Unpacking Conflict: Examining The Role of Conflict Resolution Styles In Long Term Committed Romantic Relationships

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ABSTRACT

Conflict is an inherent aspect of romantic relationships. This study examined the influence of conflict resolution styles on long-term committed romantic relationships. Using a quantitative, cross-sectional design, data were collected from 60 participants through snowball sampling. Participants completed the Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI) and provided demographic details. Statistical analysis using SPSS revealed no significant association between conflict resolution styles and either relationship duration or gender, suggesting that these demographic factors do not meaningfully influence how partners manage conflict. These findings challenge traditional assumptions and align with literature emphasizing the importance of emotional and interpersonal dynamics—such as emotional intelligence, communication quality, and attachment styles—in shaping conflict behaviour. The study underscores the need to shift from demographic to psychological and relational predictors when understanding conflict patterns. Implications include guiding counsellors and educators to prioritize emotional regulation and communication skill-building. Future research should explore variables like emotional intimacy, digital habits, and personality traits using dyadic and longitudinal designs.

Keywords: conflict resolution styles, gender, romantic relationships, relationship duration

1. INTRODUCTION

Conflict is an inherent aspect of romantic relationships, and the strategies couples employ to navigate disagreements significantly influence the health and longevity of their partnerships. Constructive conflict resolution styles, such as collaboration and compromise, are associated with higher relationship satisfaction and emotional intimacy. Conversely, destructive styles like avoidance, competition, and accommodation often correlate with dissatisfaction and instability.

The collaborating style, characterized by high assertiveness and cooperativeness, involves partners working together to find mutually beneficial solutions. This approach fosters deeper emotional connections and resilience against external stressors. Similarly, the compromising style, which entails moderate assertiveness and cooperativeness, can be effective in resolving less critical issues promptly. However, over-reliance on compromise without addressing underlying concerns may lead to unresolved tensions over time.

In contrast, destructive conflict resolution styles can undermine relationship quality. The competing style, marked by high assertiveness and low cooperativeness, often results in power struggles and resentment. Avoidance, characterized by low assertiveness and cooperativeness, leads to unresolved issues and emotional distance. Accommodation, involving low assertiveness and high cooperativeness, may cause individuals to neglect their own needs, leading to dissatisfaction. Studies indicate that couples predominantly using these destructive styles report lower marital satisfaction and are more prone to relationship dissolution.

The aim of the current study is to investigate the impact of conflict resolution styles on long term committed romantic relationships. The study revolves around understanding whether conflict resolution styles have an impact on relationship duration and whether there are gender differences in conflict resolution style preferences.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This study conducted by Ha and Overbeek, examined whether conflict resolution styles mediated the link between depressive symptoms and relationship longevity in 80 adolescent couples. While no mediation was found, girls' depressive symptoms were directly linked to shorter relationships. Both boys and girls with higher depressive symptoms used more negative conflict resolution strategies. Interestingly, girls' depressive symptoms were associated with increased positive problem-solving in their male partners. The findings highlight the impact of depressive symptoms on adolescent relationship stability.

This review by Unal and Akgun, explored how spouses' conflict resolution styles impact marital happiness, focusing on marital satisfaction and adjustment. While satisfaction is an individual evaluation based on personal needs, adjustment reflects the dynamic quality of the relationship. Constructive conflict resolution, where couples address problems cooperatively, enhances both satisfaction and adjustment. In contrast, destructive behaviors like aggression or self-interest diminish relationship quality. The review highlights the importance of promoting constructive communication and equipping couples with skills to navigate conflicts effectively for healthier, happier marriages.

The study by Sathyamurthy.M, Nair.V et.al, explored how communication, emotional intelligence, and conflict resolution impact satisfaction in intimate relationships. Interviews with 25 couples highlighted that active listening, empathy, and open communication foster emotional intimacy and relationship satisfaction. Technology was found to both enhance and challenge communication, while work-life balance significantly influenced relationship harmony. Conflict resolution through emotional regulation and clear communication proved essential. The study also introduced blockchain technology as a metaphor for selective information sharing in conflict management. Future research should examine long-term effects of technology and conflict resolution strategies across diverse contexts.

