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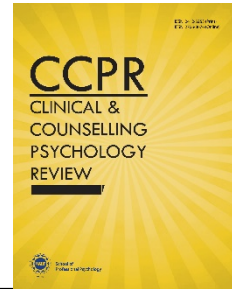|	
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Attachment, Interpersonal Relations Anxiety, and Life Satisfaction in University Students

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Abstract

The present study investigated the relationship between Adult Attachment, Interpersonal Relations Anxiety, and Life Satisfaction in university students. It was hypothesized that there is a significant relationship between the variables of the study. Moreover, a significant gender difference with respect to the study variables is expected in this research. Adult Attachment Scale, Interpersonal Relations Anxiety Questionnaire, and the Life Satisfaction Scale were used to analyze the study variables. The sample of the study comprised 200 university students of ages ranging between 19 to 25 ($M = 21.50$, $SD = .501$) with an equal number of men ($n =100$) and women ($n =100$). The results indicated that interpersonal relations anxiety had significant negative correlation with life satisfaction. Furthermore, secure attachment was found to have a significant positive correlation with Life Satisfaction as well as it had negative correlation with the interpersonal relations anxiety, ambivalent, and avoidant attachment. Besides, avoidant attachment had significant positive correlation with interpersonal relations anxiety scores. In addition to it, ambivalent and avoidant attachment had significant negative correlation with secure attachment pattern. The t-test showed that men and women participants of the study don't differ in terms of their life satisfaction and adult attachment patterns. but they do significantly differ in terms of their interpersonal anxiety. the results are discussed in the light of cultural context of Pakistan and existing literature.

Keywords: attachment, interpersonal anxiety, life satisfaction

Introduction

University students are in the critical phase of their young adulthood encountered by special developmental crises. Moreover, they are striving to build such stable personality who can manage independently and without the help of their parents. Also, they want to constitute the close and intimate relationships with other students by fulfilling the extensive obligations of

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friendship (Santrock, 1997). As young adults in their university years are in charge of and accountable for their own health and financial affairs. Hence, university years affirmed as one of the most difficult, apprehensive, and anxious time span for youth, as they have to manage their respective lives on their own (Cress & Lampman, 2007).

Mikulincer and Shaver (2007) have emphasized on the necessity of an individual's social affiliation and acquaintance with the faithful attachment figure. Moreover, it is argued by Bowlby (1979) that people possess such a system that manifests their innate behaviors by devoting the formation of these attachment bonds. Furthermore, this system is established in the authoritative nervous organism that evolves to aid children to maintain closeness with their caregiver. Therefore, it assures and safeguards the protection level to maintain their security and existence. The times when the child's intelligence is at risk or danger, they start approaching their caregiver in the time of suffering. They also start expecting from the caregiver that they would relief and reestablish their feelings of safety. In this way, the affection system will become more prominent. The relationship of parent and a child ultimately develops its affection with other figures in different ways. Finally, it results into forming the interpersonal relations anxiety in the form of new relations.

On that account, human beings need an intense bond with someone with whom they can easily and bluntly share their innate ideas and thoughts.. Furthermore, they operate in an innocuous way that provides certainty, reliability, and protection as a shelter in distress and miserable phases. In this case, outcomes lead human beings towards a motivation level to acquire and cultivate close social interrelatedness that is more innate and intrinsic at the end. An individual can acquire four interpersonal relations anxiety and attachment styles. An individual with securely attached style manifests the extensive connectedness, companionship, and establishment of control. Also, an individual with the ambivalent style grants the great points of revelation, dependency on an affectionate individual, abysmal attitudes, and self-image. Avoidant individual poses assertiveness and a little enthusiasm for life. At last, insecure individual lacks self-reliance, inflexible self-perception, and strong control. At the same time, very little dependency on affectionate figure is there that is protective based and has lack of self-disclosure (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Furthermore, indifference of ambivalent and avoidant individuals exhibit irritation and displeasure in

their interpersonal relations such as companionship that is causing anxiety. Thus, the primitive and fundamental parent and child relationship patterns ultimately dominate a person's life. Besides, if one has developed the secure attachment style it enhances and expands in other forms of intimate relations that eventually brings life to the level of satisfaction.

