

Construction and Standardization of the Indian Fear of Relationship Commitment Scale (IFRC-17)

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Abstract: *The present study aimed to construct and validate the Indian Fear of Relationship Commitment Scale (IFRC-17), the importance given to marriage arrangements, and joint family systems, the scale was culturally adapted and pilot tested among young, unmarried Indian adults. Using a cross-sectional study design, data were collected from 742 participants across university students. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses confirmed the sturdiness of the four-factor structure of the Indian adaptation of the Fear of Relationship Commitment Scale (IFRC-17), which reflects (1) negative perception of self and relationship, (2) fear of emotional and financial dependence, (3) marital anxiety, and (4) prioritization of family over romantic partners. The scale showed excellent internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.793$). Higher social phobia ($\beta = 0.073$) and general trust ($\beta = 0.271$) were positively associated with fear of commitment, while higher self-esteem ($\beta = -0.275$) was associated negatively. The IFRC-17 is culturally sensitive and valid and reliable and can serve as an efficient measure for assessing relational anxiety and commitment avoidance in Indian populations in both research and clinical settings.*

Keywords: Commitment anxiety, romantic relationships, marriage, India, scale validation, psychological assessment

1. Introduction

Many would say that today, gamophobia is a different social anxiety that is increasingly being taken into the Indian social fabric. The aversive emotional reactions that long-term relationships, formalised partnerships, or marriage-related obligations engender fall under it. Clients who have gamophobia can usually establish romantic bonds that get stressed out when either party starts expressing an intent for further commitment or formalisation of their relationship. (Kumar & Joseph, 2017; Shaver et al., 2005)

There seems to be a rising friction in India-where the traditional mode of thinking victimises the perfected scope of romance-from a collectivist family set-up to an individualistic mode of existence. Over the past two decades, youth increasingly have delayed marriages, have preferred cohabitation instead of formal marriage, and rejected family-arranged unions. As per the research analyzing NFHS data, the percentage of female aged 20-24 who remained unmarried goes up from 17 in 1992-93 to 24 in 2005-06 (Institute for Social and Economic Change [ISEC], 2024). Such an increase in the average age of marriage reflects shifts in social behavior and attitudes toward marriage by younger female in India. Simultaneously, young men are further resisting marriage to avoid taking financial responsibility and foreseeing loss of autonomy and emotional entrapment (Gupta & Verma, 2020; Pathak et al., 2023).

Some cross-country histories say that economic insecurity, mainly low income and precarious types of employment is negatively correlated with commitment avoidance (Kalmijn, 2011). Since, in India, a so-called traditional marriage normally involves the man provisioning financially and absorbing the lady into the auspices of a joint family, such pressures could in fact aggravate the fears. Thus, supposedly, men and female view marriage as likely threatening to their

personal independence, emotional independence, and financial freedom (Shukla & Bhatia, 2018).

Another major cause of gamophobia stems from personal or vicarious relationship experiences of a negative nature, such as observing parental fights, infidelities, divorces, or toxic interpersonal relationships that negatively imprint on one's consciousness and instill long-term fears of marriage failure. In the Indian context, marital success goes hand-in-hand with family name and reputation; thus, any individual who witnesses a few intangible years of failed marriage or long disputes may develop intense fears toward entering into long-term unions (Mukherjee & Sinha, 2016).

Some childhood experiences: experienced in the form of witnessing domestic violence, neglect, or abandonment can create maladaptive emotion regulation, induce low self-worth, and engender distrust, all of which contribute to avoidant behaviors and enhance vulnerability to fear of intimacy (Kapadia et al., 2019; Walker et al., 2017). Additionally, intimate partner violence (IPV) in early adult romantic relationships has come up as a rapidly growing concern in India. Female who cohabitate with their partners, or marry at an early age, report significantly higher levels of IPV; emotional and sexual abuse are highlighted (Kumar, 2022; Sharma & Shukla, 2015).

Shrinking intimacy and commitment may be a consequence of both childhood sexual abuse or adult sexual assault due to lingering trauma and fear of emotional dependency (Bhandari & Shukla, 2017). In Indian cultural contexts, where any conversation around sexuality is still viewed through an unwanted lens by the society, survivors of abuse could bury their fears, represented as preference for short-term, non-committal relationships out of self-protection.