A study by Akula Bisht and Dr. Kaushlendra Mani Tripathi explored how conflict resolution styles, individual protective factors, and humor affect relationship satisfaction among heterosexual romantic couples. Analyzing responses from 206 participants aged 18 to 61, the researchers found that conflict engagement negatively impacted relationship satisfaction, while problem-solving skills were also linked to lower satisfaction levels. In contrast, individual protective factors like self-control and cooperation, as well as humor, showed no significant effect on relationship satisfaction. The study also noted differences in conflict resolution strategies based on gender and marital status, highlighting the importance of effective conflict management in fostering relationship satisfaction. Further research is recommended to examine additional factors influencing relationship satisfaction across diverse cultural contexts and populations.

A recent study investigated the impact of partner phubbing, gaslighting, and conflict resolution styles on relationship satisfaction among married and romantic heterosexual adults. Utilizing data from 357 participants collected via Google Forms, the research employed standardized instruments: the Couple Satisfaction Index (CSI-4), Partner Phubbing Scale, Gaslighting Relationship Exposure Inventory (GREI), and Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI). The findings revealed significant negative correlations between relationship satisfaction and gaslighting, partner phubbing, and conflict resolution styles. Additionally, gaslighting positively correlated with both partner phubbing and conflict styles. Regression analysis identified gaslighting as a significant negative predictor of relationship satisfaction (β = -0.259, p < .001), while the other variables were not significant predictors. Notably, married individuals reported higher relationship satisfaction and lower levels of phubbing and gaslighting compared to those in non-marital romantic relationships. These results underscore the detrimental impact of emotional manipulation and digital distractions on relationship satisfaction, highlighting the importance of addressing such behaviors in relationship counselling.

A study by Adrija Sarkar and Vigraanth Bapu K.G. investigated how adult attachment styles relate to conflict resolution strategies in romantic relationships. Analyzing data from 113 participants using the Conflict Resolution Inventory-Self Version (CRSI-Self) and the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised Questionnaire (ECR-RQ), the study found that individuals with anxious attachment styles are more likely to engage in conflict, employ self-protection, and seek acceptance during disputes. In contrast, avoidant attachment styles were associated with self-protection and acceptance strategies but showed a weak negative correlation with positive problem-solving approaches. Additionally, married individuals exhibited higher levels of avoidant attachment and acceptance strategies compared to those in dating



relationships. These findings highlight the influence of attachment styles on conflict resolution behaviours, emphasizing the importance of understanding attachment patterns to improve relationship satisfaction and conflict management.

A two-year longitudinal study by Shmuel Shulman and colleagues examined how conflict resolution styles influence the longevity of adolescent romantic relationships. Involving 40 late adolescent couples (average ages: males 17.71 years, females 17.18 years), the study had participants engage in a task designed to reveal differences by resolving disagreements, with their interactions recorded and analyzed. Follow-up assessments at 3, 6, 9, 12, 18, and 24 months revealed three distinct conflict resolution patterns namely, downplaying pattern where couples tended to minimize conflicts, maintaining relationships for about 9 months, with half remaining together at 24 months, integrative pattern which is Characterized by effective negotiation and problem-solving, these couples sustained their relationships throughout the two-year period and conflictive pattern, defined by confrontational interactions, these couples typically ended their relationships within the first 3 months. The study underscores the significant role of conflict resolution strategies in the stability and duration of adolescent romantic relationships, highlighting that integrative approaches are associated with greater longevity, while confrontational styles may lead to early dissolution.

A qualitative study by Caroline and Christian Heim, published in Contemporary Family Therapy (2025), investigated how couples married for over 40 years develop and employ jointly negotiated conflict resolution strategies (JNCRS). The research involved 1,112 participants from 48 countries, combining semi-structured interviews with 90 couples and survey responses from 932 individuals. Through interpretive phenomenological and content analyses, the study identified 23 distinct JNCRS, with six primary strategies—listening, avoiding conflict, effective communication, compromise, resolving issues promptly, and cooling down—accounting for 72% of the approaches reported. Notably, listening, avoiding conflict, and effective communication comprised 43% of the strategies. These strategies evolved over time, influenced by factors such as parental modeling, cultural backgrounds, and mutual acceptance. The findings suggest that long-term couples adapt their conflict resolution methods collaboratively, offering valuable insights for therapists working with couples to enhance relationship longevity and satisfaction.

