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How vacation satisfaction shapes relationship quality among Indian couples

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ABSTRACT
This study explores the impact of vacation satisfaction on relationship quality in diverse Indian couples. It considers factors such as commitment, relationship type, and demographics. The research also explores the influence of travel motivations on relationship quality, encompassing aspects like goal attainment and commitment. The results indicate that Push and Pull motivations positively contribute to vacation satisfaction, underscoring their role in enhancing satisfaction. Moreover, the study emphasizes the importance of vacation satisfaction, commitment, and relationship quality in overall relationship quality improvement. Notably, different relationship types (cohabiting, not living together, married) do not alter the link between vacation satisfaction and relationship quality. The paper concludes with implications derived from the findings of the study.

Introduction

In the 21st century, many couples struggle to maintain passion in their relationships, which can negatively impact their married life. Satisfaction and commitment change over time in heterosexual couples (Rusbult, 1983). Indo-Asian News Service (2015) reported that 94% of Indian couples feel a lack of attractiveness in their married lives and want to improve their relationship. The couple’s relationship quality can be improved by engaging in new (Ying et al., 2018) and exciting activities together (Aron et al., 2000). Travel and tourism can lead to rapid self-expansion and enhance relationship quality (Bandara et al., 2017).

Morry et al. (2010) further explained the attributes of relationship quality into positive and negative, which can be measured by examining patterns of interaction observed by others. Relationship quality plays a pivotal role in personal well-being and longevity – the substantial significance of maintaining a healthy relationship quality has recently been an attentive area of research. Poor relationship quality can cause stress and distressed bonds, harming both physical and mental health (Hassebrauck & Fehr, 2002). Nurturing, intimacy, understanding, love styles, self-validation, personal growth traits, communication methods, emotional awareness, and partner support are the significant aspects of evaluating the relationship quality (Yang & Neustaedter, 2020).
Vacations (travel and tourism) revitalize the body and mind by exposing individuals to new environments and taking off from their daily routines to impact overall well-being and happiness (Otoo & Kim, 2020). Bhatia and Maidullah (2022) assert that couples taking regular vacations develop higher satisfaction levels in relationships and consider vacations an essential opportunity for romance. Vacation to a romantic destination and participating in tourism activities create a romantic atmosphere (Li et al., 2022), improve communication (Durko and Petrick, 2016), reinforce mutual commitment, intensify bonds (Cai & Zhou, 2022), reduce stress (Holman & Jacquart, 1988) and also helps in reducing divorce/separation/break-ups (Hill, 1988) between couples, and revitalizes relationship.

Motivations are essential for satisfying vacation companions’ needs, notably for couples with straightforward patterns (Tokarchuk & Maurer, 2017). Service quality received at a destination, along with the achievement of goals set from push and pull motivation (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977) to travel, further impacts the quality of life and helps to improve the relationship commitment (Klenosky, 2002). Vacation satisfaction has been accounted for with an implicit effect on life fulfilment via participation in leisure activities at the tourist destination (Xu et al., 2017).

This research investigates how vacation satisfaction impacts relationship quality for Indian couples with different statuses and whether relationship commitment mediates, relationship types, and demographic factors moderate this effect. It examines the influence of travel motivations on relationship quality among various couple statuses, considering goal achievements and commitment dynamics. The research focuses on Indian-origin couples, utilizing theoretical models and scales to provide insights into relationship quality. It encompasses literature review, theory, data collection, results, implications, limitations, and future avenues.

**Literature review**

**Tourism motivation**

Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs theory (Maslow, 1943) laid the groundwork for motivation research, sparking the development of diverse theories and models in tourism literature. The widely used push-pull framework by Dann (1977) suggests that tourists are motivated by internal desires and emotions, while external factors like destination attributes also influence their travel choices. The desire to escape and unwind are identified as a crucial internal motivation for couples to travel. Conversely, destination pull factors like scenic beauty, historical and cultural attractions, and unique experiences are shaped by the environment of the destination. Factors such as visa accessibility, currency exchange, and friendly local communities also contribute to attracting tourists. Pull motivation driven by destination features can create memorable couple experiences, fostering emotional attachment and stronger relationship bonds (Ying et al., 2018).

