Methodology

   This chapter presents the objectives necessary for comprehending emotional dependency in romantic relationship within a particular sociocultural context. The study's key terms have been detailed and clear operational definitions have been provided. The objectives of the study and the detailed explanation of the assessment measures used to achieve the objectives have been stated. The chapter summarizes the process of selecting the sample, details of the data collection process and the statistical techniques employed for the analysis. The chapter is organized under the following sections:

1. Key terms

2. Theoretical Framework

3. Conceptual Framework

4. Research objectives

  a. Broad objectives

  b. Specific objective

5. Research design

  a. Phase 1 and phase 2 of the study

  b. Locale of the study

  c. Sample and sampling techniques

  d. Assessment measures

  e. Pilot study and field testing the tools

  f. Procedure for data collection

6. Plan of analysis

The study explores the understanding of the concept of emotional dependency in the Indian cultural context, in addition to investigating the influence of factors such as gender, gender role beliefs, different geographical locations and the implicative cultural influences on the experiences and meaning of emotional dependency.

Key Terms

The following gives the definitions of the key terms used in the study.

Emotional Dependency

Emotional dependency is characterized by separation anxiety, need for constant expressions of affection and attention, modification of plans, fear of loneliness and exhibition of borderline personality behavior (Lemos & Londoño, 2006).

Relationship Satisfaction

Relationship satisfaction is defined as the extent to which an individual meets his/her partner's needs and expectations and how their relationship is compared to that of others', love, regrets and problems of the relationship.

Relationship Conflict

A conflict in a relationship is measured in terms of whether it occurs or not, frequency and degree of arguments.

Well-Being

Well-being can be defined as a multidimensional construct encompassing but not restricted to presence of positive emotions, engagement, satisfying social relationships, sense of purpose and accomplishments in life.

Theoretical Framework

The Cognitive/Interactionist model of Interpersonal Dependency

The basic primary principle behind Cognitive/Interactionist (C/I) model is that dependency driven motivations, behaviors, and emotional responses are the product of activated schemas perceiving self as helpless, weak and ineffectual. The model maintains that activation of helpless self-schemas results in range of behaviors aimed at strengthening relationships. The way these behaviors are manifested is regulated by contextual cues that sways dependent individual's beliefs regarding which strategy will strengthen social ties the most. These three etiologically defined factors are believed to contribute to the construction of helpless self-schema early in life:

1. Overprotective, authoritarian parenting

2. Gender-role socialization

3. Cultural attitudes regarding achievement and relatedness (belongingness)

The C/I model of Interpersonal Dependency believes dependency to be comprised of 4 components:

1. Cognitive: the perception of an individual about self as being powerless and in effectual.

2. Motivation: Wishes to have relationship with protectors and caregivers.

3. Affective: It is the fear of abandonment and negative evaluation by others.

4. Behavioral: Employing such self-presentation strategies that facilitates relationship and hence strengthen ties with others.
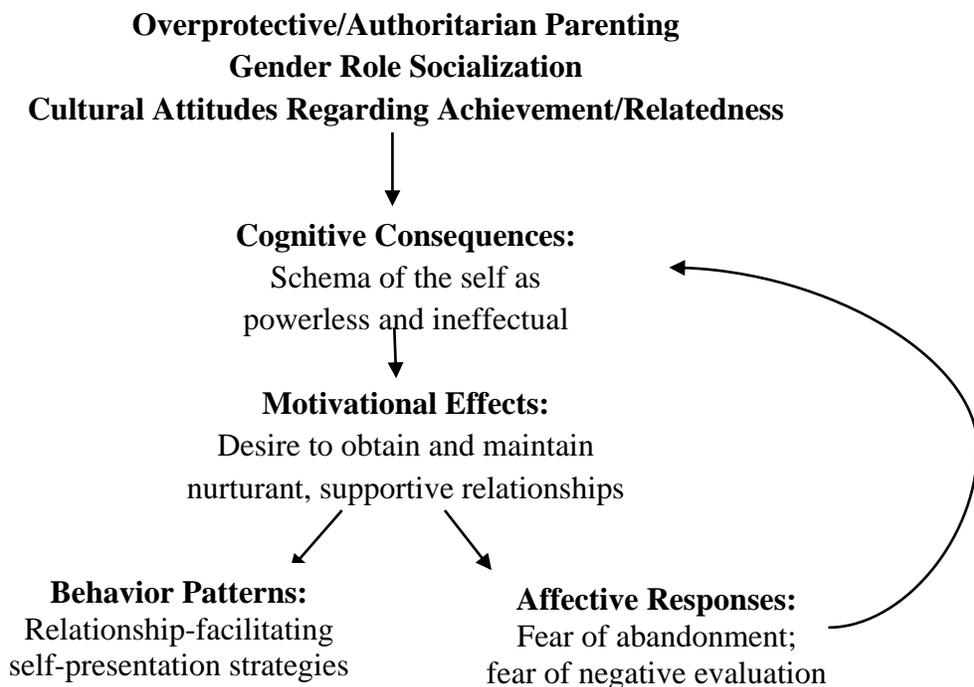
Helpless self-concept is the key of the dependent personality orientation and the related dependency related psychological mechanisms. A person with self-perception of

being powerless and ineffectual is motivated to have relationship with potential protectors and nurturers. The cognitive component of C/I model paves the way for the motivational component. Such dependency-related motivation leads to dependency related behaviors wherein person employs relationship-facilitating self-presentation strategies and to different affective responses which reflects the self-belief of the person (Bornstein, Ng, Gallagher, Kloss, & Regier, 2005).

The C/I model conceptualizes dependency related behavior and responses as being proactive, goal-driven and motivated by beliefs and expectations of self, other and interaction of self and other. It also states that the behavior of a dependent person may vary in different circumstances but the underlying core beliefs (self-perception as powerless) and motives (desire for relationship with protectors and caregivers) remains constant (Bornstein, 2011).

Figure 1

Theoretical Framework: A cognitive/interactionist model of interpersonal dependency (from Bornstein, 2011, p. 126)

Overprotective/Authoritarian Parenting
Gender Role Socialization
Cultural Attitudes Regarding Achievement/Relatedness

Cognitive Consequences:
Schema of the self as
powerless and ineffectual

Motivational Effects:
Desire to obtain and maintain
nurturant, supportive relationships