A study involving 477 premarital individuals aged 18 to 40 examined the relationships between adult attachment styles, conflict resolution strategies, and relationship satisfaction. Participants completed online questionnaires assessing their attachment styles and preferred conflict resolution methods. Among those currently in relationships (N = 271), relationship satisfaction was also measured. The findings revealed that secure attachment styles positively correlated with constructive conflict resolution strategies—such as collaborating and compromising—and higher relationship satisfaction. Conversely, insecure attachment styles (characterized by anxiety and avoidance) were linked to less effective conflict resolution approaches and lower satisfaction levels. Interestingly, individuals with high levels of attachment anxiety or avoidance reported significantly greater relationship satisfaction when they frequently employed collaborating and compromising strategies and minimized the use of avoidance tactics. These insights underscore the importance of adopting constructive conflict resolution methods to enhance relationship satisfaction, particularly for those with insecure attachment patterns.

A study by Özge Ünal and Serap Akgün examined how conflict resolution styles influence marital satisfaction through the mediating role of marital adjustment, considering both individual (actor) and partner effects. The research involved 155 married couples who completed assessments on their conflict resolution approaches, marital adjustment, and relationship satisfaction. Utilizing the Actor–Partner Interdependence Model, the findings indicated that both husbands' and wives' use of positive problem-solving strategies predicted their own marital satisfaction via marital adjustment. Additionally, husbands' positive and negative problem-solving styles influenced not only their own but also their wives' marital satisfaction through marital adjustment. These results highlight the significance of constructive conflict resolution in enhancing marital satisfaction and underscore the interconnected nature of partner behaviors in marital dynamics.

Lawrence A. Kurdek's 1995 study, *Predicting Change in Marital Satisfaction from Husbands' and Wives' Conflict Resolution Styles*, published in the *Journal of Marriage and Family*, examined the impact of conflict resolution strategies on marital satisfaction over a two-year period. The study involved 155 married couples who completed annual surveys assessing their conflict resolution styles—conflict engagement, withdrawal, and compliance—and their marital

satisfaction. Key findings of this study included how the conflict resolution styles employed by both spouses, particularly the frequency with which wives used conflict engagement and husbands used withdrawal, were linked to changes in each spouse's marital satisfaction. And also, how overall, husbands' marital satisfaction was more frequently affected by how their wives resolved conflicts than wives' marital satisfaction was affected by how their husbands resolved conflicts. These findings underscore the importance of conflict resolution strategies in maintaining marital satisfaction and highlight the need for couples to develop effective communication and problem-solving skills.

METHODOLOGY

Aim of the Research

The research aims to study the impact of conflict resolution styles on long term committed romantic relationships of individuals between the ages 18 to 50 years.

Objectives

- 1. To study the impact of conflict resolution styles on long term committed romantic relationships.
- 2. To study the impact of different conflict resolution strategies on relationship duration of individuals in committed romantic relationships.
- 3. To study whether there is gender differences in conflict resolution strategy preferences.

Hypotheses

- There is a relationship between conflict resolution styles and relationship duration.
- There are gender differences in conflict management strategies.

Research Design

The study uses quantitative design (Questionnaire) to understand the conflict resolution styles of participants. The study uses the Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory to measure the style of conflict resolution preferred by the individual.

The Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI) is a self-assessment tool, adapted from the 1970s Thomas–Kilmann model, designed to reveal how individuals or teams typically manage interpersonal disagreements. Participants complete a concise questionnaire (often the 16-item CRSI-16), rating their frequency of use across four distinct conflict resolution strategies: Conflict (items -1,5,9,13), Problem Solving (items -2,6,10,14), Self-Protection (items -3,7,11,15) and Acceptance (items -4,8,12,16). Each item is scored using a 5-point Likert Scale. (Never =1, Sometimes = 2, Often = 3, Almost Always = 4, Always = 5)

Reliability and Validity: The internal consistency of the Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI) subscales, as measured by Cronbach's alpha, varied across the different dimensions. The conflict engagement subscale demonstrated acceptable reliability with an alpha of 0.77, while the positive problem-solving subscale showed a slightly lower, yet still acceptable, alpha of 0.75. However, the withdrawal and compliance subscales exhibited lower internal consistency, with alpha values of 0.61 and 0.53, respectively, indicating questionable to poor reliability for these dimensions.

Sample

The target population for this study were individuals between the age group 18 to 50 who are currently in committed romantic relationships for more than 1 year belonging to the India. 60 participants between the age group of 18-50 years from different demographic and educational backgrounds were invited to participate in the study based on their availability. Non probability method of sampling such as Snowball sampling was used for this research.