**Vacation satisfaction**

Vacation satisfaction arises from the interplay of push and pull motivations, shaping holiday goals. Positive evaluation of vacation-related experiences contributes to vacation satisfaction. Push motivation is an internal factor that drives couples to seek travel for escapism, relaxation, and rejuvenation (Otoo & Kim, 2020). Escape, rest, and relaxation are significant push factors, fostering bonding and understanding between partners and enabling open conversations, all vital in a relationship (Shahvali et al., 2019). Shared experiences during vacations, like effective communication and new adventures, enhance day-to-day couple functioning (Cai & Zhou, 2022). Love enriches social interaction, relationship enhancement, and tourist satisfaction (Filep & Matteucci, 2020). Pull motivations for travel are primarily influenced by an individual’s environment and destination features.
Destination image emerges as a crucial pull factor, influencing tour quality, satisfaction, and word-of-mouth recommendations (Hwang et al., 2020). Good restaurants are a dominant pull motivation for British travellers to Phuket (Sastre & Phakdee-Auksorn, 2017). These pull factors attract tourists and create memorable experiences, with destination beauty and services fostering emotional attachment and strong relationship bonds (Ying et al., 2018). Hence, the following hypotheses can be proposed:

**H1:** Push motivation positively affects vacation satisfaction.

**H2:** Pull motivation positively affects vacation satisfaction.

Relationship commitment

Commitment involves persisting in a particular course of action (VanderDrift et al., 2009). In romantic relationships, commitment has three dimensions: attraction (including love, enjoyment, and devotion), moral responsibility (commitment to marriage), and constraining factors (emotional and financial costs) (Stanley et al., 2002). Commitment is critical in relationship dynamics, addressing concerns about relationship quality and stability (Rusbult, 1983).

In relationships, commitment is nurtured through personal interactions and mutual gestures. It evolves through shared experiences, joint problem-solving, and activities denoted as experiential risk, benefits, evaluation, co-creation, relationship quality, and future travel intentions (Wu & Cheng, 2020) among couples. Research has shown that commitment increases as satisfaction and investment in the relationship increase (Givertz & Segrin, 2005; Rusbult, 1983). Likewise, individuals whose emotional and psychological needs are met by their partner are more likely to be committed and rooted in the relationship (Gustafsson et al., 2005). Using actor-partner interdependence models, Givertz et al. (2009) established a strong link between satisfaction and commitment among romantic couples. Marital commitment, directly and indirectly, affects the couple’s satisfaction in marriage. Nonetheless, a research gap exists concerning the couple’s vacation satisfaction and commitment level. Hence, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

**H3:** Vacation satisfaction positively influences relationship commitment.

Relationship quality

Relationship quality is a multifaceted concept encompassing objective and subjective dimensions of a relationship, including intimacy, agreement, autonomy, and sexuality (Morry et al., 2010). Conde Nast Traveler, a travel magazine, highlighted enhancing romantic relationships through travel, citing the Malaysian government’s “second honeymoon” programme with a remarkable 99% success rate (Bandara et al., 2017). Research indicates that engaging in novel and exciting activities, such as travel experiences, can trigger positive emotions and elevate relationship quality (Hassebrauck & Fehr, 2002). Findings suggest that couples who embark on journeys foster greater connection, intimacy, communication, and well-being upon their return (Aron et al., 2000). Nonetheless, although these studies underscore the positive impact of vacations on relationships and overall quality of life, they have not explicitly delved into the correlation between vacation satisfaction and relationship quality. Drawing from these insights, proposing hypotheses concerning this relationship becomes credible;
**H4:** Vacation satisfaction positively influences relationship quality.

