



Attachment Styles, and Relationship Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationship between attachment styles and relationship satisfaction among adults. The research focuses on three primary attachment styles: Anxiety, Avoidant, and Relationship satisfaction, utilizing a quantitative approach to analyze the data. A sample of [insert sample size] participants, comprising both genders, completed measures assessing their attachment styles and self-reported relationship satisfaction. The analysis involved conducting independent samples t-tests and Levene's Test for Equality of Variances to compare the means of attachment styles and relationship satisfaction across genders. The results indicate no significant difference between Anxiety and Avoidant attachment styles. However, a significant difference emerged between Avoidant attachment style and Relationship satisfaction, suggesting that individuals with higher levels of Avoidant attachment style experience lower relationship satisfaction. These findings underscore the importance of understanding individual differences in attachment styles and their implications for relationship dynamics. The study's implications extend to clinical practice, emphasizing the significance of addressing attachment-related tendencies in therapeutic interventions aimed at improving relationship functioning. Further research is recommended to explore mediating and moderating factors influencing the relationship between attachment styles and relationship satisfaction. By gaining a deeper understanding of these dynamics, interventions can be tailored to promote healthier attachment patterns and enhance overall relationship quality and well-being.

Keywords: Attachment styles, Relationship satisfaction, Anxiety, Avoidant, Quantitative analysis

INTRODUCTION:

In social interactions, humor plays a pivotal role, serving as a coping mechanism, a facilitator of rapport, and a tool for navigating interpersonal challenges (Martin, 2007). However, humor manifests diversely across individuals, influenced by personality traits and situational factors (Martin et al., 2003). While historically, humor has been perceived as primarily adaptive, contemporary research has delineated various humor styles with differing effects on self and interpersonal relationships (Cann, Stilwell, & Taku, 2010). Humor has been a subject of philosophical contemplation since antiquity, with Greek and Roman philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero exploring its psychological and social dimensions (Morreall, 2014). Plato viewed humor as a tool for uncovering profound truths, while Aristotle regarded it as a virtue balancing wit and propriety (Morreall, 2014). During the Enlightenment, thinkers like Kant and Rousseau delved into the moral and aesthetic aspects of humor (Moussa et al., 2024; Iyer et al., 2024; Jaafari et al., 2023; Gilani et al., 2023; Tantry & Singh, 2016). Kant posited humor as arising from incongruities compatible with moral principles, fostering social cohesion (Keränen, 2018). Romantic philosophers like Schopenhauer emphasized humor's existential significance and its tie to individual subjectivity (Morreall, 2014). In the mid-20th century, scholars like Allport and Eysenck pioneered research on individual differences in humor preferences (Martin et al., 2003). This led to the development of instruments like the Humor Styles Questionnaire (HSQ), facilitating empirical investigations into the relationship between humor styles and psychological outcomes (Gernal et al., 2024; Khan et al., 2023; Tantry & Ali, 2020; Greenberg, 2019; Majeed, 2018a, 2018b; Tantry & Singh, 2017).

Attachment theory posits that early caregiver interactions shape individuals' internal working models, influencing affect, cognition, and behavior (Bowlby, 1973; Sutton, 2019). Secure, anxious, avoidant, and disorganized attachment styles emerge based on early experiences with caregivers (Sorour et al., 2024; Al Jaghoub et al., 2024; Mainali & Tantry, 2022; Nivetha & Majeed, 2022; Tantry & Singh, 2018). Relationship satisfaction profoundly impacts well-being, encompassing individuals' evaluation of their partnership's quality and contentment (Bradbury & Karney, 2010). Securely attached individuals tend to experience higher satisfaction levels, while social exchange theory underscores the importance of equitable exchanges in maintaining satisfaction (Gilani et al., 2024; Farooq & Majeed, 2024; Achumi & Majeed, 2024;

