ATTACHMENT STYLES OF COUPLE WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE PARENTS IMPACTING CURRENT MARITAL RELATIONSHIPS

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Abstract:
Attachment theory, a psychological framework developed by John Bowlby, delves into the dynamics of relationships and bonds, especially in long-term connections such as those between parents and children or romantic partners. Central to Bowlby's premise is the belief that the initial bonds formed by children with their caregivers wield profound and enduring influence over their lives. He posited that these early attachments shape individuals' perceptions and behaviors in subsequent relationships, creating a foundation known as the internal working model (Bowlby, 1988).In the realm of attachment theory, three primary styles of attachment are recognized: Secure attachment, Dismissive-avoidant attachment, and Preoccupied attachment. These attachment styles reflect individuals' approaches to intimacy, trust, and dependency in relationships. According to Bowlby, the formation of primary attachments concurrently results in the development of a mental representation or internal working model of relationships.The research employed a stratified random sampling technique to ensure a representative sample. Screening of participants involved the administration of a detailed information schedule through a Google form. To assess attachment styles and interpersonal dynamics, the Relationship Scales Questionnaire (Griffin and Bartholomew, 1994) and a scale for evaluating interpersonal styles (Zacchilli, Hendrick, and Hendrick, 2009) were administered. Statistical analysis, utilizing SPSS, encompassed Descriptive Statistics (Mean and SD) and One-way MANOVA to explore the impact of attachment styles on various conflict styles.The results of the study underscored the significant influence of attachment style on different conflict styles within marital relationships. This insight offers a nuanced understanding of how distinct attachment styles play a pivotal role in shaping the dynamics of future relationships. The key findings contribute to the growing body of knowledge on attachment theory's practical implications, particularly in the context of marital relationships.

Key words :
Attachment theory, Marital conflict, Married couples

Attachment style denotes an individual's characteristic approach to forming relationships with intimate caregivers and attachment figures, encompassing connections with parents, children, romantic partners, and interactions within organizational settings (Levy et al., 2010). The profound impact of attachment on individuals' lives is underscored, as inappropriate development may jeopardize emotional well-being and impede daily functioning. The perpetuation of attachment styles from childhood to adulthood is posited to be influenced by family dynamics (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991).Key tenets of attachment theory, elucidated by Bowlby (1982), propose that attachment establishes early in life and endures throughout one's existence, framing relationships from the "cradle to the grave." The availability of an attachment figure is pivotal in establishing a secure base, enabling the exploration of the world and the formation of relationships by reflecting on internal experiences.
The extensive body of research on attachment style has yielded several noteworthy findings:
Attachment style typically crystallizes in childhood, shaped by the quality of relationships with primary caregivers. Individuals with secure attachment styles exhibit healthier relationships and superior mental health outcomes compared to those with anxious or avoidant styles.Anxious and avoidant attachment styles correlate with heightened levels of relationship conflict, jealousy, and an elevated likelihood of breakups.Attachment style is malleable over time, particularly in response to

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positive or negative relationship experiences.Positive relationship experiences, therapy, and self-reflection can foster secure attachment.

In essence, understanding attachment style is pivotal for comprehending interpersonal dynamics and predicting relationship outcomes.

Attachment style manifests in four main types:

- **Secure:** Individuals comfortable with both intimacy and independence, able to form healthy relationships by trusting others and effectively communicating their needs.
- **Anxious**: Those craving intimacy but often apprehensive about rejection, exhibiting clinginess, jealousy, or possessiveness in relationships.
- **Avoidan**t: Individuals prioritizing independence and self-reliance over emotional connection, struggling with vulnerability and forming close relationships.
- **Fearful-Avoidant:** People with mixed feelings about relationships, desiring emotional connection but fearing rejection, often avoiding close connections.

A fundamental aspect of attachment theory is the concept of the internal working model (Bretherton, 1990), representing the internalized development of the caregiver-child relationship. Hazan and Shaver's (1987) research supports consistency in attachment styles from infancy to adulthood, with predictable variations in interpersonal interactions.The internal working model influences how individuals interpret experiences, with modifications occurring only when experiences defy interpretation within existing models (Feeney, 2004). Anxious attachment is associated with hyperactivating tendencies, evidenced by higher negative affect, stress, and perceived social rejection (Sheinbaum et al., 2015).Falvo et al.'s (2012) study establishes a direct link between a secure attachment style and pro-social behaviors, indicating that individuals with secure attachment are more likely to engage in helping behaviors toward supervisors and colleagues, fostering reliable relationships in professional settings compared to those with an avoidant style associated with exhaustion and cynicism.