Attachment theory holds certain valuable insights into gamophobia. A meta-analytic review by Mikulincer and Shaver (2012) highlighted that insecure attachment patterns, especially anxious or avoidant, are highly indicative of fears of commitment. Commonly found in fear of long-term relational entanglement are depression, low self-esteem, and negative attitudes about self (Brennan et al., 1998; Rani & Joseph, 2021).

Even though the concept is increasingly gaining attention, India presently faces a dearth of any standard mechanism to measure relationship commitment fear. Hence, the present study sought Indian Fear of Relationship Commitment Scale (IFRC-17). The major objective was to study its psychometric properties; the secondary objective was to look at the psychosocial and socio-demographic correlates of commitment fear among young Indian adults.

2. Methods

2.1 Study Design and Participants:

2.1.1 Sample 1: Design and Sampling Procedure

A cross-sectional design was used between August and December 2024 in CMR university. A total of 742 eligible respondents participated in the study. Data collection was conducted through in-person interviews with questionnaires in English. The interviewers were trained in a standardized manner regarding ethical engagement and conduct of interviews for data collection.

2.1.2 Minimum Sample Size Calculation

In the absence of any existing data about the repository in actual concern, the target frequency was optimally set at 50%. Using Epi Info version 7.2 (population survey tool), the minimum sample size required for the study was 384, for a 95% confidence level, 5% margin of error, and a design effect of 1.5 due to multistage stratified sampling. The final recruitment of 742 therefore accounts for the non-response and to ratify representation from different linguistic and cultural regions.

2.1.3 Ethical Approval and Informed Consent

The study protocol was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee of the School of Liberal Studies, CMR University. All ethical guidelines were strictly adhered to.

Each participant was informed about the nature of the study purpose, and voluntary participation in full before data collection commenced. Assurances of confidentiality and the possibility to withdraw at any point without consequence were provided. Written informed consent was extracted with a consent form (English). Since the study envisioned observation and non-intervention, no physical or psychological harm was anticipated.

2.1.4 Measures and Instruments

The primary instrument employed in this study was the Indian Fear of Relationship Commitment Scale (IFRC-17). It consists of 17 items rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Items 1, 3, and 4 were

reverse scored. Higher total scores indicate more significant fear of commitment.

2.2 Test–Retest Reliability

Test–retest reliability for IFRC-17 was examined by inviting 100 randomly selected participants from Sample 1 to repeat the scale approximately 10 days after its original administration. This specific time was selected to minimize recall bias and to also lessen a chance for real change in psychological traits. Test and retest administrations were conducted by the same interviewer. Comparison of responses from the two time points was done by computing intraclass correlation coefficients (ICCs), for which a value of ≥ 0.70 was indicative of good temporal stability (Koo & Li, 2016).

2.3 Statistical Analysis

Analysis of the data was carried out using SPSS Version 29.0 (IBM Corp., Armonk, NY). Descriptive statistics were used to present the sample's features. Means and standard deviations (SD) were presented for continuous variables, while frequencies and percentages were used for categorical variables. The Shapiro–Wilk Test was used to test the normality of the data for continuous variables.

To look into the internal structure of the IFRC-17, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) first was conducted on Sample 1 via principal axis factoring with promax (oblique) rotation, which considers the intercorrelation between underlying psychological constructs. Factorability adequacy was assessed using the KMO (Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin) measure and Bartlett's test of sphericity. Factors with eigenvalues higher than 1 were retained. Cronbach's alpha (α) was computed for internal consistency for the entire scale and each subscale. An α of ≥ 0.70 was acceptable.

Test–retest reliability of total IFRC-17 scale scores was analyzed using intraclass correlation coefficients (ICCs, two-way mixed model), with an ICC > 0.70 representing acceptable temporal stability. Inter-scale correlations and reliability (Cronbach's α) were also computed for all other measures (i. e., RSES, DERS, CTQ).

Bivariate analyses using independent-samples t-tests and chi-square tests (χ^2) as appropriate were run to identify predictors of commitment fear. Variables significant at $P < .10$ were entered into a stepwise linear regression model with total IFRC-17 scores as the dependent variable.