Behavior Patterns:
Relationship-facilitating
self-presentation strategies

Affective Responses:
Fear of abandonment;
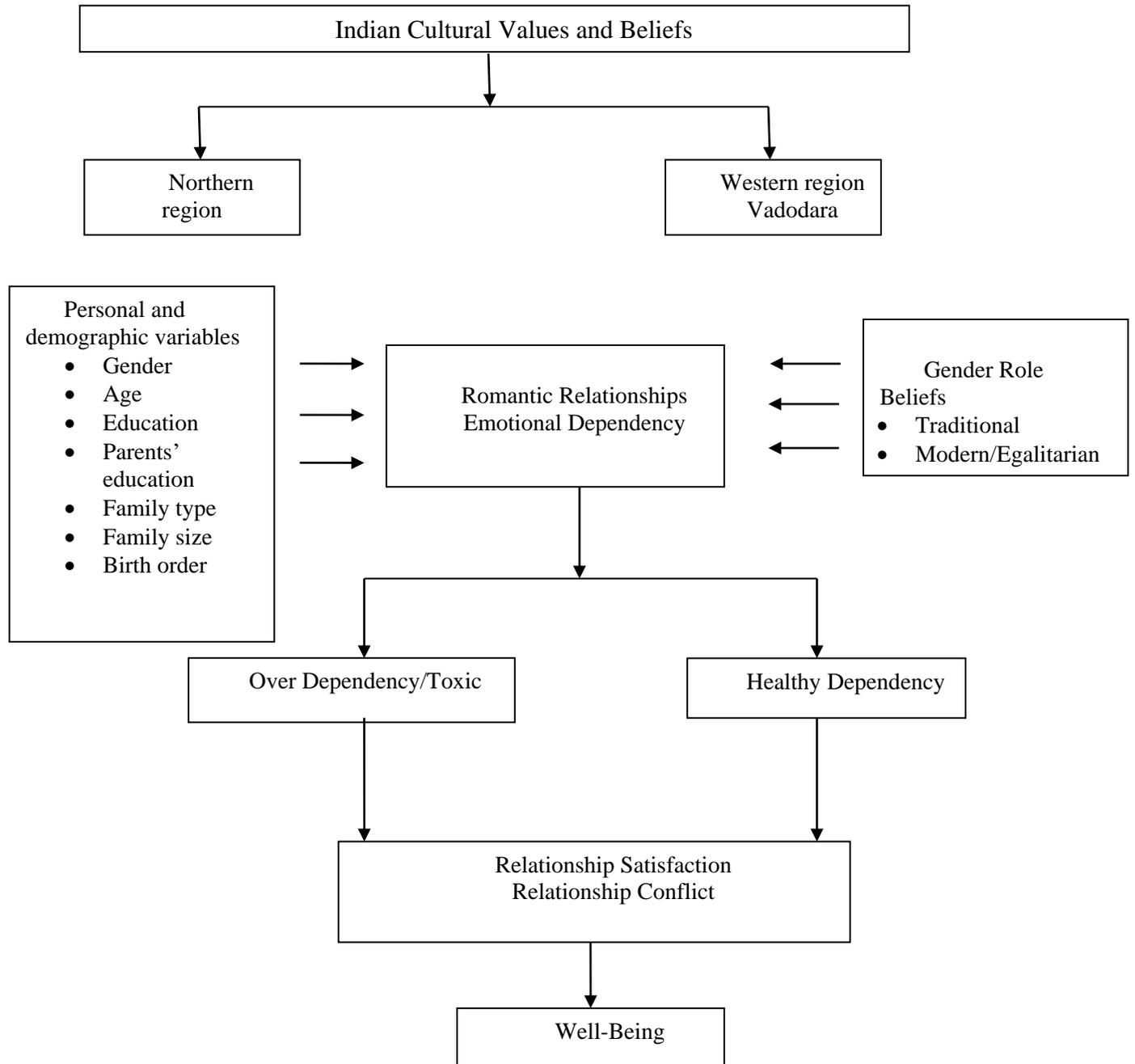fear of negative evaluation

Bornstein et al. (2004) have identified and distinguished between three dimension of dependency and detachment i.e., destructive overdependence (DO), healthy dependence (HD) and dysfunctional detachment (DD). Destructive overdependence is exhibited through maladaptive and inflexible dependency. The self is perceived as being weak so the individual desires to form and maintain close ties with authority figures. The fear of abandonment and negative validation by others leads to a clingy behavior. Appropriate help and support seeking is a characteristic of healthy dependence. Thus, dependency is adaptive and flexible. The self is perceived as competent by the individual and there is a healthy need to maintain close ties. A healthy dependent person functions autonomously with a considerable amount of confidence in self and well being is sought for in intimate situations. Dysfunctional detachment is manifested by a perception of others as hurtful and extremely autonomous self-presentation. An individual with dysfunctional detachment keeps distance from others due to the fear of possible hurt and overwhelming closeness.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for the study is represented in Figure 2

Figure 2

Conceptual Framework

```
                    ┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
                    │    Indian Cultural Values and Beliefs     │
                    └─────────────────────────────────────────┘
                                      │
                    ┌─────────────────┴─────────────────┐
                    ▼                                     ▼
        ┌─────────────────────┐              ┌─────────────────────┐
        │   Northern region   │              │   Western region    │
        │                     │              │      Vadodara       │
        └─────────────────────┘              └─────────────────────┘
```

```
┌──────────────────────────┐                                      ┌──────────────────────────┐
│   Personal and           │                                      │   Gender Role            │
│ demographic variables    │      ┌───────────────────────┐       │   Beliefs                │
│   • Gender               │ ───▶ │                       │ ◀───  │   • Traditional          │
│   • Age                  │ ───▶ │ Romantic Relationships│ ◀───  │   • Modern/Egalitarian   │
│   • Education            │      │ Emotional Dependency  │ ◀───  │                          │
│   • Parents'             │ ───▶ │                       │ ◀───  │                          │
│     education            │      └───────────────────────┘       └──────────────────────────┘
│   • Family type          │                  │
│   • Family size          │                  │
│   • Birth order          │                  │
└──────────────────────────┘                  │
                              ┌────────────────┴────────────────┐
                              ▼                                  ▼
                ┌───────────────────────┐         ┌───────────────────────┐
                │ Over Dependency/Toxic │         │   Healthy Dependency  │
                └───────────────────────┘         └───────────────────────┘
                              │                                  │
                              ▼                                  ▼
                ┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
                │          Relationship Satisfaction               │
                │          Relationship Conflict                   │
                └─────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                                      │
                                      ▼
                            ┌───────────────────┐
                            │    Well-Being     │
                            └───────────────────┘
```

The research is conceptualized to be studied in Northern India, a relative traditional region and Western India which is considered to be a relatively modern region of the country. Gender Role Beliefs and Personal and Demographic variables such as gender, age, education, parent's education and family type are the independent variables of the study. Well-being is the dependent variable and the other intervening variables are emotional dependency, relation conflict and relationship satisfaction. Romantic relationship among emerging adults and emotional dependency are the two central concepts of the research. As derived from the theoretical framework, the effect of gender role beliefs on emotional dependency and the consequent influence of emotional dependency on romantic relationship will be studied. The review of literature predicts two types of emotional dependency i.e., healthy dependency and toxic/over dependency. Either may have an influence on relationship conflict and relationship satisfaction. Literature review have established a very strong association between relationship conflicts, relationship satisfaction and well-being of an individual. Hence, the impact of emotional dependency on satisfaction and conflict and further combinative influence of well-being will be investigated.