Relationship satisfaction is a subjective assessment of the overall quality, contentment, and fulfillment individuals derive from their romantic or interpersonal relationships. This multifaceted evaluation encompasses dimensions such as emotional well-being, effective communication, trust, intimacy, compatibility, support, and the overall functionality of the relationship. A seminal study by Karney and Bradbury (1995) conducted an exhaustive examination of research on marital quality and stability, emphasizing the pivotal role of communication, conflict resolution, shared goals, and realistic expectations in shaping relationship satisfaction and stability. Additionally, research by Bodenmann et al. (2009) identified constructive conflict resolution strategies and higher problem-solving satisfaction as contributing factors to elevated relationship satisfaction. Investigating the interplay between attachment style, support-seeking behaviors, and relationship satisfaction, a study by Simpson et al. (1992) disclosed that individuals with a secure attachment style reported greater relationship satisfaction. Moreover, their proclivity for seeking support was positively associated with increased support provision from their partners, thereby enhancing
overall relationship well-being.Conflict within a marital context denotes disagreements, disputes, and emotional tensions inherent to intimate relationships, including marriage. Conflict is an inevitable aspect of such relationships, arising from various sources such as differing values, communication styles, financial matters, parenting approaches, and individual personalities.

The present research aims to elucidate the influence of attachment patterns on interpersonal relationships and conflict within a relationship among working individuals. By analyzing the effects of attachment styles on perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral intentions in marital relationships, the study seeks to uncover the underlying reasons for conflict and lower relationship satisfaction. Recognizing that not all conflict is detrimental, the research underscores the importance of effective conflict management strategies, couples therapy, and communication training in strengthening marriages.

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Objective of the Study:

The research aims to investigate the influence of different attachment styles (secure, fearful, dismissive, and preoccupied) on conflict strategies in current marital relationships. It seeks to explore the connection between individuals' attachment styles and various conflict resolution strategies and behaviors within their marital relationships.

Participants:

One hundred couples (age 25-40; mean = 35.72; 100 males and 100 females) participated in the study. To be eligible, individuals needed at least a graduation-level education and were required to live with their partners without children. The exclusion of individuals with major medical or psychiatric illnesses isolated the impact of job-related stress and interpersonal conflict on the selected group. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants based on specific criteria aligned with the research objectives. While not fully representative of the entire population, this method allowed for an in-depth exploration of couples facing job-related stress and workplace conflict without confounding variables introduced by parenthood or health issues.

Measures:

a) The Relationship Scales Questionnaire (RSQ):

Developed by Griffin and Bartholomew (1994), the RSQ assesses adult attachment styles using a 5-point scale. It measures four attachment patterns: secure, dismissing, fearful, and preoccupied. The questionnaire's validation by Griffin and Bartholomew demonstrated acceptable internal consistency, making it a reliable tool for assessing adult attachment styles.

b) The Romantic Partner Conflict Scale (RPCS):

A self-report measure assessing conflict frequency and intensity in romantic relationships, the RPCS comprises 42 items divided into five subscales: Intimacy, Communication, Power, Problem-Solving, and Conflict Tactics. It provides insights into the nature of conflict and strategies used to manage it.

Procedure:

Ethical considerations were paramount, with participants providing informed consent before data collection. Participants were married, living with partners, childless, and without a history of physical or psychiatric illnesses. Two questionnaires, RSQ and RPCS, were administered to assess attachment styles and conflict resolution strategies.

Following identification of dominant attachment styles, the study examined how these styles influenced chosen conflict resolution strategies. Statistical techniques, including Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) and descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations), were employed to analyze variations in conflict resolution strategies based on attachment styles. The results were discussed comprehensively, exploring implications and significance, contributing to our understanding of how attachment dynamics shape conflict resolution in marital relationships.