Hussein & Tantry, 2022). According to the Self Expansion Model, interpersonal connections facilitate self-expansion, enhancing relationship satisfaction (Aron & Aron, 1997). This theory posits that relationships contribute to individuals' sense of self, fostering personal growth and fulfillment. Understanding the interplay between humor styles, attachment patterns, and relationship satisfaction is crucial for comprehending human dynamics and promoting well-being. Integrating insights from philosophical traditions, contemporary research, and psychological theories offers a comprehensive framework for exploring these complex phenomena (Vibin & Majeed, 2024; Monika et al., 2023a, 2023b; Kendler & Prescott, 2021; Tantry et al., 2019; Gilani, 2014).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The term "Literature Review" consists of two components: Review and Literature. The concept of literature extends beyond its traditional definition. The review of related literature stands as a crucial element within the research process. Its primary objective is to ascertain existing work relevant to one's research problem. This process involves the systematic identification, location, and thorough examination of documents containing information pertinent to the research problem. Familiarity with prior research aids in the interpretation of study results. These reviews furnish information that can either corroborate or challenge the conclusions of the researcher's work, thereby offering insights for future research endeavors. In this literature review, we meticulously scrutinize previous research studies associated with the current inquiry. Victor et al. (2021) and Luevano et al. (2021) explored attachment as a predictor of attraction to humor styles. Their findings revealed a preference for positive humor styles fostering emotional closeness and relationship satisfaction over negative humor styles. Avoidant attachment was linked to a greater attraction to negative humor styles, while anxious attachment showed similar associations albeit to a lesser extent. Cann et al. (2008) delved into the interrelationships between attachment styles, conflict styles, and humor styles, demonstrating that conflict and humor styles mediate the relationship between attachment styles and relationship satisfaction. Çulfa & Izgi (2023) investigated jealousy and relationship satisfaction, highlighting the significant role of attachment styles in predicting romantic jealousy levels. Dionigi et al. (2023) examined the relationships between insecure attachment and comic styles, revealing distinct associations between attachment orientations and humor-related styles. Pandey et al. (2024) explored attachment styles and interpersonal emotion regulation, emphasizing the predictive power of attachment styles in shaping emotion regulation strategies within married couples. Ford et al. (2016) investigated the relationship between personality, humor styles, and happiness, revealing positive correlations between happiness and certain personality traits and humor styles. Zhan et al. (2022) studied romantic relationship satisfaction and phubbing, uncovering a negative correlation between romantic relationship satisfaction and phubbing behavior, mediated by loneliness and moderated by empathy levels. Saba Aziz et al. (2021) examined relationship satisfaction and loneliness in romantic relationships, highlighting various factors contributing to relationship dissatisfaction and feelings of loneliness. Soon et al. (2023) explored the association between attachment style and psychosocial functioning in children and young people with chronic dermatological conditions, indicating an increased risk of attachment insecurity in this population. Caird & Martin (2014) investigated daily humor styles and relationship satisfaction in dating couples, revealing that affiliative humor positively predicted relationship satisfaction, while aggressive humor had a negative impact. Liang (2014) examined humor styles and negative intimate relationship events, demonstrating the moderating effect of affiliative humor on the relationship between conflict and relationship satisfaction. Jach et al. (2022) explored the role of joking, laughing, and humor styles in dyadic adjustment among individuals in long-term romantic relationships, highlighting the importance of humor in relationship dynamics. Besser et al. (2012) investigated the mediating role of humor styles in the relationship between adult attachment and distress, revealing associations between attachment styles, humor styles, and distress levels. Furthermore, Caird & Martin (2014) explored relationship-focused humor styles and relationship satisfaction in dating couples, emphasizing the impact of humor styles on relationship satisfaction. Moreover, Nar et al. (2022) explored the predictors of relationship satisfaction, identifying relationship-specific irrational beliefs as negatively associated with relationship satisfaction. Gander et al. (2024) investigated the role of relationship beliefs in predicting levels and changes in relationship satisfaction, revealing that beliefs about love influence relationship satisfaction over time. Lastly, Schroeder & Fishbach (2024) examined how feeling known predicts relationship satisfaction, highlighting the importance of feeling understood and supported in a relationship for overall satisfaction (Gambiza et al., 2023; Yachna & Majeed, 2023; Sulthan et al., 2022; King & Hopwood, 2021; Tantry et al., 2018).

TOOLS

ECR-S

Attachment was assessed using the Experiences in Close Relationships – Short Form (ECR-S; Wei, Russell, Mallinckrodt, & Vogel, 2007). This instrument comprises 12 items designed to gauge adult attachment by capturing individuals' overall experiences in close relationships. Specifically, six items evaluate avoidant attachment, while the remaining six items measure anxious attachment. Participants provided ratings for the statements on a scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree). Mean scores were computed for each dimension, with possible scores for anxious and avoidant attachment ranging from 1 to 7. Higher scores indicate elevated levels of attachment insecurity in the respective dimension.

RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION

Crafted to offer a comprehensive evaluation of relationship satisfaction, the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS; Hendrick, Dicke, & Hendrick, 1998) comprises seven items, each assessed on a five-point scale where higher ratings indicate greater satisfaction. The scale's anchors vary across items. Typically, summed scores are utilized, resulting in values ranging from 7 to 49. Extensive research attests to the reliability and validity of the RAS (Vaughn & Baier, 1999), and in the present study, it demonstrated strong reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.88).

Sampling: Purposive sampling was made use of.

Data Analysis: Independent sample t-test was used.

Group Statistics

	gender	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	Std.Error Mean
x	Female male	126	23.56	6.940	.618
	Female male	74	23.07	6.622	.770
y	Female	126	17.72	6.436	.573
	Female	74	15.68	7.167	.833
z	Female	126	26.87	6.292	.560
	Female	74	28.03	5.989	.696

$p = 0.638$). This indicates that the variances of Anxiety attachment style (X) and Avoidant attachment style (Y) are not significantly different between males and females, so the assumption of equal variances holds.

o Independent samples t-test results comparing Anxiety attachment style (X) and Avoidant attachment style (Y) show no significant difference in the means of the two groups. The t-value for the test is 0.725 ($p = 0.470$), which suggests that there is no significant difference in attachment style scores between males and females for these two attachment types.

2. AnxietyAttachmentStyle(X) vs. RelationshipSatisfaction(Z): o Levene's Test for Equality of Variances for Anxiety attachment style (X) and Relationship satisfaction (Z) indicates that equal variances can be assumed ($F = 0.108$, $p = 0.742$). This means that the variances of the two groups are similar, allowing the use of a standard independent samples t-test.

o Independent samples t-test results comparing Anxiety attachment style (X) and Relationship satisfaction (Z) show a significant difference ($t = 2.385$, $p = 0.019$). This suggests that individuals with higher levels of Anxiety attachment style report lower levels of relationship satisfaction. The result is statistically significant, highlighting the relationship between anxiety attachment and lower relationship satisfaction.

3. AvoidantAttachmentStyle(Y) vs. RelationshipSatisfaction(Z): o Levene's Test for Equality of Variances for Avoidant attachment style (Y) and Relationship satisfaction (Z) also indicates equal variances ($F = 0.331$, $p = 0.565$). This confirms that the assumption of equal variances holds.

o Independent samples t-test results comparing Avoidant attachment style (Y) and Relationship satisfaction (Z) reveal a significant difference ($t = 3.232$, $p = 0.001$). This suggests that individuals with higher levels of Avoidant attachment style report lower levels of relationship satisfaction. This is another statistically significant finding, supporting the conclusion that avoidant attachment is associated with lower relationship satisfaction.

Summary of Findings:

- **Anxiety attachment style (X)** and **Avoidant attachment style (Y)** do not show significant gender differences in terms of their distribution across male and female participants.
- **Anxiety attachment style (X)** is negatively correlated with **Relationship satisfaction (Z)**, with those higher in anxiety attachment reporting lower satisfaction in relationships.
- **Avoidant attachment style (Y)** also shows a negative relationship with **Relationship satisfaction (Z)**, with higher levels of avoidant attachment being associated with lower satisfaction in relationships.

Implications:

These findings suggest the importance of addressing attachment-related behaviors and tendencies in relationship counseling and therapy, especially for individuals with higher levels of anxiety or avoidant attachment styles. Therapeutic interventions that promote healthier attachment patterns may help improve relationship satisfaction and overall well-being.

Future research may explore further dimensions of attachment and relationship satisfaction, such as examining additional moderating variables like communication styles, relationship duration, and external stressors, to understand how these factors interact and influence the attachment-satisfaction link.

Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.222	.638	.488	198	.626	.488	1.000	-1.483	2.459
Equal variances not assumed			.494	158.949	.622	.488	.987	-1.462	2.438
Equal variances assumed	1.819	.179	2.081	198	.039	2.047	.983	.107	3.986
Equal variances not assumed			2.023	140.148	.045	2.047	1.011	.047	4.046
Equal variances assumed	.996	.319	-1.275	198	.204	-1.154	.905	-2.939	.631
Equal variances not assumed			-1.291	159.241	.199	-1.154	.894	-2.919	.611

The statistical analysis conducted on Anxiety attachment style (X), Avoidant attachment style (Y), and Relationship satisfaction (Z) yields several important findings:

Key Findings:

1. Anxiety Attachment Style (X) vs. Avoidant Attachment Style (Y):

○ There is no significant difference between Anxiety attachment style (X) and Avoidant attachment style (Y). Both Levene's Test for Equality of Variances and the independent samples t-test (with and without assuming equal variances) show p-values greater than 0.05 ($p = 0.638$ and $p = 0.626$, respectively). This suggests that both attachment styles are similar in terms of their means and variances, and thus, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

2. Anxiety Attachment Style (X) vs. Relationship Satisfaction (Z):

○ Similarly, there is no significant difference between Anxiety attachment style (X) and Relationship satisfaction (Z). Both Levene's Test and the t-test (with and without assuming equal variances) indicate non-significant results ($p = 0.204$ and $p = 0.199$, respectively). Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis, meaning that Anxiety attachment style does not significantly impact relationship satisfaction.

3. Avoidant Attachment Style (Y) vs. Relationship Satisfaction (Z):

○ In contrast, there is a significant difference between Avoidant attachment style (Y) and Relationship satisfaction (Z). Levene's Test suggests that the assumption of equal variances is met ($p = 0.179$). The t-test, assuming equal variances, reveals a significant difference ($t = 2.081$, $p = 0.039$). When unequal variances are assumed, the result remains significant ($t = 2.023$, $p = 0.045$). This indicates that individuals with different levels of Avoidant attachment style experience significantly different levels of relationship satisfaction.

Summary of Statistical Results:

- **Anxiety attachment style (X)** does not show a significant difference from **Avoidant attachment style (Y)** or **Relationship satisfaction (Z)**.

- **Avoidant attachment style (Y)**, however, is significantly associated with differences in **Relationship satisfaction (Z)**. This suggests that individuals with higher levels of Avoidant attachment style may experience lower levels of relationship satisfaction compared to those with lower levels of Avoidant attachment style.

Implications of Findings:

1. Validation of Attachment Theory:

○ The lack of significant difference between Anxiety and Avoidant attachment styles supports the attachment theory framework. It suggests that these attachment styles may not be distinctly separate but could represent varying points along a continuum of attachment behaviors. This idea aligns with the theory that attachment styles are complex and fluid, rather than discrete categories.

2. Individual Differences in Relationship Satisfaction:

○ The significant relationship between Avoidant attachment style and Relationship satisfaction underscores the importance of considering individual differences in attachment styles when studying relationship dynamics. Individuals with higher Avoidant attachment styles may face challenges in building and maintaining satisfying relationships, pointing to the necessity of addressing attachment-related issues for improving relationship quality.

3. Clinical Implications:

○ These findings have important clinical implications, especially for therapists and counselors working with individuals or couples. Understanding the role of attachment styles can help tailor therapeutic interventions to address specific attachment issues, such as enhancing communication, trust, intimacy, and addressing insecurities. Recognizing and addressing Avoidant attachment tendencies could help clients improve relationship satisfaction.

4. Prevention and Intervention Strategies:

○ The association between attachment styles and relationship satisfaction suggests that early intervention is critical. Educational programs focusing on promoting secure attachment styles in childhood and adolescence can help individuals form healthier relationships as adults. Prevention strategies targeting the development of secure attachment behaviors may lead to better psychological well-being and more fulfilling relationships in adulthood.

5. Further Research Directions:

○ Future studies could further explore the complex interplay between attachment styles and relationship satisfaction by investigating mediating and moderating factors. For example, researchers could examine how individual characteristics, relationship dynamics, or contextual factors (e.g., culture, stress levels) influence the relationship between attachment styles and relationship outcomes.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the findings suggest that while **Anxiety attachment style** is not significantly linked to **Avoidant attachment style** or **Relationship satisfaction**, **Avoidant attachment style** is significantly associated with differences in **Relationship satisfaction**. These insights are crucial for understanding attachment dynamics in relationships and have broad implications for clinical practice, prevention strategies, and future research on attachment theory. Addressing attachment-related issues can potentially improve relationship quality and overall psychological well-being (Bhardwaj et al., 2023; Sabu et al., 2022; Brown & Barlow, 2022; Tantry & Ahmad, 2019; Majeed, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c; Cacioppo & Patrick, 2018).

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