**The relationship between relationship commitment and relationship quality**

Commitment is a crucial predictor of relationship quality (Weigel et al., 2011; Wiik et al., 2009). Commitment is influenced by continued communication, affection, partner-acceptable behaviour, service quality, and shared experiences (Yang & Neustaedter, 2020). Negative communication could influence the association between commitment and relationship quality (Kelmer et al., 2013). Additionally, shared experiences, such as future travel preparation, may improve relationship quality through commitment (Su et al., 2016). Hence the following hypothesis is proposed;

**H5:** Relationship commitment positively influences the relationship quality

**The mediating role of relationship commitment between vacation satisfaction and relationship quality**

Couples face challenges in improving relationships or achieving common goals. Vacations are a goal-oriented approach used by couples to enhance relationship quality. Bhatia and Maidullah (2022) confirmed that travelling together positively impacts relationships. Yang and Neustaedter (2020) suggest that time spent on travel planning and discussion can boost relationship quality through commitment. Loyalty and commitment are often used interchangeably. Interactions between partners can impact relationship quality over time. Vacation satisfaction can enhance relationship quality and commitment. Despite similar studies, no models have measured the after-effects of vacation satisfaction on improved relationship quality with the role of commitment understood. This research is grounded in existing literature and proposes the following hypotheses.

**H6:** Relationship commitment mediates vacation satisfaction and relationship quality.

**The moderating role of relationship types between relationship commitment and relationship quality**

Modern societies encompass many romantic relationships, spanning partner choice, cohabitation, same-sex marriages, premarital relationships, and singlehood (Surra and Boelter, 2013). Stafford and Canary (1991) confirmed that the nature of the relationship, whether married, engaged, seriously dating, or casually dating, influences perceptions of partner maintenance strategies. Distinct relationship types impact commitment and quality, with cohabiting couples demonstrating less commitment than married couples (Wiik et al., 2009). An exciting study by Mustafa et al. (2013) confirmed that Malaysian respondents favour traditional relationships, while Indian and Chinese respondents find more satisfaction in long-term commitments. In contrast, Li et al. (2022) found that couples who are engaged, cohabiting, or in the dating phase tend to display more substantial personal commitment during the initial stages of the relationship, in contrast to couples whose primary emphasis is marriage. The foundational elements of honesty, trust, and morality significantly mould future relationships, and the dynamics of relationship commitment and quality fluctuate among diverse relationship categories.
There are numerous approaches to understanding relationship commitment and quality. Using measures such as motivation, income, and self-administered research (married, dating/engaged, cohabiting), researchers have explored how different factors influence relationship satisfaction. This includes investigating the role of demographic factors such as gender, education level, income, and religion in relationship commitment and quality. Halliday Hardie and Lucas (2010) acknowledge the necessity to explore these factors in modern societies, where relationship development is influenced by both married and cohabiting couples. They highlight economic hardship as a significant indicator of declining relationship quality. Nicholas and Wolfinger (2008) provide evidence, drawing examples from Western societies, indicating the crucial role of religion in relationship maintenance strategies. Religious activities can enhance feelings of social support, thereby alleviating social and economic stresses that could strain relationships. Wiik et al. (2009) confirmed that European women tend to be more committed to relationships than men, enhancing relationship quality. Additionally, the study confirms that couples with similar educational levels experience reduced chances of separation compared to those with educational imbalances, fostering improved relationship quality and commitment.

H7: Relationship types moderate relationship commitment and relationship quality.

The moderating role of demographic factors (gender, education level, income, religion) between relationship commitment and relationship quality

Halliday Hardie and Lucas (2010) acknowledge the necessity, in modern societies, to explore numerous contributing factors for health and happiness in relationship development, encompassing both married and cohabiting couples. They highlight economic hardship as a significant indicator of declining relationship quality. Nicholas and Wolfinger (2008) furnish evidence, drawing examples from Western societies, indicating the crucial role of religion in relationship maintenance strategies for married and cohabiting couples. Attending religious sites enhances feelings of social support, thereby alleviating social and economic stresses that could strain relationships (Su et al., 2016). Wiik et al. (2009) confirmed that European women tend to be more committed to relationships than men, enhancing relationship quality. Additionally, the study confirms that couples with similar educational levels experience reduced chances of separation compared to those with educational imbalances, fostering improved relationship quality and commitment.