Statistical Tools:

- Descriptive Statistics: Mean and Standard Deviation
- Univariate MANOVA to understand the effect of attachment styles on various styles of interpersonal relationships.

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RESULTS

	A.S	Mean
COMPROMISE	SECURED	36.9167
	FEARFUL	37.5600
	PREOCCUPIED	34.5600
	DISMISSIVE	35.4615
	Total	36.1100
SEPARATION	SECURED	16.4583
	FEARFUL	16.4000
	PREOCCUPIED	13.2000
	DISMISSIVE	12.3077
	Total	14.5500
DOMINATION	SECURED	12.7083
	FEARFUL	24.0800
	PREOCCUPIED	23.3600
	DISMISSIVE	18.0769
	Total	19.6100
SUBMISSION	SECURED	6.5833
	FEARFUL	24.1600
	PREOCCUPIED	27.3600
	DISMISSIVE	6.8077
	Total	16.2300
I.R	SECURED	6.2500
	FEARFUL	8.2800
	PREOCCUPIED	18.6000
	DISMISSIVE	9.5000
	Total	10.6900
AVOIDANCE	SECURED	5.2500
	FEARFUL	9.8000
	PREOCCUPIED	3.8000
	DISMISSIVE	11.6154

MANOVA- TO DETERMINE THE EFFECT OF DIFFERENT ATTCHMENT STYLES ON DIFFERENT CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLES

Dependent Variable	(I) A.S	(J) A.S	Sig.
COMPROMISE	SECURED	FEARFUL	.549

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		PREOCCUPIED	.000
		DISMISSIVE	.016
	FEARFUL	SECURED	.549
		PREOCCUPIED	.000
		DISMISSIVE	.000
	PREOCCUPIED	SECURED	.000
		FEARFUL	.000
		DISMISSIVE	.237
	DISMISSIVE	SECURED	.016
		FEARFUL	.000
		PREOCCUPIED	.237
SEPARATION	SECURED	FEARFUL	1.000
		PREOCCUPIED	.000
		DISMISSIVE	.000
	FEARFUL	SECURED	1.000
		PREOCCUPIED	.000
		DISMISSIVE	.000
	PREOCCUPIED	SECURED	.000
		FEARFUL	.000
		DISMISSIVE	.550
	DISMISSIVE	SECURED	.000
		FEARFUL	.000
		PREOCCUPIED	.550
DOMINATION	SECURED	FEARFUL	.000
		PREOCCUPIED	.000
		DISMISSIVE	.000
	FEARFUL	SECURED	.000
		PREOCCUPIED	.846
		DISMISSIVE	.000
	PREOCCUPIED	SECURED	.000
		FEARFUL	.846
		DISMISSIVE	.000
	DISMISSIVE	SECURED	.000
		FEARFUL	.000
		PREOCCUPIED	.000
SUBMISSION	SECURED	FEARFUL	.000
		PREOCCUPIED	.000
		DISMISSIVE	.996
	FEARFUL	SECURED	.000
		PREOCCUPIED	.014
		DISMISSIVE	.000

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	PREOCCUPIED	SECURED	.000
		FEARFUL	.014
		DISMISSIVE	.000
	DISMISSIVE	SECURED	.996
		FEARFUL	.000
		PREOCCUPIED	.000
I.R	SECURED	FEARFUL	.383
		PREOCCUPIED	.000
		DISMISSIVE	.053
	FEARFUL	SECURED	.383
		PREOCCUPIED	.000
		DISMISSIVE	.760
	PREOCCUPIED	SECURED	.000
		FEARFUL	.000
		DISMISSIVE	.000
	DISMISSIVE	SECURED	.053
		FEARFUL	.760
		PREOCCUPIED	.000
AVOIDANCE	SECURED	FEARFUL	.000
		PREOCCUPIED	.070
		DISMISSIVE	.000
	FEARFUL	SECURED	.000
		PREOCCUPIED	.000
		DISMISSIVE	.011
	PREOCCUPIED	SECURED	.070
		FEARFUL	.000
		DISMISSIVE	.000
	DISMISSIVE	SECURED	.000
		FEARFUL	.011
		PREOCCUPIED	.000

Based on observed means.
The error term is Mean Square(Error) = 4.194.

