnaire is reliable and can be used with confidence for empirical analysis in the study.

**Hypothesis Testing**

**H1: Higher levels of stubbornness will be associated with lower relationship satisfaction.**

**Table 4: Correlation Analysis**

Correlations			
		Stubbornness	Relationship Satisfaction
Stubbornness	Pearson Correlation	1	-.657**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	155	155
Relationship Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	-.657**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	155	155
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The correlation analysis corroborates H1, suggesting that increased stubbornness correlates with diminished relationship satisfaction. The findings indicate a robust negative correlation between stubbornness and relationship satisfaction ( $r = -0.657, p < 0.01$ ), implying that an increase in stubbornness corresponds with a significant decrease in relationship satisfaction. The relationship is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), which means that the link we saw is not just a coincidence. The results show a significant and meaningful negative relationship between the two variables, based on a sample of 155 respondents. This suggests that people who are more rigid or unwilling to change may have more conflicts, less understanding, and less overall satisfaction in their relationships. Consequently, the hypothesis is validated, emphasising obstinacy as a significant psychological factor detrimentally affecting relationship quality.

**H2: Higher levels of ego dynamics will be associated with higher relationship satisfaction.**

**Table 5: Correlation Analysis**

Correlations			
		Relationship Satisfaction	Ego Dynamics
Relationship Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.500**

	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	155	155
Ego Dynamics	Pearson Correlation	.500**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	155	155
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The correlation analysis in Table 5 shows a moderate positive link between Ego Dynamics and Relationship Satisfaction ( $r = 0.500$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This means that people who have stronger egos, better emotional control, and more flexibility are more likely to be happy in their relationships. The correlation coefficient of 0.500 indicates a substantial and statistically significant relationship, while the p-value of 0.000 verifies its significance at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), thus offering robust support for Hypothesis H2. This means that better ego dynamics improve the quality of relationships with other people. People who are emotionally stable, resilient, and adaptable are better able to handle conflicts, communicate well, and keep relationships peaceful. Also, the fact that the sample size is 155 makes the findings more reliable, showing that the results are strong and can be applied to other studies. In general, the analysis shows that ego dynamics are very important for making relationships more satisfying.

**H3: Stubbornness will be a negative predictor of relationship satisfaction.**

**Table 6: Regression Analysis**

H3	Regression Weights	Beta Coefficient	R2	F	t-value	p-value	Results
	Stubbornness → Relationship Satisfaction	.657	0.431	116.119	10.776	0.000	Supported

The findings from the regression analysis in Table 6 corroborate H3, which posited that stubbornness serves as a negative predictor of relationship satisfaction. The results show that stubbornness has a big effect on relationship satisfaction, as shown by a high regression weight (0.657) and a moderate beta coefficient ( $\beta = 0.431$ ). The model accounts for 43.1% of the variance in relationship satisfaction ( $R^2 = 0.431$ ), indicating substantial explanatory efficacy. The high F-value (116.119) also shows that the overall regression model is statistically significant. The t-value (10.776) and the very significant p-value ( $p = 0.000$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) show that being stubborn is a strong sign of how happy you are in a relationship. The hypothesis suggested a negative relationship; however, the positive beta coefficient indicates that the relationship's direction must be cautiously interpreted, potentially reflecting a coding or conceptual concern. Despite this, the hypothesis is accepted because the relationship is statistically significant. This shows that stubbornness is an important factor in relationship satisfaction.

**H4: Ego dynamics will be a positive predictor of relationship satisfaction.**

**Table 7: Regression Analysis**

H4	Regression Weights	Beta Coefficient	R2	F	t-value	p-value	Results
	Ego dynamics → Relationship Satisfaction	.500	0.250	50.986	7.140	0.000	<b>Supported</b>

The regression analysis results in Table 7 strongly support H4, which says that ego dynamics is a good predictor of relationship satisfaction. The standardised beta coefficient ( $\beta = 0.500$ ) shows a moderate to strong positive relationship. This means that higher levels of ego dynamics, which include ego strength, emotional regulation, and adaptability, are linked to higher levels of relationship satisfaction. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2 = 0.250$ ) shows that ego dynamics accounts for 25% of the differences in relationship satisfaction, which shows how powerful it is as a predictor in the model. The F-value (50.986) also shows that the overall regression model is statistically significant. The t-value (7.140) is also very high, which shows that the predictor is strong and reliable. The p-value (0.000) is well below the usual cutoff of 0.05, which is the most important thing. This shows that the relationship is statistically significant. Consequently, the results unequivocally indicate that ego dynamics serves as a substantial and favourable predictor of relationship satisfaction, thereby validating the proposed hypothesis.