Research Objectives

The study was designed to address the following research objectives:

Broad Research Objectives

To understand the influence of emotional dependency on romantic relationships of emerging adults belonging to urban upper middle class of Gujarat and Uttarakhand.

Specific Research Objectives

1. To understand the influence of select personal and demographic variables (gender, age, education, parent's education, family type) on emotional dependency in individuals currently in romantic relationships.

2. To understand the influence of gender role beliefs on emotional dependency in romantic relationships.

3. To understand the influence of emotional dependency on relationship conflict and relationship satisfaction.

4. To understand the influence of relationship conflict and relationship satisfaction on well-being.

5. To explore the emerging adults' understanding about concepts of emotional dependency, love, relationship conflict, and relationship satisfaction.

6. To understand the regional differences (Gujarat and Uttarakhand) in all of the above.

Research Design

A mixed-methods explanatory sequential design was adopted including both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Table 1 gives a summary of the research design used in the study. Using both kinds of data, allows for a more robust analysis while drawing on the

strength of both quantitative and qualitative approaches (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Clark,

2011).

Table 1

Mixed Methods Explanatory Sequential Research Design

Phase	Procedure	Outcome
Quantitative Data Collection	Collection of data through survey (in-person and Google forms)	1. Demographic details 2. Numeric data 3. Participant's profile
Quantitative Data Analysis	Analysis using JASP and Excel 1. Frequencies 2. Descriptive Statistics 3. Independent t-test 4. Correlation 5. Regression 6. Mediation Analysis	1. Descriptive Data 2. Influence of socio-demographic factors on different variables 3. Relationship between different variables
Qualitative data collection	1. Selection of Participants for interviews based on score of quantitative result 2. Preparation of Open ended Interview Schedule 3. Conducting interviews 4. Notes taking 5. Transcription and translations	1. 40 interview participants 2. Transcribed data for further analysis
Qualitative Data Analysis	1. Open coding 2. Thematic analysis 3. Developing themes	Codes and themes
Integration of quantitative and qualitative results	Combining and explaining the findings of quantitative phase	1. Theoretical models based on the combined results 2. Discussion 3. Practical Implications 4. Future Directions

Mixed-methods sequential explanatory design involves collection and analysis of

quantitative data followed by qualitative data in two consecutive phases (Creswell et al.,

2003). In this design, the researcher first collects and analyzes the quantitative data of the

study. The qualitative data is collected and analyzed next in the sequence, which helps

elaborate on the quantitative results of the study. The qualitative data builds on the first phase

and the two approaches are integrated in the later stages of the study to present a

comprehensive picture of the situation. The rationale behind using this approach is that the quantitative data gives a broad understating of the research problem. Whereas, the qualitative data and its analysis further elaborates and provide insights on the results obtained in the quantitative study by delving into participants' perspectives in greater detail (Creswell et al., 2003)

Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Study

The study was divided into two phases. The quantitative phase of the study involved establishing a relationship between emotional dependency in romantic relationships and gender role beliefs, relationship conflict, relationship satisfaction and well-being. The qualitative phase involved eliciting participants' views and feelings toward their current romantic relationship, satisfactions and dissatisfactions therein, and the experience of emotional dependency.

Locale of the Study

The present study was conducted within the municipal limits of two locales, urban Gujarat and urban Uttarakhand.

Gujarat, the western Indian state is ranked among the first five states in India in per capita income and level of industrial development (Pathak-Shelat & DeShano, 2014). The state is widely believed to be a prosperous, advanced and a peaceful state, and notably urbanized. Gujaratis have earned the reputation of being adept entrepreneurs. Additionally, Gujarat and its people are often regarded as being more westernized and modernized compared to other Indians and the rest of India (Joshi, 2000).

As cited in Patel (2022), from a business point of view, Gujarat has abundant manufacturing facilities and is recognized as an industrially advanced area. The geographical

location of a 1600 kilometers long coastline provides ample business and employment avenues at various sea ports. Moreover, the agricultural economy of Gujarat proved innumerable opportunities for trade and business. It is recognized as an economically and infrastructurally developed state (Khanna et al., 2022). It is the fastest-growing state in Indian economy and is known for the highest level of women's empowerment (Bhatt & Shastri, 2018). Few major cities of Gujarat namely, Ahmedabad, Vadodara and Surat have a considerable influence on urbanization and industrial development.

Vadodara is a modern urban Indian city with a population of approximately 1.6 million (GOI, 2011). Vadodara is generally considered as progressive and "modern" (Netting, 2010). With emphasis on university education of boys and girls, Vadodara is referred as "*sanskarinagari*" (cultured city) of Gujarat. Such accessibility provides "mobility" to the youth, especially girls, providing them an opportunity to develop intimate relationships, maintain secrecy and satisfy the intrinsic needs of contact (Gala & Unhelkar, 2008). Surat, located in the western region in the state of Gujarat, is the eighth largest city in India with a population of about 5 million (Bowker et al., 2012). Ahmedabad is situated in one of the most urbanized and industrialized regions of Gujarat and is ranked as the seventh largest metropolis in India (Bhatt, (n.d.)). It secures a reputation of being one of the most important cities in Gujarat. The city has earned the nickname "Manchester of the East" owing to its booming textile industry (Ray, 2008). The singularity of the state of Gujarat comes from the blend of its vibrant wide culture and the inherent spirit of entrepreneurship, the strategic geographic location and the interest of government on the women centered entrepreneurship initiatives (Junare & Singh, 2016). Thus, the participants from Gujarat came

from a middle-class social context which is transitional, prosperous and at the dynamic cross-section of continuity and change

The second locale of the study was urban Uttarakhand. Uttarakhand, formerly known as Uttaranchal is a state in the northern part of India which was established on November 9, 2000. As per the last census 2011, the state had the population of 10.08 million. Dehradun is the capital of the Uttarakhand and it is the largest city of the state. Uttarakhand has 13 districts and the state is divided into two regions- Garhwal and Kumaon. The mostly common spoken languages are Garhwali, Kumaoni and Hindi. Uttarakhand has earned the title of "Land of the Gods" owing to numerous Hindu shrines and pilgrimage places. Uttarakhand is known to be a traditional state where culture and traditions are more strongly enforced. Rural Uttarakhand is marked by forms of patriarchal dominance and oppression (Moller, 2003; Rangan & Jewitt, 2001). Goli et al. (2013) in an investigation estimated the mate selection choice for women by states. Gujarat had the greater proportion (12 percent) of women taking decisions alone on selection of their spouses. However, parents alone taking the decision for finding a suitable bridegroom for their daughter are highest (92 percent) in Uttarakhand. The study also mentioned the majority of the north Indian states, parents are taking decision alone on the selection of a groom for their daughter and it is substantially greater as compared to the other parts of India. In a study which estimated marriage rates in India, Mukherjee et al. (2014) using District Level Household and Facility Surveys (DLHS) data of the years 2004-2008, observed that the age specific marriage rates (ASMR) revealed that majority of the females got married between 15 to 29 years, with 20-24 years of age having the major share. Similarly, larger share of boys married after 20 years of age with majority getting married between 25 to 34 years. In Gujarat and Uttarakhand, the highest

ASMR for males is in the age range of 20 to 34 years and female is 20 to 29 years respectively. Higher marriage rates of male was observed in the age range of 25 to 29 years in Gujarat and 30 to 34 years in Uttarakhand respectively. Similarly, majority of females were in the age range of 20 to 24 years in Gujarat and Uttarakhand.