H8: Gender moderates relationship commitment and relationship quality.

H9: Education level moderates relationship commitment and relationship quality.

H10: Income moderates relationship commitment and relationship quality.

H11: Religion moderates relationship commitment and relationship quality.

Methodology

Research design

This study investigates how travel motivations affect relationship quality in couples of different statuses (married, dating/engaged, cohabiting). It analyses the impact of achieving personal and destination-related goals through pull/push motivations on relationship commitment and trajectory. Applying the quantitative method, this study extends Durko and Petrik’s prior work (Durko & Petrick, 2016) by introducing motivation as an antecedent to vacation satisfaction and relationship quality.

Research instrument

Self-administered survey encompassing demographic questions in the first section (age, gender, income, education, occupation). The following section inquired about relationship duration, cohabitation duration, and annual vacation count. Participants rated 55 research concepts on a 5-point scale (1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree). The survey included adapted items: 18 items for pull and push motivation (Chen & Chen, 2015), 16 for vacation satisfaction (Uysal et al., 2003), 9 for relationship quality (Chonody et al., 2020), and 12 for relationship commitment (Monteiro et al., 2015).

Sampling and data collection

Using a quantitative method and purposive sampling, adults recently taking vacations were approached as participants in this research. Data was collected online (via Google Forms) using
a self-administered questionnaire from December 2022 to February 2023. Informed consent was obtained from participants, and they were informed about data privacy and confidentiality before data collection. Out of 307 responses received, all were complete except for five, which were excluded due to missing data. Table 1 illustrates demographic findings: 64.9% were female, with the highest age group being 26–30 years (31.7%) and 61.3% having a post-graduate degree.

Most respondents were within the income range of INR15000–24999 (31.1%), while students formed the largest occupational group (39.4%). It was observed that most couples in relationships follow Hinduism (86.4%), probably because of the large population. In terms of relationship status, noteworthy findings indicate that most couples (54.6%) cohabit without being married, while 33.8%...

| Table 1. Respondent demographics. |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| **Description**               | **Frequency**   | **Percentage**  |
| Gender                        |                 |                 |
| Female                        | 196             | 64.9%           |
| Male                          | 106             | 35.1%           |
| Age (years)                   |                 |                 |
| 21–25                         | 56              | 18.5%           |
| 26–30                         | 96              | 31.7%           |
| 31–35                         | 64              | 21.2%           |
| 36–40                         | 51              | 16.9%           |
| 41–45                         | 19              | 6.3%            |
| 46–50                         | 9               | 2.9%            |
| 51–55                         | 7               | 2.3%            |
| Education                     |                 |                 |
| Diploma                       | 6               | 2.0%            |
| Bachelor’s Degree             | 75              | 24.8%           |
| Post Graduate Degree          | 185             | 61.3%           |
| PhD                           | 36              | 11.9%           |
| Income (Monthly – INR)        |                 |                 |
| 15000–24999                   | 94              | 31.1%           |
| 25000–34999                   | 51              | 16.9%           |
| 35000–49999                   | 40              | 13.2%           |
| 50000–59999                   | 29              | 9.6%            |
| 60000–100000                  | 45              | 14.9%           |
| 100000–above                  | 43              | 14.3%           |
| Occupation                    |                 |                 |
| Professional/Self Employed    | 42              | 13.9%           |
| Working                       | 123             | 40.7%           |
| Student                       | 119             | 39.4%           |
| Other                         | 18              | 6.0%            |
| Religion                      |                 |                 |
| Christian                     | 9               | 3.0%            |
| Hindu                         | 261             | 86.4%           |
| Muslim                        | 18              | 6.0%            |
| Other                         | 14              | 4.6%            |
| Relationship Types            |                 |                 |
| Relationships but not live in together | 102   | 33.8%           |
| Married                       | 35              | 11.6%           |
| Live in relationship          | 165             | 54.6%           |
| Number of years living in a relationship |     |                 |
| Less than a year              | 136             | 45.0%           |
| 1                             | 55              | 18.2%           |
| 2–4                           | 52              | 17.2%           |
| 5–10                          | 26              | 8.6%            |
| 10+                           | 35              | 10.9%           |
| Number of vacation/s taken in a year |     |                 |
| Never                         | 27              | 8.9%            |
| 1 Time                        | 70              | 23.2%           |
| 2 times                       | 83              | 27.5%           |
| More than 2 times             | 122             | 40.4%           |
are in a relationship but live separately. Remarkably, 45% of these couples have been together for under a year, with 18% for one year and 17% for 2–4 years. Concerning vacation habits, 40.4% embarked on over two trips annually.