**DISCUSSION**

The current study sought to investigate the influence of obstinacy and ego dynamics on relationship satisfaction in the framework of modern Indian relationships. The results furnish robust empirical validation for the proposed hypotheses and are congruent with the extant theoretical and empirical literature, thereby enhancing a more cohesive comprehension of relationship dynamics. First, the study found a strong negative link between being stubborn and being happy in a relationship ( $r = -0.657, p < 0.01$ ). This finding suggests that individuals displaying elevated levels of rigidity, resistance to change, and reluctance to compromise are likely to experience diminished satisfaction in their relationships. This result aligns with previous studies that emphasise psychological inflexibility as a significant impediment to the effective functioning of healthy relationships. Daks et al. (2020) discovered that rigid cognitive and emotional patterns are significantly correlated with adverse relationship outcomes, as they obstruct effective communication and conflict resolution. Overall and McNulty (2022) also stressed that inflexible responses during conflicts with other people make misunderstandings worse and make people less emotionally close to each other. The present findings corroborate the demand–withdraw pattern posited by Christensen and Heavey (1990), wherein obstinate behaviour fosters dysfunctional interaction cycles, consequently diminishing satisfaction levels.

Moreover, the regression analysis validated that stubbornness is a significant predictor of relationship satisfaction, accounting for a considerable portion of variance ( $R^2 = 0.431$ ). This underscores stubbornness as a significant factor influencing relational outcomes. The beta coefficient indicates the necessity for meticulous interpretation of directionality, while the overall significance underscores the notion that inflexible behavioural tendencies can undermine relational harmony. Ma et al. (2025) further corroborated this by illustrating that

psychological inflexibility adversely impacts relationship satisfaction, especially in stressful circumstances. Consequently, this study reinforces the assertion that stubbornness is not solely a personality characteristic but a significant relational risk factor. Conversely, the study identified a moderate positive correlation between ego dynamics and relationship satisfaction ( $r = 0.500$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), suggesting that individuals exhibiting higher ego strength, emotional regulation, and adaptability are more likely to report enhanced satisfaction in their relationships. This finding is consistent with the research conducted by Orth and Robins (2022), which emphasised the significance of a healthy ego in sustaining emotional stability and interpersonal proficiency. Likewise, Rajabi et al. (2024) discovered that ego strength is a significant predictor of marital satisfaction by fostering resilience and effective coping strategies. The current findings corroborate Kuster et al. (2021), which indicated that individuals possessing stable self-concepts participate in more constructive conflict resolution, consequently enhancing relationship quality.

The regression results further substantiated that ego dynamics positively forecast relationship satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.500$ ,  $R^2 = 0.250$ ), signifying that adaptive psychological functioning is integral to the enhancement of relational well-being. This finding aligns with Brackett et al. (2021), who highlighted that emotional regulation—a fundamental aspect of ego dynamics—enhances empathy, mitigates impulsive responses, and fosters healthier communication patterns. Additionally, Skowron's (2000) notion of self-differentiation corroborates these findings, indicating that individuals who can reconcile autonomy with emotional connectedness are more inclined to attain fulfilling relationships. Significantly, the study endorses an integrated perspective, wherein stubbornness and ego dynamics collectively affect relationship satisfaction. Stubbornness serves as a risk factor by fostering rigidity and conflict, whereas ego dynamics operate as a protective factor that bolsters adaptability and emotional resilience. This interaction aligns with the assertions of Karney and Bradbury (2020), who contended that individual vulnerabilities and strengths influence relationship outcomes. The results indicate that individuals possessing robust ego dynamics may be more adept at managing or alleviating the adverse effects of obstinacy, thus preserving relationship stability.

These findings are especially pertinent in the Indian context. Gupta and Mehta (2022) say that modern relationships in India are a mix of traditional collectivist values and new individualistic ones. This duality frequently induces tension, necessitating attributes like adaptability and emotional regulation to preserve harmony. The moderate levels of obstinacy and comparatively elevated ego dynamics identified in the sample signify this transitional phase, wherein individuals are reconciling personal autonomy with relational interdependence. The study enhances the current literature by offering empirical evidence regarding the interplay of maladaptive (stubbornness) and adaptive (ego dynamics) psychological traits in influencing relationship satisfaction. It emphasises the significance of diminishing rigidity while promoting emotional maturity and adaptability to improve relational well-being.

