

Commitment Dynamics: Generational Variations in Romantic Relationships among Gen X, Millennials and Gen Z

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Abstract : Background: Romantic commitment has evolved across generations, influenced by societal, cultural, and technological changes. This study explores how Generation X, Millennials, and Gen Z perceive, develop, and sustain commitment, with a focus on family, society, and technology. The objectives are to uncover generational differences, identify barriers to commitment, and examine cultural influences, offering insights to foster healthier relationships in a shifting world. Method: A phenomenological approach was used to examine generational differences in romantic commitment dynamics. Fifteen participants (five from each generation) were recruited online. Inclusion criteria required participants to identify with a specified generation and have romantic relationship experience. Semi-structured interviews (60-90 minutes) were conducted, focusing on personal experiences, values, and technology's influence on commitment. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed thematically. Ethical protocols ensured participant well-being and data integrity. Findings: Generational shifts in commitment were observed, with Gen X emphasizing traditional values like marriage and loyalty, Millennials balancing tradition with personal fulfillment, and Gen Z prioritizing autonomy and mental well-being. Technology, such as dating apps and social media, created option overload and skepticism about authenticity. Despite increasing individualization, family influence remained significant. Key barriers to commitment included emotional detachment, career priorities, and trust issues, reflecting a broader shift toward more flexible and individualized relationships. Conclusion: This study provides valuable insights into generational differences in commitment dynamics, highlighting shifts in how commitment is viewed and enacted. While the study contributes to understanding evolving perspectives, the findings are limited by a small sample size, potential cultural biases, and the short-term nature of the research, limiting generalizability. Future Implications: Future research should focus on cross-cultural and longitudinal studies to track changes in commitment perceptions. Examining digital communication's impact on relationship satisfaction and exploring new frameworks for assessing relationship success will further inform understanding and policymaking in the context of evolving romantic dynamics.

Keywords : generational differences, commitment dynamics, romantic relationships, emotional compatibility, social media

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