Variables

Independent Variable: Conflict Resolution Styles

Dependent Variable: Relationship Duration, Gender

Procedure

60 participants were sampled through Snowball Sampling techniques. The sample consisted of 60 individuals who are in long term committed romantic relationships, with 31 Females and 29 Males, respectively, falling between the ages 18 and 50 years. An online Google Form consisting of Eligibility Criteria, Instructions, Demographic Details, Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory and a question to assess the duration of the relationship based on the options given such as: Less than 1 year, 1 year, More than 1 year and 3+ years, respectively. Informed Consent, Confidentiality and Purpose of Study were clearly explained in the form. The participants had to give clear consent before even filling the form and it was also clearly informed that they were allowed to withdraw from participating at any point of filling the form. Data was collected and converted on Google Sheets and Statistical Analysis was done using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The results were then analysed and interpreted.

Data Analysis

The collected data was analysed using SPSS. Pearson Correlation statistical procedure was conducted.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows Descriptive Statistics for Key Variables

Variable	N	M	SD	Skewness	Normality (p)
Gender	60	1.52	0.50	-0.07	<.001
Relationship	60	1.45	0.50	0.21	<.001
Duration					
CRSI	60	37.15	6.83	-0.30	0.368

The total sample comprised 60 participants. Gender was approximately evenly distributed (M = 1.52, SD = 0.50), and participants reported varied relationship durations (M = 1.45, SD = 0.50), both measured as categorical variables. Conflict resolution styles, measured via the Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI), had a mean score of 37.15 (SD = 6.83), indicating moderate engagement with the conflict strategies assessed. CRSI scores ranged from 19 to 53.

Tests for normality were also conducted. The Shapiro-Wilk test indicated that gender (p < .001) and relationship duration (p < .001) were not normally distributed, likely due to binary coding. However, CRSI scores were normally distributed (W = 0.979, p = 0.368), validating the use of parametric tests for analyses involving this variable.

Table 2 shows Correlation between Relationship Duration and Conflict Resolution Styles (CRSI)

Variable	Relationship Duration	CRSI	
1. Relationship Duration	Pearson's r p-value		
2. CRSI	Pearson's r p-value	0.015 0.912	

Pearson's correlation analysis indicated that there was no statistically significant association between relationship duration and conflict resolution styles, r(58) = 0.015, p = .912. This negligible positive correlation suggests that the length of time individuals had been in a romantic relationship had virtually no influence on the conflict resolution strategies they employed. In other words, whether couples had been together for a shorter or longer duration did not meaningfully predict how they approached or managed interpersonal conflicts within their relationship.

Table 3 shows Correlation between Gender and Conflict Resolution Subscales

Variable		Gender	Conflict	Problem Solving	Self Protection	Acceptance
1. Gender	Pearson's r p-value					
2. Conflict	Pearson's r p-value	-0.060 0.650				
3.Problem Solving	Pearson's r p-value	-0.015 0.911	0.998 < .001	_		
4.Self Protection	Pearson's r p-value	-0.075 0.571	0.999 < .001	0.998 < .001		
5. Acceptance	Pearson's r p-value	-0.111 0.400	0.999 < .001	0.998 < .001	0.999 < .001	_

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to assess the relationship between gender and each of the four subscales of the Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI): Conflict, Problem Solving, Self Protection, and Acceptance. The results revealed consistently weak and statistically non-significant associations. Specifically, gender showed a very weak negative correlation with the Conflict subscale (r = -0.060, p = .650), indicating a negligible tendency for one gender to engage slightly less in conflictual behaviours, though the result was far from statistically significant. Similarly, the correlation between gender and Problem Solving was almost non-existent (r = -0.015, p = .911), suggesting no meaningful relationship between gender and the use of constructive conflict strategies. The correlation with the Self Protection subscale was also weak and non-significant (r = -0.075, p = .571), as was the association with the Acceptance subscale (r = -0.111, p = .400). Taken together, these findings suggest that gender does not play a significant role in influencing the types of conflict resolution strategies individuals use. Regardless of gender, participants appeared to utilize a comparable range of strategies when navigating conflict in their romantic relationships.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between conflict resolution styles and relationship duration, as well as to examine gender differences in conflict resolution strategies within long-term committed romantic relationships. The findings are interpreted in relation to the proposed hypotheses and existing literature.

Hypothesis 1

"There is a relationship between conflict resolution styles and relationship duration."