Life satisfaction can be defined as an individual's capability of inner emotional and insightful awareness approach of the existence. In general, life satisfaction is postulated in three dimensions: the quantification and degree of satisfaction, effect of gratification, and nonappearance of pessimism (Diener et al., 2003). From a long time, interpersonal relations anxiety has been associated with the positivity, contentment, enjoyment, and the diverse consequences of inquiry, which further has authorized this relationship. According to Alfred Adler, an individual's schemas and mindset in regard with the others and in essence with the aspects that forms the phenomenon of love and job is the primary responsibilities of human life. It greatly influences the fate and pleasure of a gentleman and the whole establishment of a civilization.

To study the variables including Attachment, interpersonal relations anxiety and life satisfaction is relatively a contemporary approach within the fields of development and social psychology to inquire that vary realm. As university students have been providing the evidences of it from centuries. So, western researchers have long been acquainted and conscious of that particular link. From various dimensional perspectives, the current phenomenon was in the examined state since decades under the distinctive investigations. Lately, the current topic grasped the attention of researchers likewise; availability of literature is less in regard to this issue in the Pakistani cultural context. Ultimately, to comprehend the immensity and nature of the relationship among mentioned variables, a number of relative studies are demonstrated and reviewed.

Whereas, experimental evidences have furnished by researchers as a proof to the dimensions of adulthood that provides rationale of life satisfaction. Such as the occurrence of life contentment and positive distress was significantly connected to adult affection safety, (Torquati & Raffaelli, 2004) and life gratification (La Guardia et al., 2000). In spite of adult attachment, anxiety and avoidance were negatively associated with the gratification of life. Also, they were significantly connected to the negative effects (Ling et al., 2008; Van Buren & Cooley, 2002; Wearden et al., 2005).

The core endeavor of the present study was to explore outside of the stereotypical realms of relationship within the interrelatedness of attachment and well-being. It was all determined to scrutinize the possible mediators (, that is, self-compassion and emotional empathy) of this relationship.

In another research conducted by Pierceall and Kiem (2007), 75% university learners were analyzed to have equitable up to the level of tightness, and 12% were accounted to have atypical state of anxiety. Afterwards, Ross et al. (1999) outlined the etiology of anxiety in which 38% from intrapersonal distresses (, that is, advanced responsibilities), 28% from environmental stressors (, that is, changes in ecological situations), 19% from interpersonal stressors (, that is, quarrels of intimate partners), and 15% from academic stressors (, that is, poor grades).

Method

Sample

The sample of the current study consisted of 200 university students with an equal number of men and women to conduct this research. Convenient sampling technique was used to collect data from five public sector universities of Lahore. The participants were selected from the age range of 19- 25 years. Hence, the design of the research was 'correlational research design'.

Inclusion/ Exclusion Criteria

University students with age range of 19-25 were included in the present research with no previous psychiatric history. As the people who were not the students in that University and who were out of the required age range/limit with any previous psychiatric history were excluded from the current research.

Assessment Measures

The measures used were;

- Adult Attachment Scale
- Interpersonal Relationship Anxiety Questionnaire (IRAQ)
- Satisfaction with Life Scale

Adult Attachment Scale

This scale was originally developed by Hazen and Shaver (1987). Moreover, Urdu translated revised form of the respective scale was used for the present research. This is the main measure of adult attachment. It is a 3-item survey intended to quantify one's attachment style. The scale measures the three attachment styles; (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) Avoidant, Anxious/Ambivalent, and Secure Attachment.

