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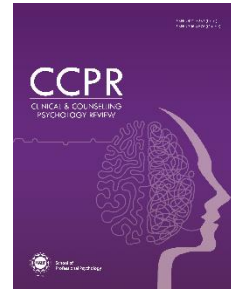
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Title: Attachment Styles, Love Styles, and Romantic Jealousy among Late Adolescents and Young Adults: An Analytical Study

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Attachment Styles, Love Styles, and Romantic Jealousy among Late Adolescents and Young Adults: An Analytical Study

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Abstract

The current study aims to discuss the relationship among attachment styles, love styles, and romantic jealousy in late adolescents and young adults. Correlational research method was used and data was collected through purposive sampling technique. The sample comprised of males ($N = 177$) and females ($N = 128$). Revised Adult Attachment Scale, Love Attitude Scale (short form), and Multidimensional Jealousy Scale were used for data collection. The analysis showed significant correlation of mania and ludus love styles with anxious attachment style. Anxious attachment, mania, and ludus love were found positively associated with cognitive jealousy, emotional jealousy, and behavioral jealousy. Moreover, close love style was significantly correlated with eros love style and depend attachment style was positively correlated with pragma and eros love styles. Linear regression was applied to find out the predictions. Ludus love style was significantly predicted by anxious attachment, while close attachment was a significant predictor of eros love style. However, depend attachment significantly predicted pragma love style. Hence, the study has practical implications in family and relationship counselling. It will help to better understand the relationship problems that are rapidly prevailing in our culture.

Keywords: anxious attachment, love styles, ludus, mania, romantic jealousy

Introduction

In relationships, our bonding with others varies from individual to individual which is termed as *attachment styles*. According to Baumeister (2012), the need to belong in person must cause him to move to do something and this need would develop a sense of love in the person.

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Attachment style is basically the way we engage or connect with others. Attachment is described as a “lasting psychological connectedness between human beings” (Bowlby, [1969](#), p.194) and it is a learned behavior. John Bowlby was keen to study distress and anxiety, which children may feel when separated from primary caregivers. He also stated that the impacts of such early bonds continue throughout life.

By what means people describe love in the perspective of their passionate bonds are referred to approaches known as love styles. The way people sense and act in their relations is influenced by these approaches (Heshmati et al., [2017](#)). Eros, storge, agape, ludus, pragma, and mania are the six love styles which Lee has described. The three basic love styles are termed as *primary* and these primary love styles combine in a different way to form *secondary* love styles. That’s why this theory is named as color-wheel theory of love because primary love types combine to form secondary love types just like primary colors combine to form different secondary colors. Three primary love styles are eros, storge and ludus. These love styles combine inversely to give rise to secondary love styles, namely mania, agape, and pragma (Agus et al., [2021](#)).

Feeling jealous when your partner is involved in romantic relationship with others is termed as *romantic jealousy* (Güçlü et al., [2017](#)). Pfeiffer described three types of jealousy, namely cognitive, emotional, and behavioral. Cognitive jealousy is related to thought pattern of a person. It refers to having jealousy thoughts about partner interested in romantic relation with others. Different from this, emotional jealousy involves feelings tied to one's partner, where uneasiness or distress is triggered in response to situations that provoke jealousy. This represents the emotional aspect of jealousy. Behavioral jealousy involves frequency of verbal or physical methods of defensive nature that are used to search about partners involvement in romantic relationship with others (Aloyce et al., [2023](#)).

Exclusive, reactive, and anxious jealousy share similarities with emotional and cognitive jealousy whereas possessive jealousy can involve partner inspection behaviors. Barelds and Barelds-Dijkstra ([2007](#)) concluded that exclusive, reactive, and anxious jealousy share similarities with both emotional and cognitive jealousy, while possessive jealousy often involves behaviors like monitoring a partner. They suggested that anxious jealousy, comparable to cognitive jealousy, can be seen as a negative relationship experience that may ultimately lead to relationship

disturbances. However, little is known about how possessive jealousy affects relationships, as it may, in some cases, also contribute to relationship satisfaction. Perceptive, emotive, and interactive jealousy are adversely associated with marital contentment. It was discovered by Andersen et al. (1995) that perceptive jealousy had a comparatively potent counter correlation with interpersonal contentment.