Using AMOS (version 29) and the maximum likelihood estimation method, a CFA was conducted on Sample 2 to test the four-factor structure suggested by the EFA, with several goodness-of-fit indices reported: adjusted χ^2 divided by degrees of freedom (χ^2/df), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), and adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI). A χ^2/df ratio between 1 and 3 was acceptable, RMSEA < 0.08 indicated reasonable fit, and GFI/AGFI ≥ 0.90 was considered satisfactory (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

All P-values $< .05$ were considered statistically significant.

3. Results

3.1 Exploratory Factor Analysis of the IFRC-17

An exploratory factor analysis was carried out to identify the latent structure of the Indian Fear of Relationship Commitment Scale (IFRC-17), including all responses of Sample 1 (N = 742). The data were examined for factorability before running the EFA. The correlation matrix showed no incidence of multicollinearity, as no pairs of items showed inter-item correlations above $r > 0.90$. Also, all items revealed communality values above 0.30, and no item had a factor loading below 0.30. Hence, no items were dropped from the 17-item scale.

The sample was deemed meritoriously adequate, with a KMO measure of sampling adequacy of 0.862, greater than the minimum limit of 0.50. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity produced significance, $\chi^2(136) = 3145.72$, $p < .001$, which also affirmed the acceptability of the dataset for factor analysis.

A four-factor solution with eigenvalues greater than 1 and explaining 52.1% of cumulative variance was retained after running a principal axis factoring with promax rotation (allowing for correlated factors) with IFRC-17 items.

Factor 1, Negative Self and Relationship View, explained 26.3% of the variance and had items describing low self-esteem and the fear of inadequacy, as well as expectations of relationship failure or divorce.

Factor 2, Fear of Dependence and Loss of Autonomy, explained 11.4% of the variance and had items describing fear of emotional caregiving, financial interdependence, and loss of freedom in joint family systems.

Factor 3 (Marriage Anxiety) accounted for 7.8% of the variance and included panic or discomfort relating to weddings and the permanence of long-term partnerships.

Factor 4 (Family and Personal Prioritization) explained 6.6% of the variance and included items about giving priority to family or friends rather than a partner and feeling uncomfortable with shifting emphasis to a romantic relationship.

Item loadings were above 0.45 on their specific factors, and there was an absence of relevant cross-loadings.

The thorough scale was consistent in itself (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.793$). Subscale reliabilities were also acceptable: Factor 1 $\alpha = 0.78$, Factor 2 $\alpha = 0.76$, Factor 3 $\alpha = 0.68$, and Factor 4 $\alpha = 0.60$. Based on this, IFRC-17 underlines a stable and significant multidimensional structure, apt for utilizing Indian populations.

Table 1: Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Participants (N = 742)

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	361	48.6%
	Female	381	51.4%
Age (years)	Mean $\pm$ SD	21.4 $\pm$ 3.2	—
Educational Level	/Postgraduates	742	100%
Relationship Status	In a romantic relationship	155	20.8%
	Single (not currently dating)	587	79.2%

Note. Age is reported as mean $\pm$ standard deviation. Percentages may not total exactly 100% due to rounding.

This table represents the Sociodemographic characteristics of the participants (N = 742), with a mean age of 21 years (SD = 3.2). Graduate and postgraduate students were the sample. With a near-equal gender distribution and a majority reporting single relationship status.

Table 2: Promax Rotated Factor Matrix Revealing the Four-Factor Structure of the Indian Fear of Relationship Commitment Scale (IFRC-17)