Interpersonal Relationship Anxiety Questionnaire

The Interpersonal Relationship Anxiety Questionnaire (IRAQ) (Rohner, 2008) was used to measure the anxiety in interpersonal relations. Urdu version of the scale was used for this research to improve understanding of the subjects IRAQ is a consistent tool for measuring interpersonal relations anxiety in medical as well as non-clinical settings in Pakistan.

Satisfaction with Life Scale

Satisfaction with Life Scale is a 5-item scale which is developed by Diener (1985) to measure the worldwide reasoning judgments of one's life satisfaction (not a measure of either positive or negative affect). As members of the current study designate that how much they approve or are upset with each of the 5 items by using a 7-point measure. Hence, this scale choices from 7 strongly agree to 1 strongly disagree.

Procedure

Once the sampling was chalked/sketched out. Participants were contacted at their respective places with the help of convenient sampling technique. First of all, permission letter was signed from the heads of the universities and then participants were contacted. They were briefed about the purpose of the current research. Besides, they were ensured about their confidentiality and they were also told about their right to withdraw from the present research at any time they would want to. Since, all the instructions were given carefully as these were already written on the data colleting tool. In this way, the Data was collected by using the Questionnaires. Hence, it usually took 15 minutes for the participants to fill the Questionnaires. In the end of the data collecting phase, participants were acknowledged right after the data collection process.

Ethical Consideration

All ethical considerations were followed while conducting the present research. Furthermore, the informed consent was taken to collect the data and participants were told about their research rights to withdraw from the participation process anytime they want to. In addition to it, permission was taken from the director of the respective institute to gather data and the heads of concerned departments. Ultimately, permission was taken from the scale authors in written to use the scales.

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Results

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The present research was conducted to determine the relationship among Attachment, Interpersonal Relations Anxiety and Life satisfaction in Pakistani university students. For this reason, the Attachment Scale, Interpersonal Relationship Anxiety Questionnaire and Satisfaction with Life Scale were used to collect the data. In this case, Mean and Standard Deviation were computed. Primarily, correlation matrix was applied to find out the relationship between Attachments, Interpersonal Relations Anxiety and Life Satisfaction level among university students. Secondarily, t-tests were applied to examine the gender differences among the terms; Attachment, Interpersonal Relations Anxiety and Life Satisfaction. Hence, the statistical package for social science 17 version was used to analyze the data.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample (N=200)

Variables	f (%)	M	SD
Gender		21.50	.501
Men	100 (50%)		
Women	100 (50%)		
Father Education		2.70	.830
Illiterate	5 (2.50%)		
Matric	90 (45.0%)		
Graduate	58 (29.0%)		
Higher	41 (20.5%)		

Variables	f (%)	M	SD
Mother Education		2.43	.787
Illiterate	13 (6.5%)		
Matric	104 (52.0%)		
Graduate	49 (24.0%)		
Higher	22 (11.0%)		
Father Occupation		2.64	1.329
Labor	32 (16.0%)		
Business	79 (39.5%)		
Govt. Job	41 (20.5%)		
Retired	6 (3.0%)		
Private Job	30 (15.0%)		
Died	3 (1.5%)		
Mother Occupation		1.77	.464
Working	39 (19.5%)		
Non-Working	116 (58.0%)		

Above given table indicated the demographic characteristics of sample taken in the present study. Mean age of the men and women was $M = 20.11$ and $SD = 2.149$. Also, table showed that most of the fathers' education about the sample falls into Matriculation category and mothers' education also falls into Matriculation category. Additionally, the sample of the current study has most of the fathers' professions related to business. In contrast, most of the mothers' occupation is non-working and only living as house wives.

Table 2

Descriptive of AAS (Adult Attachment Scale)

Variables	f (%)	M	SD
Secure Attachment	110 (55.0)	.55	.499

Variables	f (%)	M	SD
Ambivalent Attachment	61 (30.5%)	.61	.923
Avoidant Attachment	29 (14.5%)	.44	1.059

The above table showed that most of the participants fall into Secure Attachment Category at first, and at second is Ambivalent Attachment Category, and very few participants' fall into Avoidant Attachment Category, in the end. This means, most of the participants out of the current research are securely attached with their parents.