Rural Uttarakhand has a considerable influence on the urban parts of Uttarakhand. Most of the urban population of the state is comprised of migrated individuals from the villages. At the same time decisions of the elderly who are largely committed to traditional beliefs are given due importance. As per census 2011 (provisional data) the literacy rate of Uttarakhand stands at 79.60 percent which is higher than the national average of 74 percent and Gujarat (79.31 percent). Regardless of the emphasis on girl's education, the drop-out rate is quite high in Uttarakhand. It is 17% at the primary school stage and 35% at the secondary level. This high rate is ascribed to the burden of domestic chores and work on the land that the girls are expected to do (Pandey, 2013). The author also reported that age of marriage is one of the primary reasons accountable for the declining health of women in Uttarakhand. Uttarakhand had higher maternal mortality ratio (285) as compared to that of Gujarat (112) in the year 2011-2013 (World Bank, 2017).

The growth in urban areas of Uttarakhand is in part contributed by migration from hill districts (Mamgain & Reddy, 2015). Dehradun and Haldwani have experienced a heavy influx of migrated population from villages (Shekhawat, 2019). As per the commission's report, youths constitute the highest number of those who migrated from Uttarakhand - 42 percent are in the age group of 26 to 35, 29 percent are over 35 years old and 28 percent below 25 years. There has been a shift in the migration pattern; permanent family migration has become a norm. People prefer to settle in Nainital and Haldwani instead of returning to

their villages in the hills. Although they try and maintain links with their mountain villages, they have had to adapt themselves to the new realities and have also developed new cultures and identities (Pathak et al., 2017).

Presence of various educational institutions in Roorkee and Dehradoon and Kumaon University in Haldwani has opened up the opportunity to easy accessible and economical education for youth in Uttarakhand. Presence of such educational institution provides individuals with opportunity for interaction with opposite sex and thus initiates romantic relationships. These institutions also aggravate youth's immigration to these cities.

Given these differences it was interesting to understand the differences in romantic relationships among emerging adults in Uttarakhand and Gujarat.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Sample

The total sample of the study was 385 emerging adults aged 18-29 years. Participant characteristics:

- Individuals belonging to urban educated families.

- Individuals enrolled in college or completed education.

- Individuals involved in a heterosexual romantic relationship (at least for a year)
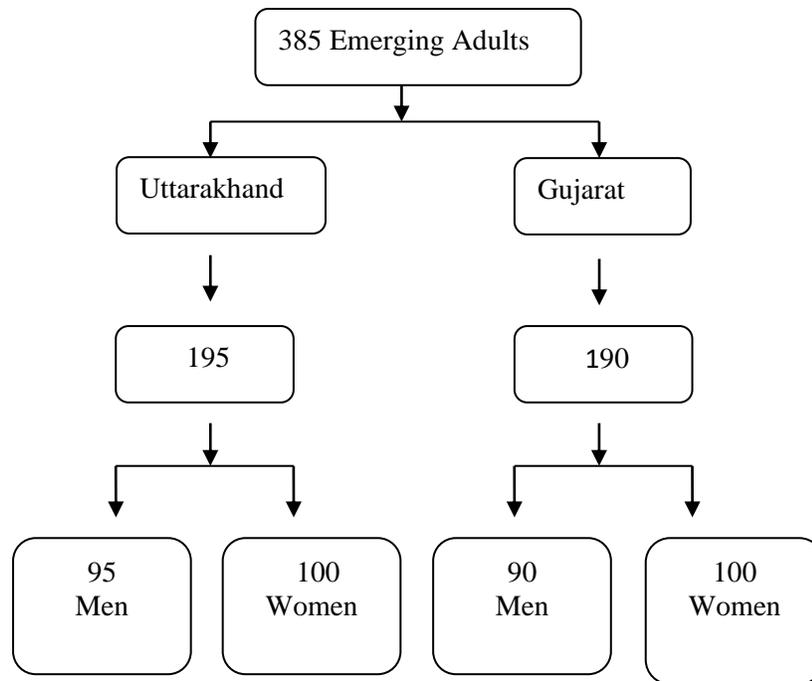
Sampling Technique

Purposive and snowball techniques were used to find the prospective participants.

Process of Identifying the Participants. Participants were contacted from different colleges of Gujarat and Uttarakhand. The researcher used different social media platforms, college notice boards, leaflets and posters mentioning the study description in brief and participation criteria to identify participants. The researcher also approached participants sitting in community gardens, cafes and university campuses. It was made sure that the prospective participants were briefed about the study and the nature of their participation. The participants were assured that their privacy and 'confidentiality' will not be breeched and they could leave the study at any point in time they wished to do so or deny to answer any question they did not feel comfortable.

Figure 3 and 4 give visual representations of the sample distribution for the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study.
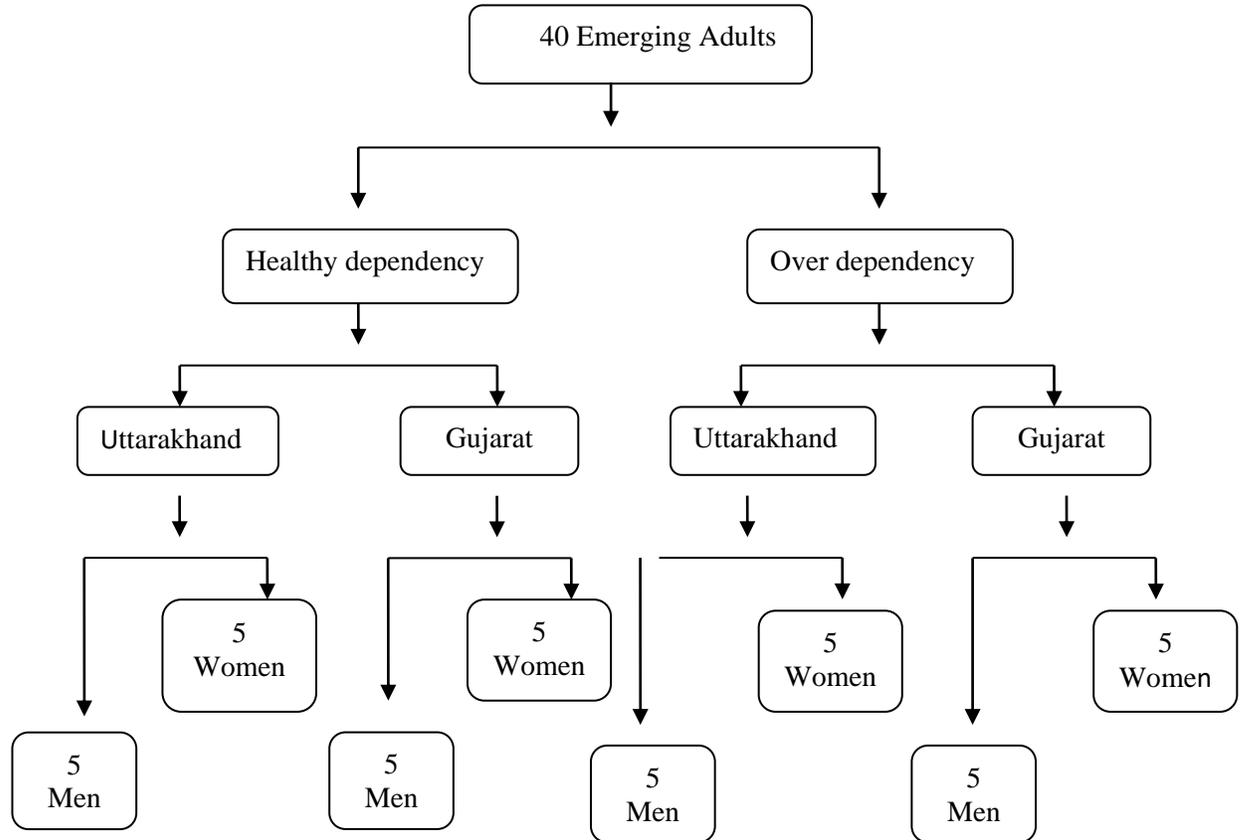
Figure 3