**Results and discussion**

In this research, the conceptual path model was analysed using the software SmartPLS, which is based on partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). The data analysis process was divided into two primary sections: the measurement and structural models. The measurement model was used as a foundation base to assess and examine the validity and reliability of the derived measures for the outer model-theoretical constructs. In contrast, the estimation of the path model was examined through testing (structural model) the inner model. PLS path modelling was one of the robust methods to analyse conceptual models in social sciences, mainly in hospitality and tourism (Ali et al., 2018). Further, to maximize the dependent constructs’ predictability, the conceptual model contains reflective measurement, the nature of the conceptual model as multi-dimension, and the violation of multivariate normality assumptions (Dhahak & Huseynov, 2020; Hair et al., 2019).

**Measurement model assessments**

The proposed model includes four first-order constructs: pull motivation, push motivation, vacation satisfaction, relationship commitment, and relationship quality. The loadings of the measures on their relevant constructs were examined to evaluate the consistency and reliability of the measures and items. Table 2 presents the factor loading results of each item; in this case, the factor loading values of RQ3, RC4, RC6, RC8, and RC12 less than 0.5 were removed to meet the recommended thresholds that support indicator reliability. Furthermore, all constructs were found to be reliable based on Cronbach’s alpha (CA) and composite reliability (CR) values, which were both above the recommended thresholds.

Table 2 revealed that Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability values were above 0.7, thus indicating that the measurements are reliable and have the predicting capability of their construct, respectively. Additionally, to evaluate the convergent validity of the outer model, both the cross-loading of measurements and the average variance extracted (AVE) were measured. The AVE value of each construct was above the threshold limit of 0.50, resulting in it being able to explain at least 50% of the variance of its indicators (Hair et al., 2019). As per Table 2, the AVE values of each construct are “Relationship Commitment” 0.746, “Pull Motivation” 0.754, “Push Motivation” 0.648, “Relationship Quality” 0.847, and “Vacation Satisfaction” 0.788, respectively.

To ensure that the constructs within the path model are distinct from each other, the discriminant validity was evaluated using two measures: the Fornell-Larcker and Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT). The Fornell-Larcker criteria state that the AVE square root of each construct should be higher than the correlation of that construct with all other constructs (see Table 3). The HTMT ratios in Table 3 were below the critical limit of 0.90, indicating the accuracy of correlation. Tables 3 and 4 indicate that the model has good discriminant validity using both methods.