	Item	Factor Loading	Factor
1	I prioritise my romantic relationship. (Reverse scored)	0.728	Factor 4
2	I place higher importance on myself, family, and friends than on my partner.	0.680	Factor 4
3	I see my partner as part of my future. (Reverse scored)	0.661	Factor 4
4	I look forward to getting married. (Reverse scored)	0.468	Factor 4
5	I feel uneasy or experience panic when discussing marriage.	0.718	Factor 3
6	I feel uncomfortable at a wedding and when I see others get married.	0.570	Factor 3
7	I fear the responsibilities that come with emotional commitment.	0.688	Factor 2
8	I am afraid that my emotional commitment will contradict my freedom and privacy, such as expectations around shifting to my husband's house or giving up personal space after marriage.	0.704	Factor 2
9	I am afraid that my partner will depend on me financially and emotionally, including expectations in joint family settings where emotional caregiving becomes a duty beyond the partner.	0.459	Factor 2
10	I am afraid of being financially and emotionally dependent on my partner, especially in arranged marriage settings where autonomy in decision-making may be reduced.	0.619	Factor 2
11	I am afraid that my emotional relationship will end with divorce, and I will suffer as a result, particularly given the stigma and social consequences of divorce in India.	0.468	Factor 1
12	I fear I am not good enough for my partner.	0.665	Factor 1
13	I struggle with self-confidence and self-esteem.	0.710	Factor 1
14	Attachment makes me anxious.	0.568	Factor 1

15	Commitment makes me worry about losing better opportunities.	0.552	Factor 1
16	I struggle to trust my partner and fear abandonment.	0.501	Factor 1
17	I hate the idea of spending the rest of my life with only one person, especially if the marriage was arranged without sufficient personal choice or compatibility check.	0.644	Factor 3

Note:

Factor 1: Negative perception of self, partner, and relationship

Factor 2: Fear of emotional commitment and financial dependence

Factor 3: Tension related to the idea of marriage

Factor 4: Prioritization of personal (family/friends) life over romantic relationship

Cronbach's α for IFRC-17 = 0.793

This table reveals a four-factor structure with strong item loadings across domains such as self-perception, emotional commitment, marital tension, and personal priorities.

Promax Rotated Factor Matrix of the Indian Fear of Relationship Commitment Scale (IFRC-17)

Table 3: Multivariable Analysis: Linear Regression Models for IFRC-17 and Its Subscales

Model 1: Factor 1 – Negative perception of self, partner, and relationship

Predictor Variable	Unstandardized β	Standardized β	P-value	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Defectiveness schema	0.089	0.403	.001	0.036	0.141
Self-esteem (Rosenberg)	- 0.064	- 0.282	.018	- 0.116	- 0.012
Composite abuse scale	0.037	0.258	.032	0.003	0.071

Presents the results of a multiple linear regression predicting **Factor 1** of the IFRC-17, This table reflects negative perceptions of self, partner, and relationship. The higher defectiveness schema and abuse scores were related to greater fear. And higher self-esteem was linked to lower fear of relationship commitment.

Table 4: Model 2: Factor 2 – Fear of emotional commitment and financial dependence

Predictor Variable	Unstandardized β	Standardized β	P-value	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Depression (HAMD)	0.033	0.269	.015	0.007	0.059
Age	- 0.056	- 0.288	.008	- 0.098	- 0.015
General trust score	0.050	0.221	.045	0.001	0.100

Multiple linear regression results for Factor 2 of the IFRC-17 indicate that higher depression and lower age significantly predict greater fear of emotional commitment and financial dependence. While higher general trust is also positively associated with this fear

Table 5: Model 3: Factor 3 – Tension related to the idea of marriage

Predictor Variable	Unstandardized β	Standardized β	P-value	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Self-esteem (Rosenberg)	- 0.043	- 0.212	.003	- 0.071	- 0.015
Fear of intimacy	0.014	0.250	.006	0.021	0.021
University education	- 0.395	- 0.187	<.001	- 0.670	- 0.120
Attachment (dismissing)	0.066	0.147	.025	0.008	0.124

Regression results for Factor 3 show that lower self-esteem, greater fear of intimacy, and dismissing attachment style significantly predict higher tension related to the idea of marriage.

Table 6: Model 4: Factor 4 – Prioritization of personal (family/friends) life

Predictor Variable	Unstandardized β	Standardized β	P-value	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Attachment (secure)	0.091	0.211	.003	0.032	0.151
General trust score	0.040	0.190	.005	0.012	0.068
Attachment (preoccupied)	0.080	0.157	.021	0.012	0.147
Composite abuse scale	- 0.008	- 0.143	.044	- 0.015	0.0001

Regression results for Factor 4 indicate that secure and preoccupied attachment styles, along with higher general trust, significantly predict greater prioritisation of personal (family/friends) life. Conversely, higher abuse scores were associated with lower prioritisation of personal relationships over romantic ones.