Sample distribution (Quantitative Phase)

```
                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │ 385 Emerging Adults │
                    └─────────────────────┘
                              │
              ┌───────────────┴───────────────┐
              ▼                                ▼
      ┌──────────────┐                 ┌──────────────┐
      │  Uttarakhand │                 │   Gujarat    │
      └──────────────┘                 └──────────────┘
              │                                │
              ▼                                ▼
         ┌─────────┐                      ┌─────────┐
         │   195   │                      │   190   │
         └─────────┘                      └─────────┘
              │                                │
        ┌─────┴─────┐                    ┌─────┴─────┐
        ▼           ▼                    ▼           ▼
   ┌────────┐  ┌─────────┐         ┌────────┐  ┌─────────┐
   │   95   │  │   100   │         │   90   │  │   100   │
   │  Men   │  │  Women  │         │  Men   │  │  Women  │
   └────────┘  └─────────┘         └────────┘  └─────────┘
```

From this sample, 40 men and women, equally distributed by gender, were selected, including those who manifested healthy and over emotional dependency, presented in Figure 2.

Figure 4

Sample distribution (Qualitative Phase)

Assessment Measures

Description of the assessment measures used for data collection is given in the following section. Table 2 provides information about the objectives and the corresponding assessment measure used for achieving the specified objective.

Table 2

Objectives, Variables and Assessment Measures

Objectives	Participants	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	Assessment measures
		Quantitative Phase		
To understand the influence of select personal and demographic variables on emotional dependency in individuals currently in romantic relationships.		Gender Age Education Parent's education Family Type State	Emotional Dependency	BIP
To understand the influence of gender role beliefs on emotional dependency in romantic relationships.	Emerging adults 18 - 29 years	Gender Role Beliefs	Emotional Dependency	GRAS EDQ
To understand the influence of emotional dependency on relationship conflict and relationship satisfaction.	men (n = 20) women (n = 20)	Emotional Dependency	Relationship Conflict Relationship Satisfaction	EDQ, TCS RAS
To understand the influence of relationship conflict and relationship satisfaction on well-being		Relationship Conflict Relationship Satisfaction	Well-being	TCS, RAS PERMA Profiler
To understand the regional differences (Gujarat and Uttarakhand) in all of the above				BAP,GRAS EDQ,RAS TCS PERMA Profiler
		Qualitative Phase		
To explore the emerging adults' understanding about concepts of emotional dependency, love, relationship conflict, and relationship satisfaction	Emerging adults 18 - 29 years men (n = 20) women (n = 20)	Understanding of terms such as "love", "relationship satisfaction", "relationship conflict", "dependency", "emotional dependency" Gender differences in all the above stated variables Factors influencing emotional dependency Relationship between well-being and emotional dependency		Open-Ended Interview Schedule

Note. BIP – Background Information Performa, EDQ – Emotional Dependency Questionnaire, GRAS – Gender Role Attitude Scale, RAS – Relationship Assessment Scale, TCS – The Conflict Scale

The measures used in the study are provided below.

Background Information Form

A background information form was prepared to get the general information/personal particulars of selected sample with regard to their name, age, family type, total family income, address, educational qualification, their age and sex etc (Appendix C).

Emotional Dependency Questionnaire

Emotional Dependency Questionnaire (EDQ) was designed and validated by Lemos and Londoño (2006). It comprises 23 items, has a high degree of reliability (Cronbach Alpha of 0.927) and a variance explanation of 64.7%. This questionnaire was created to evaluate ED measured by its six components. It is a 23-item scale with appropriate reliability ($\alpha =$ 0.93 for the total scale, α between 0.62 and 0.87 for the subscales) and validity levels in the university population. A subsequent confirmatory factorial analysis corroborated that the scales for separation anxiety, emotional expression from the partner, plan modification, fear of being alone, and attention seeking have an average extracted variance of above 53% and a composite reliability of above 0.75 (Appendix D)

The sub-domains of the tools are explained as follows:

Separation Anxiety. It describes the fear that comes at the idea of possible relationship dissolution which manifests itself through different emotional expressions. It is mainly characterized by excessive anxiety caused due to the persistent concern of possible loss as a result of separation from an important bonding figure. It is mostly seen as abandonment, separation and distancing. Separation anxiety gives rise to and reinforces such patterns of interpersonal dependency, wherein a person attaches themselves to the significant other, overestimating their significance and deeming them essential for the peace and

happiness. Such overestimation of the partner renders them as the only option to avoid anxiety in the eye of the dependent person. Temporary distancing in daily life can lead to feelings of distrust and thoughts associated with loss and loneliness (Beck et al., 2004; Castelló, 2005, as cited in Lemos & Londoño, 2020).

Affective Expression. This is the need to seek constant expressions of affection from their partner to reaffirm their feelings of love and calm insecurities. Emotionally dependent individuals may distrust the feelings of their significant other and have an insatiable need for unconditional love, leading them to demand constant display of affection as reassurance (Lynch et al., 2001 as cited in Lemos & Londoño, 2020).

Plan modifications. This involves modifying activities, plans and behaviors with the intention of satisfying the explicit or implicit desire to please their partner or to simply spend more time together. This point to a high degree of attentiveness to their partner's desire, needs and whim. For the emotionally dependent person, their partners are the center of their life, sacrificing anything else important in their life, including themselves, children or other family members. This need of exclusivity impedes the emotionally dependent individual from engaging in other activities, ascertaining their availability to their partner with the expectation of similar reciprocation from the partner (Castelló, 2005).