The results of this study did not support the first hypothesis. Pearson's correlation analysis revealed no statistically significant association between relationship duration and conflict resolution styles (r = 0.015, p = .912). This suggests that the length of time individuals have been in a romantic relationship does not significantly influence how they

approach or resolve conflict. In other words, couples who have been together longer do not necessarily differ from newer couples in the types of conflict resolution strategies they employ.

This finding contrasts with the conclusions drawn by Shulman et al., whose longitudinal research demonstrated that integrative conflict styles contributed to the longevity of adolescent relationships. Similarly, Caroline and Christian Heim's study of long-married couples emphasized how conflict strategies evolve over time through mutual negotiation and adaptation. One possible explanation for this contradiction could be that while conflict strategies do evolve in very long-term marriages (e.g., over decades), this change may not be as evident in mid-length or moderately long relationships, such as those represented in the present sample.

Moreover, Ünal and Akgün found that marital adjustment mediates the relationship between conflict resolution and satisfaction, suggesting that it is not just the length of the relationship, but also the quality of emotional regulation and dyadic adjustment that influences relational harmony. Therefore, the lack of association found in the present study might indicate that duration alone is not a sufficient indicator of conflict resolution maturity—relational dynamics are likely shaped more by emotional intelligence, mutual responsiveness, and shared values than time alone.

Hypothesis 2

"There are gender differences in conflict management strategies."

The second hypothesis was also not supported. Correlation results showed consistently weak and non-significant relationships between gender and the four CRSI subscales: Conflict, Problem Solving, Self Protection, and Acceptance. These findings indicate that men and women in the sample did not differ meaningfully in the conflict resolution strategies they reported using.

This aligns with findings from the study by Akula Bisht and Tripathi, who also found minimal gender differences in conflict resolution preferences. However, it partially contradicts Kurdek's (1995) longitudinal study, which revealed that wives' conflict engagement and husbands' withdrawal had distinct effects on marital satisfaction. Likewise, Sarkar and Bapu noted that anxious and avoidant attachment styles—which may be influenced by gendered socialization—affect conflict behaviours differently across genders.

One interpretation of this discrepancy is that gender differences may emerge more clearly in behavioural observations or within specific relational contexts (e.g., during conflict episodes), but may not be readily captured through self-reported conflict style measures. Additionally, cultural shifts in gender norms and emotional expression—particularly among younger or urban populations—may be reducing traditional gender-based differences in conflict resolution behaviours.

The findings from this study contribute to a growing body of literature emphasizing the complexity of conflict resolution in romantic relationships. Consistent with Ünal and Akgün, Sathyamurthy et al., and Caroline & Christian Heim, the results affirm that conflict resolution is a multifaceted construct influenced by factors such as emotional intelligence, mutual adaptation, and communication quality—rather than solely demographic variables like gender or duration.

However, the lack of significant findings contrasts with studies suggesting that conflict resolution patterns differ significantly by gender (Kurdek, 1995) or evolve over time (Shulman et al.). Furthermore, while Bisht and Tripathi observed that even constructive conflict styles (e.g., problem solving) can be linked to lower satisfaction—possibly due to chronic relational strain—the present study did not find any such associations, pointing to a need for further exploration into contextual factors such as emotional climate, relational commitment, or external stressors.

Notably, the high inter-correlation among CRSI subscales in this study may indicate that participants tend to use multiple strategies simultaneously, or that their conflict style is fluid depending on situational dynamics. This supports Heim & Heim's conclusion that long-term couples often blend strategies in adaptive ways, rather than adhering rigidly to one style.



The present study sought to examine the associations between conflict resolution styles, relationship duration, and gender among individuals in long-term committed romantic relationships. Contrary to expectations, the results revealed no significant relationship between the length of a relationship and the type of conflict resolution strategies used, nor were there notable gender differences in the use of such strategies. These findings challenge some long-held assumptions in relationship research that longer durations inherently cultivate better conflict management, or that men and women approach conflict in fundamentally different ways.

While these null findings may appear to diminish the role of relationship duration and gender in predicting conflict behaviour, they actually highlight a deeper truth reflected in more recent literature: that conflict resolution is not purely a function of time spent together or gendered behavioural scripts, but is instead shaped by more nuanced variables such as emotional intelligence, attachment security, communication dynamics, mutual empathy, and cultural influences. The high inter-correlations among CRSI subscales found in this study further support the notion that individuals often draw from a blended repertoire of conflict strategies, rather than adhering to a singular, fixed style.