Alyana et al. (2023) conducted a study that involved convenient sampling approach to choose a sample consisting of 200 males and 200 females. These were emerging adults, aged between 18 to 25 years, enrolled in academic institutes of Faisalabad. The study revealed insecure attachment style as significant predictor of obsessive love among emerging adults. Similarly, a study conducted by Arshad and Imran (2023) revealed that romantic jealousy negatively predicts marital satisfaction. Cheema and Malik (2021) revealed that negative association between expectations in romantic relations and psychological well-being was moderated by parental support.

Coban and Bhogal (2018) indicated that closeness predicts cognitive jealousy, but attachment style and self-esteem do not. Thus contradicting other studies that looked at the impact of attachment style and self-esteem in relation to multidimensional romantic jealousy. Zahid and Tariq (2020) revealed that romantic jealousy predicts marital satisfaction. The participants in the study were married men and women age 20-50 years living in Pakistan.

Previous researches claimed that the attachment styles shape our love styles, which have impact on peoples's relationship satisfaction. Romantic jealousy is commonly experienced in intimate relationships. Therefore, people in different love styles can experience jealousy in different ways and at different levels based on their attachments in prior relationships.

Rationale

Previous studies on variables, such as romantic jealousy, attachment, and love styles were mainly conducted in European countries. In terms of Pakistani culture, it is observed that people are reluctant to express their feelings of love and a lack of evidence based literature exists in this context. Therefore, present study aims to explore the association between these variables to contribute in the indigenous literature.

Objectives

The current study aims to fulfill the following objectives.

1. To find out relationship among attachment styles, love styles, and romantic jealousy in adolescence and adults.
2. To find out the predictors of love styles in terms of attachment styles.
3. To examine the gender differences in cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects of romantic jealousy.

Hypotheses

1. There is likely to be a significant correlation between attachment styles, love styles, and romantic jealousy among adolescence and adults.
2. Anxious attachment is likely to positively predict mania love style among adolescence and adults.
3. Anxious attachment is likely to positively predict ludus love style among adolescence and adults.
4. There are likely to be significant gender differences in romantic jealousy among adolescents and adults.

Methodology

Research Design

The study used correlational research design to evaluate the significance of the variables under study.

Sample/Participants

The sample of this study includes late adolescents and young adults ($N = 305$). The sample was further classified into categories of males ($n = 130$) and females ($n = 175$). The age range of participants was 17-31 years. The sample was approached by using purposive sampling technique.

Inclusion Criteria

The participants (adolescence and late adults) selected for the research were in undocumented relationships. They were either engaged or unengaged, currently part of a relationship.

Exclusion Criteria

Adolescences in documented relationships, such as *Nikah* or marriage were excluded from the research population.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N = 305)

Demographic Variables	<i>f</i>	%
Gender		
Male	177	58.0
Female	128	42.0
Age Groups		
Adolescence (16-19)	129	42.3
Adults (20-38)	176	57.7
Relationship Status		
Engaged	123	40.3
Unengaged	182	59.7

Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage of participants on the basis of demographics. The total sample was ($N = 305$), wherein male participants were ($f = 177$, 58.0%) and female participants were ($f = 128$, 42.0%). Out of total participants, adolescents (having age range 16-19 years) were $f = 129$, 42.3% and adults (having age range 20-38) were $f = 176$, 57.7%. Moreover, total number of engaged participants was $f = 123$, 40.3% and unengaged was $f = 182$, 59.7%.

Measurements

Revised Adult Attachment Scale

Collins ([1996](#)) developed this scale, which contains three subscales, namely close, depend, and anxiety. The total items of the scale are 18. Each subscale contains 6 items. It is 5-point Likert type scale in which responses vary from 1-5, where 1 = *not at all characteristics of me* and 5 = *very characteristics of me*. The lowest possible score of this scale is 18 and highest possible score is 90. The items 1,6,8,12,13, and 17 measure close attachment style. Depend is measured through 2,5,7,14,16,18. Whereas, anxiety subscale is measured by items 3,4, 9,10,11, and 15. Prior to the computation, 8,13, and 17 items in Close subscale and 2,7,16, and 18 in Depend subscales were reversed score.