Fear of Loneliness. Fear of loneliness is a marked fear of being without a romantic partner, or the overwhelming feeling of not being loved. The dependent individual looks upon his partner to seek balance and feel secure in order to avoid the feeling of loneliness which is seen as something frightening (Castelló, 2005, as cited in Lemos & Londoño, 2006). The dependent individual is conscious of their need for their partner recognizing that they cannot envision their life without their significant other (Lemos & Londoño, 2020).

Borderline Expression. As cited in Lemos and Londoño (2020), breaking up of a relationship can be very catastrophic for emotionally dependent individual as it compels them to face loneliness and perceived lack of meaning in their life. Coping with such distress could often lead to adoption of clinging strategies such as being impulsive and engaging in self-harm inflicting tendencies (Bornstein et al, 2002; Castelló, 2005).

Search for Attention. Emotionally dependent individual actively seeks the attention of their partner as a means to ensure their permanence in the romantic relationship and to position themselves as the focal point in their partner's life. Such behavior is driven by a psychological need within the dependent individual. This need of attention may be manifested in the form of histrionic behavior (Morse et al., 2002), it could also e exhibited as passivity and submissiveness, in case the partner desires it (Bornstein, 1998). There could also be a desire for the partner's exclusive attention, rendering the dependent individual to employ all the means deemed necessary to achieve the same (Castelló, 2005, as cited in Lemos & Londoño, 2020)

The questionnaire was translated into English, Hindi and Gujarati.

Gender Role Attitude Scale (GRAS)

The scale was developed by Zeyneloğlu and Terzioğlu (2011) to determine one's attitude towards gender roles. The Gender Roles Attitude Scale (GRAS) contains 38 items and five dimensions (egalitarian gender roles, female gender roles, marriage gender roles, traditional gender roles and male gender roles).The scale's reliability was measured with Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient. The scale's Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient for 38 items was found to be 0.92. A Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of 0.80 was found for the 'female gender roles' subscale in the analyses of the subscales for internal consistency.

The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of 0.78 was found for the 'marriage gender roles' and 'traditional gender roles' subscales. Moreover, Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient for the 'male gender roles' subscale was found to be 0.72. These results showed that the internal consistency of the scale's items with each other is high indicating that the scale has a high reliability. The total score mean from all items on the scale was 152.48 (ranging from 38-190) and the standard deviation was 20.89. The instrument is a 5-point Likert type scale. The egalitarian attitude sentences regarding gender roles were scored as 5 points for 'completely agree,' 4 points for 'agree,' 3 points for 'undecided,' 2 points for 'disagree,' and 1 point for 'absolutely disagree.' The traditional attitude sentences regarding gender roles were scored opposite to the positive sentences: 1 point for 'completely agree,' 2 points for 'agree,' 3 points for 'undecided,' 4 points for 'disagree', and 5 points for 'absolutely disagree.' The highest possible score from the scale was 190 and the lowest was 38 according to this scoring scale. The higher scores indicated more egalitarian attitude towards gender roles and the lower scores shows more traditional attitude towards gender roles (Appendix E).

Conflict Scale

The tool was developed by Gordon and Chen (2016) to understand the influence of conflicts in relationship-on-relationship satisfaction. The measure constitutes 6 items to be rated on a 7-point scale. The items exhibit strong reliability i.e., $\alpha = 0.83$ (Appendix F)

The Relationship Assessment Scale

The Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS) developed by Hendrick (1988) is a brief measure of global relationship satisfaction. It consists of seven items, each rated on a five-point Likert scale. It is suitable for use with any individuals who are in an intimate relationship, such as married couples, cohabiting couples, engaged couples, or dating

couples. The brevity of the scale increases its utility for online administration. It assesses the

extent to which an individual meets his/her partner's needs and expectation, how is their

relationship compared to that of others', love, regrets and problems of the relationship. It is a

unifactorial measure of assessment with mean inter-item correlation of 0.49 and an alpha of

0.86. The RAS reported test-retest was 0.85 (65 university graduates at a south western

university in the USA). The RAS showed high correlations with Dyadic Adjustment Scale

(0.80 in one study and 0.88 in the other) and Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (0.64 for men

and 0.74 for women) (Appendix G)

PERMA Profiler

PERMA-Profiler is a brief measure of PERMA developed by Butler and Kern (2016).

It is a 23-item measure consisting of 15 items across 5 domains, that is, Positive emotion,

Engagement, Relationship, Meaning and Accomplishment. The additional 8 items are

included in one item assessing overall well-being, three negative emotions items assessing

sadness, anger and anxiety; one item assessing loneliness; and three items assessing self-

perceived physical health. Domain scores are created by taking the average of the three items

(for each PERMA domain, negative emotion, and health; range = 0 to 10). Overall well-

being is the average of the main 15 PERMA items and the overall happiness item. Loneliness

is a single item. This is 11-point Likert scale, scores ranging from 0 to 10. The measure

demonstrates acceptable reliability, cross-time stability, and evidence for convergent and

divergent validity (Appendix H) The following are the subscales of the measure:

Positive and Negative Emotions. Emotions are an important part well-being which

can range from very negative to very positive, and range from high arousal (e.g., excitement,

explosive) to low arousal (e.g., calm, relaxed, sad). For Positive emotion, the PERMA-

Profiler measures general tendencies toward feeling contentment and joy. For Negative emotion, the Profiler measures tendencies toward feeling, sad, anxious, and anger.

Engagement. Engagement is the state of being fully absorbed, interested and actively involved in a situation of the world around you. When engagement reached very high levels, it achieves a sate called "flow", wherein an individual is so deeply engrossed in an activity that they lose all sense of time.

Relationships. Relationship encompasses the experience of feeling loves, appreciated and supported by others. Having positive relationships play a fundamental role in realizing a sense of well-being and feeling good in life.

Meaning. Meaning can be describes a having a sense of purpose in with a clear direction where one's life is going, and the belief that life holds value and it worth living. It also comprises building a connection with something greater than oneself, such a religious faith, involvement in a charity or a personally significant goal. Ultimately, meaning inculcates life of profound significance and purpose.

Accomplishment. Accomplishment can take on an objective stance, marked by receiving honors and awards, however, the subjective feeling of mastery and achievement is equally important. The scale measures such subjective feelings of accomplishments and the ability to handle daily responsibilities effectively. It involves diligently pursuing and attaining goals, and a sense of confidence in completing daily tasks and responsibilities.

Health. Health is not directly integrated in the PERMA model, but physical health and vitality is another essential element of well-being. The Profiles evaluated the subjective sense of health, centering on feeling good and healthy on a daily basis.