DISCUSSION

Post Hoc Results:

The examination of various attachment styles reveals significant effects on different interpersonal relationship styles. Focusing on the compromise style in relationships, a noteworthy difference emerges between secure and preoccupied, and dismissive attachment styles, with mean differences of 2.3567 and 1.4551, both significant at the 0.00 level. Individuals with secure attachment styles exhibit a mean value of 36.917, contrasting with preoccupied (22.56) and dismissive (23.46) styles. Fearful attachment style also shows significant differences with preoccupied and dismissing styles, with mean differences of 3.0 and 2.09, respectively. The mean value of fearful attachment style is 37.56,

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indicating a higher tendency to compromise in relationships. Compromise, as a conflict resolution strategy, has been studied in organizational contexts, where it affects employee performance but should be used judiciously (IJECM, n.d.). However, compromise in relationships doesn't necessarily enhance psychological well-being (Lin et al., 2016).

Separation in Relationships:
Significant differences in separation styles are observed between secure and preoccupied, as well as dismissive attachment styles, with scores of 3.25 and 4.15, respectively, both significant at the .000 level. Secure attachment style demonstrates a higher mean value (16.45) compared to preoccupied (13.20) and dismissing (12.30) styles. Fearful attachment style also shows significant differences with preoccupied and dismissing styles, with scores of 3.2 and 4.09, respectively. Individuals with secure attachment styles tend to exhibit frequent patterns of separation in relationships. Temporary separation in relationships is suggested as a healthy way to strengthen the relationship, especially for those with secure attachment styles (Hall, 2017).

Dominance in Relationships:
In the context of dominance in relationships, significant differences are observed between secure attachment styles and fearful, preoccupied, and dismissive attachment styles, with mean differences of -11.37, -10.65, and -5.36, respectively, all significant at the 0.000 level. Fearful (mean = 24.08), preoccupied (mean = 23.36), and dismissive (mean = 18.07) attachment styles show a higher tendency to use dominance in relationships. Research indicates that individuals with secure attachment styles report lower levels of dating aggression and are less inclined to dominate in relationships (Collins and Read, 1990; Feeney and Noller, 1990).

Interactional Reactivity in Relationships:
Regarding interactional reactivity in relationships, preoccupied attachment style significantly differs from fearful and secure attachment styles, with a significance level of 0.000. Preoccupied attachment style individuals (mean = 18.60) display higher levels of reactivity compared to other attachment styles. Preoccupied attachment style is associated with heightened sensitivity to relationship cues and fear of rejection, leading to increased reactivity in interactions (Ein-Dor, Dor-Klein, &Mikulincer, 2010).

Avoidance in Relationships:
Avoidance in relationships is more pronounced in dismissive and fearful attachment styles. Individuals with fearful attachment styles, characterized by low self-esteem and negativity, tend to avoid close relationships, leading to instability and negative emotions. Dismissive attachment style individuals minimize the importance of close relationships and distance themselves from others. Understanding attachment styles is crucial for identifying patterns in relationships and seeking appropriate support (Fraley, Garner, Shaver, and Cassidy, 2000; Mickelson and Kessler, 2010).

Submission in Relationships:
Significant differences in submission in relationships are evident between secure attachment styles and fearful and preoccupied attachment styles, with mean differences of 24.16 and 27.36, respectively, both significant at 0.000. Fearful attachment style individuals exhibit a mean value of 24.16, while preoccupied attachment style individuals display a mean value of 27.36. Fearful attachment styles, characterized by fear of losing people and low self-esteem, tend to adopt more submissive conflict resolution styles. Research suggests that submission in relationships may be a way to maintain attachment security and avoid conflict (Crittenden, 2008; Simpson, 1990).

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Conclusion:

In conclusion, attachment styles significantly impact interpersonal relationships and conflict resolution strategies. The findings highlight that compromise and separation are more prevalent in individuals with secure and fearful attachment styles, while dominance is observed in those with fearful, preoccupied, and dismissive attachment styles. Submission and avoidance tendencies are prominent in individuals with fearful, preoccupied, and dismissive attachment styles. Recognizing these patterns can provide valuable insights into relationship dynamics and inform interventions aimed at improving relationship quality and conflict resolution strategies.

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