Two assessment methods were employed to evaluate the structural model, the R-square measure for endogenous constructs and path coefficients, as suggested by Hair et al. (2019) and Sarstedt et al. (2011). The R-squared values for the endogenous constructs (0.67, 0.33, and 0.19) indicate substantial, moderate, and weak values based on the research context, while path coefficients must be statistically significant. In this study, the R-squared values for relationship commitment, relationship quality, and vacation satisfaction were acceptable at 0.469, 0.746, and 0.483, respectively (see Table 4). Path coefficients were calculated using the bias-corrected bootstrapping method with 5,000 subsamples. The results indicate that path relationships were statistically significant on direct effect. Both pull motivation and push
motivation had a positive effect on vacation satisfaction. Vacation satisfaction positively impacted relationship quality and relationship commitment. Relationship commitment positively affects relationship quality. Thus, hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H4, and H5 were supported (see Figure 1 and Table 4).
According to the proposed model, relationship commitment mediates the relationship between vacation satisfaction and relationship quality. The approach of Baron and Kenny (1986) was adopted to test this mediation effect. Initially, the researchers measured the direct relationship between vacation satisfaction and relationship quality without considering the mediator (relationship commitment). The path coefficient was found to be significant at $B = .374$, and the p-value of the path coefficient was also significant. Next, the indirect relationship between vacation satisfaction and relationship quality with the mediator relationship commitment was measured. The coefficients for both VS->RC ($B = .686$, p-value significant) and RC->RQ ($B = .557$, p-value significant) were found to be significant. The decrease in the coefficient value between the predictor and criterion variables after the inclusion of the mediator confirms the presence of mediation. The significant p-value in both conditions, with and without the mediator, indicates partial mediation. Thus, hypothesis H6 was accepted (see Figure 1 and Table 4).

The study also evaluated the moderating effect of education level, income, gender, religion, and relationship types on the relationship between relationship commitment and relationship quality. The results showed that education level, income, gender, religion, and relationship types did not
moderate the relationship, with p-values of 0.856, 0.203, 0.073, 0.965, and 0.347, respectively. Thus, hypotheses H7, H8, H9, H10, and H11 were rejected (see Figure 1 and Table 4).

**Conclusion and implications**

Prior research has focused on the psychological dimensions of love and relationships among partners, investigating diverse factors contributing to relationship development and well-being (Shahvali et al., 2019). This study assessed the impact of Push Motivation (H1) and Pull Motivation (H2) on vacation satisfaction. Push motivation includes escaping routine life, deepening partner familiarity, evaluating compatibility, and nurturing intimacy. In contrast, pull motivation includes preferences for luxury experiences, natural settings, historical sites, and local cuisine. Vacation satisfaction is crucial for travellers seeking unique experiences and the travel industry, fostering positive interactions.

This study supports the idea that vacation satisfaction may positively influence relationship commitment (H3) and quality (H4). Vacation satisfaction is believed to positively impact relationship commitment (H3), exemplified by partner importance and unity, and relationship quality (H4), expressed through contentment and the realization of an ideal relationship. However, Durko and Petrick’s (2016) model only focused on commitment as the outcome of vacation satisfaction, neglecting relationship quality.

Moreover, the interaction between vacation satisfaction and relationship commitment acts as a mediation mechanism (H5), positively affecting relationship quality (H6). The approach-based conflict resolution strategy is significant in fostering healthy relationships and promoting unity,
cooperation, and harmony during disagreements. Regarding H7, the impact of vacation satisfaction on relationship quality remains consistent across relationship types (cohabiting/engaged/married couples). This aligns with Weigel et al. (2011) argument that commitment indicators mediate the link between commitment and relationship quality regardless of relationship status. Weigel et al. (2011) found no relationship quality differences between two groups on the relationship continuum: those who cohabited and those planning to marry. This contradicts the findings of Wiik et al. (2009) about the influence of relationship type, as our study demonstrates that vacation happiness and cohesiveness improve relationship quality across relationship types. Using the extended Investment Model, we investigated how vacations impact commitment and relationship quality. According to Givertz et al. (2009), more outstanding commitment increases the likelihood of a connection. Shared vacation experiences like conversation and trying new things enrich relationships regardless of type.