In-Depth Interview

An open-ended interview guideline was developed to conduct in-depth interviews to elicit participants' interpretations regarding different elements of their relationship such as emotional dependency, conflict and satisfaction (Appendix I)

All the tools were translated in Hindi and Gujarati. The Emotional Dependency Questionnaire (CDE) was translated and back translated from Spanish to English, Gujarati and Hindi by taking help from the experts.

Preliminary Contextual Understanding

Focus group discussions were conducted with the emerging adults from Gujarat and Uttarakhand to get a preliminary contextual understanding of their perceptions regarding romantic relationships. Specifically, focus group discussions (FGDs) were held with the objective to understand the views of emerging adults of Gujarat and Uttarakhand regarding romantic relationship and emotional dependency. Three FGDs (one in Uttarakhand and two in Gujarat) were held to meet with emerging adults in small mixed groups of 4-5 individuals per group. The discussion was held to gain an understanding of the perceptions of participants regarding ideal romantic relationships and an ideal partner, their parents' views of it, over dependency in relationship, conflicts, coping mechanism etc.

Highlights of the Findings

A woman's idea of an ideal relationship involved feeling loved and secure with an independent, loyal and honest partner. For men, an ideal relationship is a secure relationship with trust, realistic expectations, respect and positive criticism. Participants gave very mixed views regarding parental acceptance of relationship. One participant in Uttarakhand revealed that her parents are very orthodox and she has never felt love. Parents in both the states expected their daughter's partner to be from the same caste, responsible, financially stable,

trustworthy and independent whereas expectations from the son were to choose an "adjusting" girl. Two participants revealed that they do not have discussions about relationships with their parents. With regard to toxic relationships, men enlisted manipulation, disrespect, trust issues, personal space invasion and insecurity as characteristics of a toxic relationship. Women recognized dominance, control, happiness dependent on partner's attention, imbalance, temper difference, obsession, stress, isolation from other interpersonal relationships possessive, overprotective and granter behavior as traits of a toxic relationship. Men perceived dependency as normal in a relationship, but their idea of dependency was of functional dependency. On being given a hypothetical situation to elicit how they would feel if their partner got dependent on them, the participants shared that they would feel a sense of burden, irritation, suffocation and exhaustion. The participants agreed that women got more dependent than men. Women identified communication gap, long distance, personality clashes, devaluing, mood swings, unresolved issues, societal pressure, and misunderstanding as the major reasons for disagreements. Men recognized loyalty, trust and personal space as the major reasons for relationship conflict. The discussions made it clear that the women thought more about intimate relationships than men. More probing was required on part of the researcher to gather responses from men.

Pilot Study and Field Testing of the Tools

The tools used in the study namely, Gender Role Attitude Scale, Emotional Dependency Questionnaire, Relationship Assessment Scale, The Conflict Scale and The PERMA Profiler were administered to 14 participants from Gujarat and Uttarakhand to check the applicability of the quantitative measures in the Indian cultural context. The quantitative

results reflected the trends as per the assumed hypotheses. There were a few modifications

made to sentence structure of the Gender Role Attitude Scale to better suit the Indian context.

Table 3

Modifications in the Tool After the Field Testing

Original	Modified
Equal chances should be **enabled** to men and women for professional development.	Equal chances should be **given** to men and women for professional development.
Families should allow girls **to flirt**.	Families should allow girls t**o talk to boys**.
Man should marry again if the woman is not able to **deliver** a child.	Man should marry again if the woman is not able to **give birth to** a child.
A woman should reject sexual **encounter in marriages** if she does not desire it.	A **married** woman should reject **sexual relationship** if she does not desire it.
Men should be preferred in **employment applications because of women's fertility**.	Men should be preferred in **job recruitment as the women might get pregnant and take leave**.

Interview Schedule Content Validity

After the completion of the quantitative phase of the study the participants were

purposefully selected and an interview schedule was developed based on the analysis of

quantitative data. The semi-structured interviews included questions related to the

understanding of the different concepts such as "love", "relationship satisfaction",

"relationship conflict", "emotional dependency"; the influence of gender, cultural and

societal expectations on the romantic experiences and instances of emotional dependency.

The schedule also included four vignettes illustrating the daily experiences of heterosexual

unmarried couple in the areas such as separation anxiety, fear of loneliness, plans

modification, search for attention and borderline expression. These thematic areas were

adapted from the Emotional Dependency Questionnaire used in the study. These vignettes

were followed by questions that the respondents were expected to answer based on their

understanding of the situation. The open-ended interview schedule was given to experts of Human Development and Family Studies, Psychology, Sociology and Anthropology for content validity. The experts were asked to evaluate the tool based on clarity and preciseness of the language and wordings, relevance of the questions as per the objectives, number of questions asked and categorization of the questions into different groups. The following was the feedback received from experts:

- The interview schedule was found to be exhaustive

- Organization of questions moving from general towards specific.

- More explicit probes on questions concerning gender related beliefs while talking more about personal experiences and social influences.

- Restructuring of a few questions for a better comprehension and avoiding possibility of a leading question.

- Addition of a few hypothetical scenarios related to real life situations revolving around the sub-domains of the emotional dependency questionnaire used in the quantitative phase of the study.

The suggested changes were made in the interview schedule and it was further given to two emerging adults from Gujarat and Uttarakhand each to check for ensure comprehensibility. The respondents were able to understand the questions easily; however they expressed difficulty in answering questions about abstract concepts, particularly the questions related to their understanding of "love", and "relationship satisfaction".

Procedure for Data Collection

The participants were recruited from different colleges and social settings using social media, notices, flyers, and word of mouth. The study was conducted in two phases. The first

phase of the study involved data collection though the medium of Google forms. There were

a few validation questions like "please choose option 3 as the answer" to check the attention

of the participants and hence, easy screening of the responses. The second phase of the study,

that is, in-depth interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview schedule. Each

interview lasted about 30 – 90 minutes and was audio-taped after due permission. Data

collection was mostly done through zoom calls as in the aftermath of Covid-19 most

participants were not comfortable with in-person meetings.

       Hindi and English were mostly spoken during the interviews. As the researcher was

not a native Gujarati speaker, there was a provision for interpreter assistance in case the

participants wished to converse in Guajarati. However, all the interviews were conducted

either in English or Hindi. The participants in Gujarat were more comfortable with English

language compared to the respondents in Uttarakhand. The semi-structured interviews took

place in a conversation style approach so that the respondent felt more comfortable in sharing

their experiences. Follow up questions were asked in case the researcher felt unsure of the

explanations in relation to the research objectives. The interview schedule (Appendix I) was

divided into key areas of enquiry as per the requirement of the research objectives. The

interview schedule transitioned from questions of general inquiry related to the

understanding of the various concepts such as love, relationship conflict, relationship

satisfaction, dependency, emotional dependency, and so on, to exploring subtleties explained

through narration of participant's subjective experiences of dependency which were shaped

by gender, societal and cultural expectations.