From a theoretical standpoint, the study contributes to a more refined understanding of relationship functioning by suggesting that demographic factors may be insufficient as standalone predictors of conflict style. Instead, these factors may interact with personality traits, relational schemas, and environmental stressors in more complex ways than previously understood. In practical terms, the findings caution against overly generalized assumptions about how conflict operates within relationships and encourage relationship counsellors, therapists, and educators to adopt more individualized, strengths-based approaches when working with couples.

Moreover, the results invite future research to explore potential moderators and mediators—such as emotional intimacy, love language alignment, psychological flexibility, and conflict frequency—that may clarify when and how conflict resolution styles impact relationship outcomes. Longitudinal and dyadic research designs are especially needed to capture the evolving nature of conflict behaviour over time and across diverse relational stages.

In conclusion, while this study did not find support for the initial hypotheses, it offers valuable insights into the complex, multidimensional nature of conflict resolution in romantic partnerships. It underscores the importance of looking beyond surface-level demographic characteristics and toward the deeper emotional and relational processes that drive how couples manage disagreement, maintain connection, and sustain relationship health over time. These findings contribute to the broader goal of promoting emotionally intelligent, adaptable, and resilient romantic relationships in an increasingly dynamic social world.

CONCLUSION

The present study investigated the influence of conflict resolution styles on long-term committed romantic relationships. Grounded in contemporary research on relational dynamics, the study aimed to explore whether demographic factors such as time spent in a relationship and gender significantly influenced how individuals manage conflict within their romantic partnerships.

The findings did not support the initial hypotheses. No significant relationship was found between relationship duration and conflict resolution styles, nor were there any significant gender-based differences in the use of conflict strategies. These results suggest that conflict resolution behaviours are not inherently determined by how long individuals have been in a relationship or by their gender. Rather, conflict resolution may be more closely tied to relational processes, emotional maturity, and contextual variables—such as communication quality, emotional intelligence, attachment patterns, and mutual responsiveness.

The literature reviewed supported the centrality of conflict resolution in maintaining relationship satisfaction and longevity. Numerous studies underscored the positive impact of constructive strategies such as compromise, emotional regulation, and empathetic communication on relationship quality. At the same time, divergent findings in the literature—such as those from Shulman et al., Kurdek (1995), and Bisht and Tripathi—highlight the complexity of

relationship dynamics and suggest that conflict resolution may be influenced by broader factors including cultural background, relationship stage, and psychological well-being.

Overall, the findings of this study contribute to a more nuanced understanding of romantic conflict management by challenging simplistic assumptions tied to relationship length and gender. They advocate for a more relational and individualized view of conflict resolution—one that considers the emotional, cognitive, and communicative capacities of each partner, as well as the dynamic interplay between them.

Future research is encouraged to explore additional moderating variables—such as emotional intimacy, personality congruence, digital communication habits, and stress levels—that may better account for variability in conflict resolution behaviour. Longitudinal and dyadic designs would also be valuable in tracking how conflict patterns evolve over time and in identifying critical relational turning points.

In conclusion, this study emphasizes that while demographic variables offer some insight into romantic relationships, it is the depth of emotional connection, the flexibility of communication, and the quality of mutual understanding that most powerfully shape how couples manage conflict and sustain emotional closeness over time.

KEY FINDINGS

- 1. No Significant Relationship between Relationship Duration and Conflict Resolution Styles-The study found no statistically significant association between the duration of a romantic relationship and the type of conflict resolution strategies used. This indicates that the length of time a couple has been together does not significantly influence their conflict resolution behaviours.
- 2. No Significant Gender Differences in Conflict Resolution Styles-There is no significant gender-based differences across the four conflict resolution subscales (Conflict, Problem Solving, Self-Protection, and Acceptance). Men and women reported similar patterns in how they manage conflict within their relationships.
- 3. Contradictions of Traditional Assumptions about Duration and Gender-The study's findings challenge traditional assumptions in relationship research which suggest that longer relationship duration or gender differences significantly affect conflict resolution patterns. Instead, the data suggest that other psychological or interpersonal factors may be more influential.
- 4. Support for Multidimensional, Context-Dependent Understanding of Conflict Behaviour In light of the literature, the study supports a more nuanced view of conflict resolution in romantic relationships—one that emphasizes emotional intelligence, mutual adaptation, and contextual factors over static demographic characteristics.

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