Love Attitude Scale: Short Form

Hendrick and Hendrick (1986) developed brief version of Love Attitude Scale. This short version consists of 6 categories of love. These include, eros, ludus, storge, pragma, manic, and agape love. Each category is measured by 3 items on 5-point Likert scale. The response rate varies from 1 = *strongly agree* to 5 = *strongly disagree* where 2 depicts *moderately agree*, 3 *neutral*, and 4 *moderately disagree* in this scale. The possible attainable score of this scale ranges from 18-90. Items 1-3 measures eros love style, 4-6 ludus, 7-9 storge, 10-12 pragma, 13-15 manic, and 16-18 items measure agape love style.

Multidimensional Jealousy Scale

Pfeiffer and Wong (1989) published this scale, which consists of 24 items. The items 1-8 measure cognitive jealousy, 9-16 measure emotional jealousy, and 17-24 measure behavioral jealousy. The responses are collected on a 7-point rating scale. In case of cognitive and behavioral jealousies, the scale varies between 1 (*never*) to 7 (*all the time*), while ranging from 1 (*very pleased*) to 7 (*very upset*) in case of emotional jealousy.

Procedure

The research topic was first presented to Advanced Studies and Research Board, University of Sargodh for approval. After approval, the permission letter for data collection was taken from the department. Initially, the data was collected through Google Forms. Students from different universities and medical colleges were approached through social media sources, such as WhatsApp. Before collecting the data, consent form was presented to the participants. It was assured that all the participants were taking part in research by their will. Online sample was approached using snowball technique. The data was also collected physically through questionnaires in hard form. For this purpose, students were approached in-person. The entire data collection process took three months. After completion of data collection, data sheet was made in SPSS.

Results

Table 2

Psychometric Properties of Scales (N = 305)

Scales	α	M	SD	Range
Attachment Style	.84	50.69	10.96	17-81
Close	.62	17.64	4.34	6-30
Depend	.58	11.62	3.46	2-23
Anxious	.78	17.90	5.09	6-30
Love Attitude	.72	45.70	8.54	24-76
Eros	.67	6.96	2.59	3-15
Ludus	.79	8.31	2.80	3-15
Storge	.86	7.14	3.12	3-15
Pragma	.75	7.23	2.72	3-15
Mania	.56	9.04	2.78	3-15
Agape	.78	7.01	2.73	3-15
Romantic Jealousy	.87	64.00	14.89	24-111
Cognitive	.88	17.23	7.26	8-40
Emotional	.90	28.39	7.93	8-40
Behavioral	.89	18.38	7.59	8-40

Table 2 reveals the psychometric properties of scales. The Cronbach's α values range from .58 - .90. The lowest reliability is of depend attachment style subscale, which is .58 and the highest reliability is of emotional jealousy subscale, which is .90. The values greater than .70 indicate higher reliability, while less than .70 means low reliability. Hence, the findings show that the scales used were reliable.

Table 3*Correlation Values of Attachment Styles and Love Styles*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Close	17.64	4.34	-								
2. Depend	11.62	3.46	.46***	-							
3. Anxiety	17.90	5.09	-.04	-.04	-						
4. Eros	6.96	2.59	.51***	.44***	-.00	-					
5. Ludus	8.31	2.80	-.01	.20***	.27***	.10	-				
6. Pragma	7.24	2.72	.05	.35***	-.03	.03	.02	-			
7. Mania	9.04	2.78	.44***	.71***	.50***	.01	.25***	.01	-		
8. Cognitive	17.23	7.26	.26***	.19***	.28***	-.00	.15**	.05	.19**	-	
9. Emotional	28.39	7.94	.19**	.17**	.27***	-.02	.17**	-.07	.22***	-.02	-
10. Behavioral	18.38	7.59	.35***	.31***	.32***	-.03	.18**	.03	.22***	.55***	-.08

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

Table 3 describes the inter-correlation among attachment styles, love styles and romantic jealousy. For this purpose, Pearson product-moment correlation was used. The findings suggested that mania and ludus love styles had significantly positive relationship with anxiety attachment style. However, close attachment style was significantly correlated with eros love style, while depend attachment style was significantly correlated with pragma love style. Moreover, Mania and ludus love were found positively associated with cognitive jealousy, emotional jealousy, and behavioral jealousy. The findings also revealed that anxious attachment was positively correlated with cognitive, emotional, and behavioral romantic jealousies.