       The initial questions acted as an icebreaker (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2018) and helped

build rapport between the researcher and the respondent. The participants talked about their

initial days of dating, how they met their partner and the general trajectory of their relationship. The researcher used probes whenever possible and the participants were asked to elaborate on their responses using personal or vicarious experiences, explicitly focusing upon gendered and cultural differences. The open-ended questions and conversation style approach helped gauge the emotions and feelings of the participants in response to different responses.

The respondents, particularly male participants from both the states were shyer in responding to the questions and took a little more time to be elaborative and expressive with their responses. Few participants were also concerned about giving the "right" definitions about their understanding of different concepts, so it was communicated to them it is their ideas and understanding of the concept which are important and they can feel free to answer the questions without pressure of "judgments" or "right" answers.

The responses of the participants were transcribed and then translated from Hindi to English. The translation to English language helped align the responses of the participants as per the research objectives as well as in-depth interpretation on part of the researcher. Translations accompany their own challenges. In the words of Müller (2007), 'translations constantly suffer from not being able to convey the richness of connotations' (p. 207). Acknowledging this, the researcher critically reflected upon the challenges of the translation from Hindi to English language throughout the translation process. Respective participant's expression and the meanings associated with different words were noted through regular memoing throughout the translation and interview process. For example, participants used the term dating, "going out", "seeing", and "romantic relationship" interchangeably. The

researcher made sure that the respondent elaborated on their understanding if the term that they preferred to use.

Given that the researcher was well-versed with English and Hindi, the researcher has a good understanding of various words used in the study. The Hindi and English words used were also cross-checked with a dictionary. These steps helped maintain the conceptual consistency and helped avoid losing intended meaning during the time of translation between languages.

The following section discusses the analysis used in the study.

Plan of Analysis

The quantitative data was entered into the Jeffreys's Amazing Statistics Program (JASP) software and was foremost checked for the normality using the Shapiro-Wilk test. Subsequently, based on the test results, and observations of QQ plots and histogram, decisions were made regarding further statistical analysis. When significant results suggested a deviation from normality, non-parametric statistics like Spearman's rho were used. Parametric statistics like Student's t-test, Pearson's correlation and regression were used when the data followed a normal distribution. Table 4 presents the plan of data analysis.

Table 4

Analysis Plan of the Study

Phase 1: Quantitative					
Objective	**Participants**	**Assessment measure**	**Variable assessed**	**Nature of data**	**Analysis**
I. What is the influence of select personal and demographic variables (gender, age, education, parent's education, family type, family size and birth order) on emotional dependency in individuals currently in romantic relationships?	Emerging Adults (18-29 years)	Background Information Performa Emotional Dependency Questionnaire	Gender Emotional Dependency	Independent categorical variable Dependent continuous variable	t-test
			Age Emotional Dependency	Independent continuous variable Dependent continuous variable	Correlation and Regression
			Education Emotional Dependency Parent's Education Emotional Dependency Family type Emotional Dependency	Independent categorical variable Dependent continuous variable	One way ANOVA or Kruskal Wallis
II. How do gender role beliefs influence emotional dependency in romantic relationships?	Emerging Adults (18-29 years)	Gender Role Attitude Scale Emotional Dependency	Gender Role Beliefs Emotional Dependency	Independent Continuous variable Dependent continuous variable	Correlation and Regression

III.	How does emotional dependency influence relationship conflict and relationship satisfaction?	Emerging Adults (18-29 years)	Emotional Dependency Questionnaire Relationship Assessment Scale Conflict Scale	Emotional Dependency Relationship Satisfaction	Independent Continuous variable	Correlation and Regression
				Emotional Dependency Relationship Conflict	Dependent continuous variable	
IV.	How do relationship conflict and relationship satisfaction influence well-being?	Emerging Adults (18-29 years)	Conflict Scale Relationship Assessment Scale PERMA Profiler	Relationship Conflict Well-being	Independent Continuous variable	Correlation and Regression
				Relationship Conflict Well-being	Dependent continuous variable	
				Relationship Conflict	Independent Continuous variable	Correlation and Multiple Regression
				Relationship Satisfaction	Independent Continuous variable	
				Well-being	Dependent continuous variable	
V.	What are the regional differences (Gujarat and Uttarakhand) in all of the above?	Emerging Adults (18-29 years)				t-test ANOVA

Each interview was the unit of analysis for qualitative content analysis that involved a search for meanings (Graneheim et al., 2017; Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis where the interviews were coded and categorized, followed by eliciting salient themes. While looking at different responses for one question,

the researcher tried to identify recurring words and ideas through multiple readings of the

transcripts. Later, the frequently used phrases and ideas conveyed by the respondents were

systematically organized into codes or categories. One such example is given in Table 5.

Table 5

Coding Example Used for Qualitative Analysis

Question	Response	Category
What is your idea of love?	**I feel love is very deep and cannot be explained in words and surpasses our imagination**...there is no certain definition but yeah love for me is care and affection and loyalty. **It's like a partner...who is present for you when no one isn't...at the end of the day there is someone that you can share your emotions with**...you can share things about your day**...it is partners working towards achieving common goals beneficial to the relationship.**	abstract and difficult to be explained Sharing emotion Reliance, presence cultivated by efforts Mutual Being present
	Love for me is how you listen to your partner and how **present you are for them**, in the worst of their moods. **Your understanding of making them laugh evertime they are sad or making them tea when they are tires, everday..as long as they need it.** It is something which takes lots of time and work and something which gives you immense **intrinsic happiness**.	Doing things for the other on a daily basis Gives internal happiness

The categories mentioned were coded into overarching themes. An example is given

as follows:

"Understanding of love"

- Love is transcendent

    o Abstract and difficult to be explained

    o Gives internal happiness

- Love is consistent efforts

    o Cultivated by efforts

o Doing things for the other on a daily basis

- Love is mutual reliance

Inter-Coder Reliability

To check the inter coder reliability, 10% of the total data were independently analyzed by two coders. The percentage agreement was established after analyzing the coded information for agreement and discrepancies. Most instances of disagreement were related to the names of the codes rather than conceptual discrepancies. For example, "recurring argument cycle" was coded as "Recurring Arguments and Stagnation Dynamics" by one coder and "constant fights leading to stagnant relationship" by the other. This was sorted by mutually agreeing and retaining the most suitable code for the number of responses within that code.

The percentage agreement of 93.86% was calculated using the following formula

Agreement (A) = $\frac{U-D}{U+\frac{1}{2}X} * 100$

Where, U = Total number of instances agreed

D = Total number of disagreements

X = Total number of clauses coded by one person and not by another (Saraswathi & Dutta, 1986, p.31).

Ethical Considerations

A full informed consent was obtained from all the participants for both the phases of the study. The participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any stage of the study, if they wished to do so. The study was presented and approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee for Human Research (IECHR), Faculty of Family and Community Science, The

Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda (Ethical Approval # IECHR/FCSc/PhD/2021/1).

(See Appendix B for the Ethics Approval Certificate).

  The next chapter details out the findings of the study.