Table 7: Model 5: Total IFRC-17 Score

Predictor Variable	Unstandardized β	Standardized β	P-value	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Social phobia score	0.073	0.393	<.001	0.050	0.096
General trust score	0.271	0.262	<.001	0.266	0.520
Self-esteem (Rosenberg)	-0.275	-0.191	<.001	-0.397	-0.154

Regression analysis for the total IFRC-17 score shows that higher social phobia and general trust significantly predict greater fear of relationship commitment, while higher self-esteem is associated with lower overall fear. These findings remained consistent across gender-stratified models.

Table 8: Stratified Multivariable Regression Analysis Predicting Fear of Relationship Commitment by Gender

Predictor Variable	β (95% CI) – Male	P-value – Male	β (95% CI) – Female	P-value – Female
Social phobia score	0.08 (0.03–0.12)	.001	0.07 (0.03–0.10)	<.001
General trust score	0.43 (0.19–0.67)	<.001	0.31 (0.12–0.50)	.001
Self-esteem (Rosenberg)	–0.23 (–0.45 to –0.02)	.030	—	—
Negativity pessimism schema	0.08 (0.03–0.12)	.001	0.14 (0.001–0.28)	.048

Note. “—” indicates the variable was not a significant predictor in that subgroup.

Stratified regression analysis by gender reveals that social phobia and general trust significantly predict fear of relationship commitment in both males and females. Self-esteem and negativity-pessimism schema were significant predictors only among males, while negativity-pessimism also emerged as a weaker but significant predictor among females.

3.5 Test–Retest Reliability

The IFRC-17 test was re-administered to 100 participants from the original cohort after 10 days, so as to assess its test–retest reliability, under similar environmental conditions. The responses were then analyzed using the intraclass correlation (ICC, two-way mixed model). Excellent reproducibility was exhibited in the results with an ICC of 0.92 (95% CI: 0.83–0.96), $p < .001$, thus indicating that the IFRC-17 yields highly stable and consistent results over short-term intervals.

3.6 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (Sample 2)

To further ascertain the factorial structure in Sample 1, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed on an independent Sample 2 of 312 unmarried Indian young adults, whose ages ranged from 18 to 35 years. The mean age for the sample was 26.7 years ($SD = 3.28$). A total of 56.7% identified themselves as females.

The four-factor IFRC-17 structure was confirmed via CFA using maximum likelihood estimation. The model yielded a χ^2 of 64.69 with 34 degrees of freedom giving a ratio of chi-square to degrees of freedom (χ^2/df) equating to 1.82, which is considered a good fit. The Steiger–Lind RMSEA was at 0.077 (90% CI: 0.040–0.101) within the acceptable range, while the Jöreskog GFI was 0.92 and AGFI was 0.90, thus ensuring the structural validity of the model in the Indian sample.

4. Discussion

The Indian Fear of Relationship Commitment Scale (IFRC-17) is a culturally refined and psychometrically rigorous tool for assessing the multifaceted nature of commitment anxiety in young Indian adults. A 17-item scale developed through exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, it measures four major candidates of commitment fear: negative self-view and relationship anxiety, fear of emotional and financial dependence, tension about the idea of marriage, and prioritizing family/personal life over a romantic relationship. The scale has a Cronbach α of 0.793, which indicates robust internal consistency.

The scale's necessity arises from the socio-cultural unique Indian contexts, in which marriage often transcends a personal choice and is, rather paradoxically, considered a family institution enshrined in collective values. These findings correspond with major demographic trends: the age at marriage increasing on average; the rise of singlehood in urban settings; and increasing resistance toward traditional arrangements of matrimony systems. Consequently, this study is an important contribution toward understanding gamophobia in Indian society, where familial expectations, most notably on female, become an added burden by joint family arrangements, gender roles, and social obligations.