Table 4

Regression Analysis Showing Anxious Attachment as a Predictor of Mania Love Style

Variables	B	β	SE	95% CI	
				LL	UL
Constant	4.22***		.51	3.22	5.2
Anxious Attachment	0.27***	.50	.03	0.22	0.32
R^2	0.26				

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

Table 4 indicates impact of anxious attachment style on mania love style. Simple Linear regression analysis was used to find the regression. The R^2 values indicate that anxious attachment explains 26% variance in the mania love style with $F(1,303) = 98.18$, $p < .001$. Hence, anxious attachment was significantly a positive predictor of mania love style ($\beta = .50$, $p < .001$).

Table 5

Regression Analysis Showing Anxious Attachment as a Predictor of Ludus Love Style

Variables	B	β	SE	95% CI	
				LL	UL
Constant	5.61***		.56	4.51	6.71
Anxiety	0.15***	.27	.03	0.09	0.21
R^2	0.08				

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

Table 5 indicates impact of anxious attachment style on ludus love style. Simple linear regression analysis was used to find the regression. The R^2 values reveal that anxious attachment explains 8% variance in the ludus love style with $F(1, 303) = 24.69, p < .001$. Hence, anxious attachment was significantly a positive predictor of ludus love style ($\beta = .27, p < .001$).

Table 6

Mean Comparison of Romantic Jealousy between Males (N = 177) and Females (N= 128)

	Male		Female		<i>t</i> (303)	<i>p</i>	Cohens' <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Cognitive Jealousy	17.35	7.37	17.13	7.20	0.264	.792	.030
Emotional Jealousy	27.07	8.50	29.37	7.36	2.521	.012	.289
Behavioral Jealousy	18.65	7.18	18.18	7.89	0.535	.593	.062

Table 6 displays mean differences of cognitive, behavioral, and emotional romantic jealousies. Only the mean differences of emotional jealousy were significant. Mean value for females ($M = 29.37, SD = 7.36$) was higher than males ($M = 27.07, SD = 8.50$) on emotional jealousy with $t(303) = 2.52, p < .05$. The Cohens' *d* value was .29 ($< .50$), indicating small effect size.

Discussion

The first hypothesis stated that there is likely to be a significant correlation between attachment style and love style among adolescence and adults. As per the findings, it was partially accepted. Similarly, there was significant relationship between anxious attachment style and manic love style. People with anxious attachment always have a fear about relationships. In mania love style, there is obsessive thoughts about the partner. Previous Studies suggested that people have an examining impact on their companions' sentiments when they are anxiously attached (Sbarra & Hazan, 2008). Subsequently, there was a significant correlation between ludus love style and anxious attachment style among adolescence and adults. Ludus love is a dangerous form of love in which individuals are not sincere and fell in love for mere enjoyment. Shaver and Hazan (1988) conceptualized this as the *avoidant type of love*. In terms of current study, it is suggested that insecure attachment should positively correlate with avoidant type of love.

The anxious attachment style is demonstrated as insecure attachment and, therefore, the results supported research hypothesis. Moreover, storge and agape had non-significant relationship with attachment style, while pragma was only correlated to dependent attachment. Hence, the hypothesis 1 was partially accepted.

Close attachment was significantly positively correlated with cognitive, behavioral, and emotional components of jealousy. These findings were supported by the study of Coban and Bhogal (2018). In their study, secure attachment positively predicted cognitive jealousy. Barelds and Dijkstra (2007) described jealousy as a positive factor in romantic relationships. It works as a balance in relationships. High score on dependent attachment shows secure attachment style. Consequently, there is also a positive role of romantic jealousy in romantic relationships of people with dependent attachment style. Simpson and Rholes (2017) described that stable relationships involve high romantic jealousy feelings. Anxiously attached people feel uncomfortable in their early life relationships. In romantic relationship they feel unstable emotions and jealousy (Li & Chan, 2012).