Table 3

Reliability Analysis of IRAQ & LSS

Scale	α	No of items
Interpersonal Relationships Anxiety Questionnaire (IRAQ)	.81	9
Life Satisfaction Scale	.80	5

Table showed reliability of IRAQ Scale and that is highly significant as α= .814 value is depicted. Moreover, LSS also have α=.80 values which is significant.

Table 4

Correlation Matrix of Life Satisfactions, Adult Attachment, and Interpersonal Relations Anxiety (N=200).

Scales	1	2	3	4	5
1. Life Satisfaction Scale	-	-.31**	.09**	-.03	-.08
2. Total Anxiety Scores		-	-.23**	.13**	.16*
3. Secure Attachment			-	-.73**	-.45**
4. Ambivalent Attachment				-	-.27**
5. Avoidant Attachment					-

*Note. *p<.01. **p<.001.*

Above table has demonstrated that total anxiety scores had a significant negative correlation with the Life Satisfaction. This means that if Interpersonal Relations Anxiety is lower in individuals, their life

satisfaction will become higher. Moreover, Secure Attachment had a significant positive correlation with the Life Satisfaction. It means that the people having secured attachment with parents will have higher level of Life Satisfaction. Furthermore, the above table also showed that Secure Attachment had a negative correlation with Interpersonal Relations Anxiety scores. This score level depicts that an individual having Secure Attachment will have lower level of Interpersonal Relations Anxiety among students. Ambivalent and Avoidant Attachment had significant positive correlation with Interpersonal Relations Anxiety scores. This score showed that those people who are having Ambivalent and Avoidant Attachment will have more anxiety in their Interpersonal Relations. However, Ambivalent and Avoidant Attachment had a significant negative correlation with Secure Attachment pattern. Eventually, this calculation shows that those people who are having secured bases of Attachment will not have Ambivalent and Avoidant Attachment pattern.

Table 5

Mean, Standard Deviation and t-values of Men and Women on IRAQ, LFS, and AAS (N=200)

Scales	Men		Women		t
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	
Life Satisfaction Scale	15.90	3.27	15.31	3.66	1.20
Total Anxiety Scores	10.31	5.16	12.95	5.16	3.61**
Adult Attachment Scale	1.55	.75	1.64	.70	.87

Above table demonstrated that men and women participants of the current study do not differ in terms of their Life Satisfaction and Adult Attachment Patterns. As they do significantly differ in terms of their Interpersonal Relations Anxiety. The Mean and Standard Deviation of the score level is showing that women show higher level of anxiety in their Interpersonal Relations as compared to men.

Discussion

The purpose of the investigation is to explore in detail about the relationship of Adult Attachment, Interpersonal Relations Anxiety and Life Satisfaction in Pakistani university student's context. The objective of the present study

was to determine the differences in terms of variables presented by this study. Moreover, to achieve the objectives, it was hypothesized to indicate that variables of the current research would have significant relationship. In terms of variables, it was also hypothesized that there will be the significant gender differences under the process of investigations.

Three scales namely as Adult Attachment Scale (Hazen & Shaver, 1987), Interpersonal Relations Anxiety Questionnaire (Rohner, 2008) and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, 1985) were used in the present research to investigate the real phenomenon of this research. Furthermore, these all scales were transcribed in Urdu translations. Cronbach's alpha was used for Urdu version of Interpersonal Relations Anxiety Questionnaire, and The Satisfaction with Life Scale showed significantly high reliabilities.

However, when the results were analyzed according to the hypotheses of the current study, first assumption was that there will be a significant relationship between the variables. Whereas, this relationship was evident through the Correlation Matrix analysis. Moreover, the results indicated that Interpersonal Relations Anxiety had a significant negative correlation with Life Satisfaction. This means that individuals with low level of Interpersonal Relations Anxiety will tend to have higher level of Life Satisfaction.