The demographics offer insight into crucial contextual elements that influence the interpretation of our findings. According to (H8,9,10,11), a critical factor in this discussion is the demographic makeup of our sample. Our sample was notable for having a balanced representation of the sexes and a small range in age, education, wealth, and religion. This distribution of demographic characteristics mirrors the target audience’s more comprehensive demographic profile. The results showed that, regardless of the participant’s demographic features, vacation happiness, partner connection, and unity consistently improved relationship quality. This consistency indicates that age, gender, education level, or religion have little to no effect on the relationship-quality outcomes of shared vacation experiences. Our research extends Givertz’s et al. (2009) idea of commitment facets to the setting of holiday experiences. Recognizing that our study’s sample size may restrict the conclusions’ applicability to larger populations is crucial.

Furthermore, self-reporting and potential answer biases may have affected the integrity of the demographic data gathered. Researchers can further investigate the interaction between demographic characteristics and other potential moderators in detail. In conclusion, our study’s demographic findings add to understanding of how vacationing together affects relationship quality and significantly impacts real-world interventions and theoretical debates in relationship psychology.

Given India’s collectivist culture valuing relationship development, the study’s findings have significant societal implications. Collaborations between NGOs and travel companies can develop couple-friendly travel packages. Accommodation providers can offer conflict resolution activities to enhance relationships. The study underscores the importance of counselling and support mechanisms for couples, addressing challenges like impulsive marriages and family acceptance issues. Training for travel industry professionals can improve travel products and support struggling relationships.

**Implication**

The study holds significant implications in several aspects. Firstly, it applies the investment model beyond tourism to couples’ relationships, offering new insights into the connection between vacation satisfaction and commitment. This suggests couples can enhance their relationships by investing in shared vacation experiences and time. Secondly, the study reveals that demographic and relationship types, like cohabiting or married, do not moderate the links between vacation satisfaction, commitment, and relationship quality. This adds understanding to how different relationships do not affect couple vacation outcomes. Thirdly, it stresses measuring relationship quality in Indian couples through commitment and vacation satisfaction due to sharing experience and time. This offers a unique perspective on assessing Indian relationship quality.

The study’s statistical results from gathered data affirm the positive impact of Push and Pull motivation on vacation satisfaction (H1 and H2), emphasizing their role as satisfaction drivers. Results from H4, H5, and H6 unveil vacation satisfaction dimensions, confirming commitment’s significance in enhancing relationship quality and potentially guiding travel programmes for
couples facing separation/divorce. Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) and local tourism offices are pivotal in attracting tourists and benefiting the local economy. The researcher expands on an investment model involving alternatives search, investment cost, and relationship satisfaction, adding vacation satisfaction for commitment.

The study’s outcomes hold managerial implications for the tourism sector, especially for DMOs, resorts, hotels, and hospitality units. Tailored infrastructure and couple-based activities can foster bonding. Promoting food prep, competitions, and games can enhance relationship quality. Tourism organizations should focus on couples’ relationship development, creating marketing strategies, and hiring personnel with social behaviour expertise. Offering counselling, conflict resolution, and improved events can elevate relationship quality. These efforts nurture trust and satisfaction in intangible aspects, fostering commitment among couples.

Lastly, the study underscores couple-friendly hotels and tourism’s potential to improve vacation satisfaction, commitment, and relationship quality. This suggests how the tourism industry can contribute to stronger relationships and well-being. Overall, this study advances our understanding of how vacations strengthen couple bonds and how tourism enhances relationship quality.

**Limitations and future avenues**

Limitations of this study encompass the use of a design to be cross-sectional, limiting causal inference. Future research could employ longitudinal designs to understand better the temporal relationships between vacation satisfaction, commitment, and relationship quality. Additionally, the study could investigate how cultural factors may moderate the relationships examined in this study. Future research could also explore the function of other factors, such as communication and trust, in shaping relationship quality among couples. Finally, the study focused on couples engaged in travel as a medium of commitment and relationship quality. Future research could extend this framework to additional contexts such as long-distance relationships, online dating, or other industries where a similar investment model may be relevant. A mixed-method approach involving in-depth interviews followed by a survey distinguishing between married and unmarried couples could be considered for future research.

**Disclosure statement**

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

**Notes on contributors**

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