

INVESTMENT MODEL SCALE (IMS)

Reference:

Rusbult, C. E., Martz, J. M., and Agnew, C. R. (1998). The Investment Model Scale: Measuring commitment level, satisfaction level, quality of alternatives, and investment size. *Personal Relationships*, 5, 357-391.

Description of Measure:

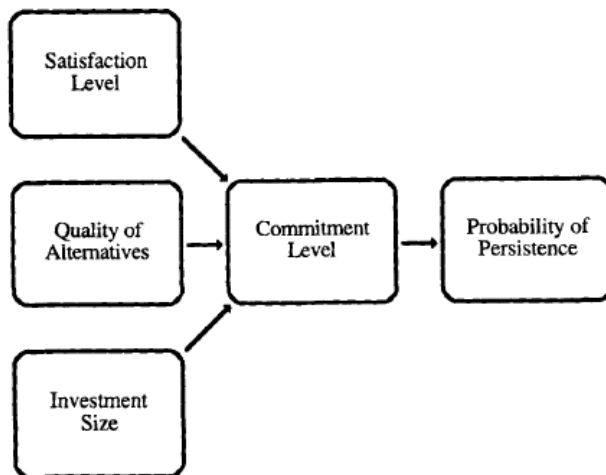
A 29-item scale that measures four constructs of the investment model (Rusbult, 1980 see below for abstract):

- (1) Commitment level – degree one intends to persist in the relationship
- (2) Relationship satisfaction – degree that the relationship fulfilled needs for intimacy, sex, companionship, security and emotional involvement.
- (3) Quality of alternatives – degree that one believes the satisfaction needs (above) could be fulfilled in another relationship.
- (4) Investment size -- measures perceptions of time invested, interconnected identity, memories, and shared experiences.

The Relationship Satisfaction, Quality of Alternatives, and Investment Size components each have Facet Items that are initially asked, prior to more global items. These facet items are concrete exemplars of each construct and are designed to prepare the respondent for the global items and are not measured in final analyses.

Respondents answer each item on a 9-point scale ranging from 0 (not at all) to 8 (completely).

Here is a diagram of the Investment Model (from Rusbult et al., 1998):



Abstracts of Selected Related Articles:

Rusbult, C. E. (1980a). Commitment and satisfaction in romantic associations: A test of the investment model. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 16, 172-186

According to the investment model, attraction to and satisfaction with a relationship is a function of a comparison of the relationship outcome value to the individual's expectations, or comparison level. Commitment to a relationship is said to be a function not only of the relationship outcome value, but also the quality of the best available alternative and the magnitude of the individual's investment in the relationship. The investment of resources serves to increase commitment by increasing the costs of leaving the relationship. In Exp I, with 171 undergraduates, commitment to relationships increased with investment size and decreased with the value of alternatives, but was not appreciably affected by relationship costs. Satisfaction/attraction significantly increased as relationship costs decreased. In Exp II, with 111 undergraduates, satisfaction/attraction was predicted by relationship reward value and relationship cost value. Commitment to relationships increased as relationship reward value and investment size increased and as alternative value and relationship cost value decreased, although the effects of cost value were weak.

Rusbult, C. E. (1983). A longitudinal test of the investment model: The development (and deterioration) of satisfaction and commitment in heterosexual involvements. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 45, 101-117.

Used a longitudinal study of heterosexual dating relationships to test investment model predictions regarding the process by which satisfaction and commitment develop (or deteriorate) over time. Initially, 17 male and 17 female undergraduates, each of whom was involved in a heterosexual relationship of 0-8 wks duration, participated. Four Ss dropped out, and 10 Ss' relationships ended. Questionnaires were completed by Ss every 17 days. Increases over time in rewards led to corresponding increases in satisfaction, whereas variations in costs did not significantly affect satisfaction. Commitment increased because of increases in satisfaction, declines in the quality of available alternatives, and increases in investment size. Greater rewards also promoted increases in commitment to maintain relationships, whereas changes in costs generally had no impact on commitment. For stayers, rewards increased, costs rose slightly, satisfaction grew, alternative quality declined, investment size increased, and commitment grew; for leavers the reverse occurred. Ss whose partners ended their relationships evidenced entrapment: They showed relatively low increases in satisfaction, but their alternatives declined in quality and they continued to invest heavily in their relationships.

Rusbult, C. E., Verette, J., Whitney, G. A., Slovik, L. F., & Lipkus, I. (1991). Accommodation processes in close relationships: Theory and preliminary empirical evidence. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 60, 53-78.

A theory of accommodation processes is advanced, and the results of 6 studies are reported. Accommodation refers to the willingness, when a partner has engaged in a potentially destructive act, to inhibit impulses to react destructively and instead react constructively. Studies 1 and 2 demonstrated that accommodation is lower under conditions of reduced social concern and lower interdependence. Studies 3, 4, and 5 revealed that accommodation is associated with greater satisfaction, commitment, investment size, centrality of relationship, psychological femininity, and partner perspective taking and with poorer quality alternatives. Commitment plays a fairly strong role in mediating willingness to accommodate. Study 6 showed that couple functioning is associated with greater joint and mutual tendencies to inhibit destructive reactions. Study 6 also demonstrated that self-reports of accommodation are related to relevant behavioral measures.

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