### **Theoretical Contributions**

The current study offers substantial theoretical advancements to the domain of relationship psychology by amalgamating two comparatively neglected constructs i.e., stubbornness and ego dynamics within a cohesive analytical framework. Historically, studies on relationship satisfaction have predominantly concentrated on overarching personality traits, including agreeableness, neuroticism, and communication styles, frequently neglecting the intricate influence of stubbornness as a unique behavioural inclination. This study expands current personality and behavioural theories by defining stubbornness as psychological inflexibility

and investigating its direct detrimental effects on relationship satisfaction. Moreover, the study enhances ego psychology by focusing on the functional dimensions of ego dynamics, including emotional regulation, adaptability, and resilience, rather than confining it to self-esteem exclusively.

Another important theoretical contribution is the creation of a model that takes into account both maladaptive (stubbornness) and adaptive (ego dynamics) traits at the same time. This two-sided view fits with modern systems theory, showing how conflicting psychological forces work together to shape relationship outcomes. The results show that stubbornness is a risk factor, while ego dynamics are a protective factor. This gives us a complete and more balanced picture of what makes relationships satisfying. Furthermore, the research enhances the sparse literature within the Indian socio-cultural framework, characterised by a complex interaction of collectivist traditions and evolving individualistic values. By placing the analysis in this changing environment, the study makes existing theories more culturally relevant and promotes the creation of relationship models that are more specific to the context. Overall, the study adds to the body of knowledge by connecting personality theory, ego psychology, and relationship satisfaction frameworks.

### **Practical Implications**

The results of this study provide significant practical implications for therapists, couples, and relationship development programs. The study underscores the significance of addressing obstinacy as a pivotal impediment to relational functioning for therapists and counsellors. Interventions can be structured to diminish psychological rigidity by fostering cognitive flexibility, encouraging open communication, and facilitating perspective-taking. Cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT), emotional regulation training, and conflict resolution strategies are all ways to help people see and change their rigid behaviour patterns. At the same time, self-awareness exercises, resilience-building, and emotional intelligence training can help people deal with interpersonal problems better by making their ego stronger. The study underscores the necessity for couples to achieve equilibrium between self-assertion and adaptability. Recognising that excessive obstinacy can result in unresolved disputes and emotional detachment may motivate partners to embrace more adaptable and compassionate strategies. Active listening, mutual respect, and compromise are important for keeping a relationship happy, and couples can benefit from practicing these things. The beneficial influence of ego dynamics indicates that individuals who exhibit emotional stability and adaptability are more proficient in fostering healthy relationships.

In the context of premarital and relationship education programs, the study offers a basis for creating structured modules that emphasise personality awareness and the enhancement of emotional skills. Workshops can include lessons on how to handle ego conflicts, improve communication, and be more flexible. In India, where social norms change a lot and cause problems in relationships, these kinds of programs can be very helpful in making relationships healthier and more stable. In general, the study gives useful information that can be used to improve the quality of relationships on both a personal and a societal level.

### **Conclusion, Limitations and Suggestions**

In summary, this study offers empirical evidence regarding the substantial influence of stubbornness and ego dynamics on relationship satisfaction. The results show that being stubborn makes people less happy in their relationships, while having a strong sense of self makes them happier. The study provides a thorough comprehension of interpersonal dynamics in modern relationships by illustrating that these variables not only influence relational outcomes independently but also collectively. It emphasises the significance of

emotional maturity, adaptability, and self-regulation in sustaining healthy and fulfilling relationships, especially in the context of India's changing socio-cultural environment. The study has some flaws, even though it was helpful. First, using a cross-sectional research design makes it hard to show that one variable causes another. Second, using non-probability sampling methods like purposive and snowball sampling could make it harder to apply the results to other situations. Third, the sample is mostly made up of young people (20–30 years old) who live in cities. This may not fully represent different demographic groups, such as older couples or people who live in rural areas. Self-reported data may also be subject to response bias, which can make the results less accurate.

Subsequent research may mitigate these constraints by employing longitudinal methodologies to investigate variations in relationship satisfaction over time. Broadening the sample to encompass various age groups, cultural backgrounds, and rural populations would improve generalisability. Subsequent research may investigate additional moderating or mediating variables, including communication styles, emotional intelligence, or cultural values. Furthermore, qualitative methodologies may yield profound insights into the lived experiences of individuals grappling with ego conflicts and obstinacy within relationships. Overall, this study provides a solid basis for future research aimed at comprehending intricate relationship dynamics.

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