The second dimension, that of the fear of emotional and financial dependence, is especially relevant in the Indian context. Marriage in India means, for female in particular, leaving the home of their birth, taking on certain new roles in another family and undergoing emotional, sometimes financial, enmeshment within a joint family system. For male, the commitment anxiety arising out of the obligation to marry only after they can provide adequately for a house and security is also consequential. The fear of emotional and financial dependence on one's family or spouse represents pressures to assert one's individual autonomy, even if at odds with the systemic set-ups that also culturally accept emotional caregiving within a very hierarchical family structure.

The third dimension relating to the stress over the idea of marriage rings true in contemporary Indian contexts. Extravagant wedding expectations mete out social pressure for one to conform to their idealistic view, and there exists dissonance between romantic ideals and the actuality of arranged marriages. Hence, in the Western sense, gamophobia leans towards individualism and self-realisation; however, fear of commitment on the Indian side arises at the crossroads of tradition, economic responsibility, and emerging gender norms.

Family preference (factor 4) has been among the important sources of relational ambivalence in collectivist cultures. In India, family is usually placed above romantic relations and, at least, before marriage. Young adults have feels hesitancy about investing fully in a romantic commitment because of several reasons: 1) they regard their family duties as a priority; 2) they fear that love might threaten family harmony; or 3) they simply feel obliged to maintain family ailing parents or the honor of aging parents. This factor foregrounds the undeviating influence of familial ties in Indian life and how arduous it has become for individuals to balance personal longing alongside community obligation.

Psychological variables such as low self-esteem, insecure attachment styles (preoccupied, dismissing), and social anxiety were positively correlated with IFRC-17 scores, mainly factor 1 and factor 3. These findings are consistent with schema and attachment theory literature, which proposes that early maladaptive schemata, such as abandonment, defectiveness, and social isolation, might contribute to relational avoidance and fear of intimacy. The abandonment scheme particularly predicted commitment fear in this study, meaning that disruptions in early caregiving relationships may hinder the development of abilities for relational trust and emotional safety.

Interestingly enough, the study highlights gender differences in commitment fear predictors, whereas low self-esteem was a greater predictor of commitment fear amongst male, probably due to internalized masculine norms around success and emotional invulnerability. The negativity-pessimism schema, on the other hand, was the only factor associated with fear of commitment in female. This is probably indicative of prevailing social trends around emotional expressivity and vulnerability in female, especially when countered by culturally salient messages equating marriage to sacrifice, loss of autonomy, and emotional risk.

The trust and commitment-fear relationship constituted another paradox: while trust is correlated with the stability of relationships, in some instances, a general trust scale corresponded higher with commitment fear. This might indicate that individuals who are generally trusting overlap with those who are highly sensitive to potential betrayal or loss in situations where commitment becomes emotionally serious.

Finally, the IFRC-17 highlights the need for culturally grounded interventions. Mental health practitioners and relationship counselors in India must bear in mind how traditional marriage norms, shifting gender dynamics, and family structures interplay to forge young adults' fears around romantic engagement. Combining attachment-based therapy, schema therapy, and culturally responsive psychoeducation offers a great possibility for these individuals to facilitate their relational anxieties and develop a positive attitude toward intimacy and commitment.

5. Limitations

Although the IFRC-17 establishes an excellent reliability and validity for an Indian cultural context, many limitations can be considered. First, the study was conducted primarily among urban university students. Thus, the generalizability must be established to other populations, especially those in rural areas, other caste or community groups, or non-Indian collectivist and individualist societies.

The cross-sectional design imposes a limitation on drawing causal inferences. Relationships between fear of commitment and self-esteem, early maladaptive schemas, social anxiety, and attachment styles were found; yet, these relationships need to be positioned into a proto-directional and developmental framework through longitudinal studies (Young et al., 2003). Such indeed should be one goal of future prospective studies, together with the examination of

protective factors that would enable a commitment of less anxiety to develop over time, such as secure attachment or skill-based emotion regulation.

Most observational studies employing self-report tools, it leaves room for response bias, social desirability bias, and recall inaccuracies. Those sensitive stigmatized feelings could very well have been under-reported by participants despite the assurance of anonymity, especially in regards to fears of commitment, sexual intimacy, or dissatisfaction with traditional marriage systems.