Ludus and mania love styles were positively correlated with cognitive, emotional, and behavioral jealousy. The mania love style is characterized by intense emotions, deep warmth, and heightened anxiety. Therefore, there will be high feelings of romantic jealousy in people who will be in mania love style. They are actually obsessed with thinking about their loved ones so they will feel jealous when they find their lovers involved with someone else either cognitively, behaviorally, or emotionally. Ludic lovers consider love as a game and are focused on winning it. However, the results were supported with the findings of Goodboy et al. (2012), which found that none of the love styles except mania and ludus predicted jealousy-evoking behavior. Finding partners in romantic relationship with others making them feel lose. As a result of it, they feel jealous.

As per the second and third hypotheses, anxious attachment style is likely to positively predict ludus and mania love styles. Anxiously attached individuals have a fear to be separated from their close relationships, hence there is a possibility that they might lead toward manic love style. Shaver and Hazan (1988) identified several characteristics of individuals with a manic love style, including experiencing a troubled childhood, having complex relationships with their parents, and viewing love as intense and overwhelming. These individuals often seek out relationships with

unfamiliar or unpredictable partners. These characteristics suggest that anxious attachment may stem from adopting the mania love style. Lee (1977) described the ludus love style as being associated with an *average childhood*, a life that is generally satisfactory but occasionally frustrating, and anxiety about the future of romantic relationships. Moreover, anxious attached individuals have not experience good relationships, therefore they don't value relationships or cannot reciprocate the feelings of others as they are always in fear to be separated. Such experiences lead them to ludus love style.

According to the fourth hypothesis, there are likely to be significant gender differences in romantic jealousy. This was partially accepted as only the significant gender differences were found in emotional jealousy. Different studies suggested different results on gender differences in romantic jealousy. Güçlü et al. (2017) reported that females scored higher on cognitive and emotional reaction items than males. No significant gender differences on behavioral jealousy were found. Elphinston et al. (2011) reported significant gender differences in emotional and behavioral jealousy with females scoring high on both dimensions. However, no significant gender differences on cognitive jealousy were found in this study. Findings may be subjected to cultural and time variations.

Concluison

The current study aimed to explore the relationship among attachment styles, love styles, and romantic jealousy, revealing key predictors of negative love styles that can significantly affect relationship satisfaction. The findings demonstrated that attachment styles, particularly anxious and avoidant, play a crucial role in shaping love styles characterized by emotional dependence and possessiveness, which in turn contribute to relationship instability and dissatisfaction. Moreover, the study highlighted the profound impact of early life attachments on the development of romantic relationships and the emotions associated with them. Individuals with secure attachment patterns tend to develop healthier, more stable romantic relationships, while those with insecure attachment styles may experience heightened jealousy, emotional distance, and challenges in managing intimacy. These results emphasize the importance of early life experiences in shaping how individuals navigate romantic relationships in adulthood, suggesting that promoting secure attachment from a young age could improve relationship dynamics and overall emotional well-being.

Implications

- This research has implications in family and relationship counselling. Counsellors can better understand the relationship issues and can plan targeted therapies for it.
- This will help adolescents and adults to better understand their relationship problems.
- This research also highlights the importance of early life attachment patterns that can influence the individuals' later life. It may help parents understand and better manage their early bonds with their children.

Limitations and Suggestions

The sample included in the study was mainly comprised of individuals who were students, so the findings may not be generalizable on all adolescents and adults, such as on those who are uneducated. Therefore, future studies can include samples from all the possible groups of this age. Moreover, study may include response biases because most peoples are not expressive due to societal stereotypical behaviors. However, future studies can use multi-method approach to get more reliable findings.

Conflict of Interest

The authors of the manuscript have no financial or non-financial conflict of interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

Data Availability Statement

The data associated with this study will be provided by the corresponding author upon request.

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