Also, the results revealed that Secure Attachment had a significant positive correlation with Life Satisfaction. Whereas, Ambivalent and Avoidant Attachment had a negative correlation with Life Satisfaction. This showed that the individuals with Secure Attachment had happy and contented life. On the other hand, those who had Ambivalent or Avoidant Attachment, their Satisfaction with Life was lesser. Moreover, Secure Attachment had a negative correlation with Interpersonal Anxiety scores. This depicts that individuals having Secure Attachment will have lower level of Interpersonal Relations Anxiety.

Furthermore, a number of researches have provided the evidences that Life Satisfaction is one of the positive signs for the life of university students. In which, individuals with positive relationship approach tend to have more satisfaction level. Whereas, individuals who have negative feelings and emotions face more disliking in their relations and have lesser Satisfaction in their Life (Diener & Suh, 1997; Easterlin, 2004). Moreover, Life Satisfaction is related to many positive indicators like, wellbeing,

money related position, opportunity, entertainment, and so on (Diener & Suh, 1997). Another study (Dekovic & Meeus, 1997) determined that the nature of the parent-child relationship influences their Interpersonal Relations. In addition to it, Secured Attachment contributes to one's overall quality of relationships along with Life Satisfaction in youngsters.

The second hypothesis was that there will be a significant gender difference in terms of the Attachment, Interpersonal Relations Anxiety and Life Satisfaction. Besides, Men and Women who were the main participants of the current study did not manifest variances in terms of their Life Satisfaction and Adult Attachment Patterns. As according to the above results, their Interpersonal Anxiety significantly vary. The Mean and Standard Deviation is showing that women showed the higher level of anxiety in their Interpersonal Relations as compared to men. The significant difference in an Interpersonal Relations Anxiety is likely to be happen due to the difference in gender role expectation in Pakistani university cultural context. However, no difference was found in terms of the Life Satisfaction and Attachment scores. Hence, it may be because both are universal phenomena prevalent equally in both genders.

Conclusion

The present research was designed to investigate the relationship between three very important variables and assessment measures including Adult Attachment, Interpersonal Relationship Anxiety, and Life Satisfaction. Moreover, gender difference among the variables was also explored with the help of the data collection method. Further, the results revealed that individuals having Secure Attachment tend to have higher level of Life Satisfaction and less Interpersonal Relations Anxiety. However, those having Ambivalent or Avoidant Attachment Pattern have higher level of Interpersonal Relations Anxiety and they have less level of Life Satisfaction. Whereas, Men and women in the current research showed no difference in terms of their Attachment and Life satisfaction scores but their Interpersonal Relations Anxiety marked the differences which were highlighting women to be more anxious in handling their relationships.

Implications of the Study

This current study will be beneficial for the university students, teachers, and general population along with their counselors, clinical psychologists and mental health professionals. It will also give an insight

into solving the problems. Besides, it will allow university's professors to design appropriate interventions and workshops. Also, it will provoke lecturers in the institute, in order to deal with such issues. Furthermore, counseling and guidance could also be provided to them in this regard about how change in the Interpersonal Relationship Anxiety affects overall Life Satisfaction of the individuals. Hence, importance of early basic relations will also be highlighted by investigation conducted through the current research.

Limitations and Suggestions

- In the present study, only one city of Pakistan has been approached to have satisfactory samples to make generalizations. Yet, sample of the current study was not large enough to apply generalization in terms of the whole population of Pakistan. Therefore, it is recommended to approach maximum cities of the Pakistan to generalize findings in further studies.
- As, the present sample represented population of only one province. Hence, to see the effect of different cultures on different provinces of Pakistan, the researcher should endorse other provinces. In the end, urban and rural comparisons are also recommended in the current research.

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