Lastly, while the sample size was good and evenly split among participants according to the education and finance of participants, there was just a slight tilting toward an individual who was willing to talk about personal issues in a structured interview setting.

6. Conclusion

The Indian Fear of Relationship Commitment Scale (IFRC-17) stands as a culturally grounded, psychometrically sound tool that provides a very comprehensive appraisal of the romantic commitment anxiety prevalent among young Indian adults. Comprised of 17 items grouped under four independent yet related components— (1) negative self and relationship perception, (2) fear of emotional and financial dependence, (3) tension related to the idea of marriage, and (4) prioritization of family/personal life—the IFRC-17 addresses the unique socio-emotional factors impacting commitment attitude in the Indian situation.

This scale is especially relevant given the rapid changes in the marital scenario in India, where more autonomy, delayed marriages, economic aspirations, and resistance to traditional expectations are becoming defining characteristics in the life of young adults (Desai & Andrist, 2010; Uberoi, 2006). The IFRC-17 is designed to be an investigative instrument for the occurrence of gamophobia as well as a clinical diagnostic intervention oriented toward delineating psychological vulnerability aspects contributing to commitment avoidance, such as diminished self-esteem, attachment insecurity, and maladaptive schema.

The scale's shortness and clarity permit use in academic settings, such as counselors in premarital counseling, relationship therapy, and community mental health programs. However, further research into cross-cultural validity, the definition of clinical cut-offs, and integration into other diagnostic conceptual schemes is recommended before applying the IFRC-17 in general across Indian subcultures.

Thus, the IFRC-17 serves as a vital bridging measure in the relationship psychology of India and fosters avenues for future research and intervention programs that focus on romantic commitment, emotional well-being, and relational resilience.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in the development and administration of, or in any act of dissemination of, the IFRC-17.

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- 11) I am afraid that my emotional relationship will end with divorce and I will suffer as a result, particularly given the stigma and social consequences of divorce in India. (*Factor 1*)
- 12) I fear I am not good enough for my partner. (*Factor 1*)
- 13) I struggle with self-confidence and self-esteem. (*Factor 1*)
- 14) Attachment makes me anxious. (*Factor 1*)
- 15) Commitment makes me worry about losing better opportunities. (*Factor 1*)
- 16) I struggle to trust my partner and fear abandonment. (*Factor 1*)
- 17) I hate the idea of spending the rest of my life with only one person, especially if the marriage was arranged without sufficient personal choice or compatibility check. (*Factor 3*)

Scoring and Psychometric Structure

- a) **Reverse Scored Items:** 1, 3, and 4
- b) **High total scores indicate greater fear of relationship commitment.**
- c) **Four-Factor Structure** (as in original validation):
- **Factor 1:** Negative perception of self, partner, and relationship
 - **Factor 2:** Fear of emotional commitment and financial dependence
 - **Factor 3:** Tension related to the idea of marriage
 - **Factor 4:** Prioritization of personal (family/friends) life
- d) **Original Scale Reliability:** Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.789$
- e) **This adapted version will be validated for content and face validity using expert reviews, followed by pilot testing with the Indian sample.**

Appendix

Participants rate their agreement with each item on a **5-point Likert scale**:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

Scale Items

- 1) I prioritise my romantic relationship (*Reverse scored*)
- 2) I place higher importance on myself, family, and friends than on my partner. (*Factor 4*)
- 3) I see my partner as part of my future. (*Reverse scored*)
- 4) I look forward to getting married. (*Reverse scored*)
- 5) I feel uneasy or experience panic when discussing marriage. (*Factor 3*)
- 6) I feel uncomfortable at a wedding and when I see others get married. (*Factor 3*)
- 7) I fear the responsibilities that come with emotional commitment (*Factor 2*)
- 8) I am afraid that my emotional commitment will contradict my freedom and privacy, such as expectations around shifting to my husband's house or giving up personal space after marriage. (*Factor 2*)
- 9) I am afraid that my partner will depend on me financially and emotionally, including expectations in joint family settings where emotional caregiving becomes a duty beyond the partner. (*Factor 2*)
- 10) I am afraid of being financially and emotionally dependent on my partner, especially in arranged marriage settings where autonomy in decision-making may be reduced. (*Factor 2*)