

The Effect of Adult Attachment on Conflict Resolution Styles in Couples Relationship

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ABSTRACT

Background: Relationship researchers have focused on the frequency of conflict in couples' relationships and the manner in which couples engage in and try to resolve conflicts. Conflict occurs regularly in most close relationships and dealing with conflict, under some conditions, may facilitate the development and maintenance of intimacy and satisfaction in a relationship. conflict resolution style can be developed through different developmental experiences and practices. The present researcher tried to understand conflict resolution behavior from attachment perspective. **Objective:** The purpose of this study is to examine individual differences in conflict resolution behavior using attachment theory as a framework. **Methodology:** Community based descriptive cross-sectional study was employed in Yeka Sub-city of Addis Ababa. A total of 306 (159 female and 147 male) participants were included from community sample. Three Kebeles in Yeka sub-city of Addis Ababa were selected randomly. Data were collected on demographic factors, adult attachment style and conflict resolution style. For the standard constructs namely attachment style, Experience in Close Relationship Scale-Revised (ECR-R, Fraley et al., 2000 and for conflict resolution style, Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI-II, Rahim, 1983) were used. **Result:** The standard regression revealed that both attachment dimensions (attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance) predict conflict resolution behavior significantly. Attachment avoidant was more predictive of conflict resolution style than attachment anxiety. **Conclusion:** The attachment style or emotional bond between couples has true impact on how couples resolve the problem or conflict which is inevitable.

Keywords: Adult Attachment Style; Conflict Resolution Style; Couple Relationship

Close relationships are essential to health and well-being. The capacity to form intimate (couple) relationship with others is considered as an essential developmental task and a principal feature of effective personality development (Bowlby, 1988; Cassidy, 2001; Loubser, 2007). Couple relationship is the emotional (eg. cohabitation) or emotional and legal (marriage) commitment between two opposite sex individuals to share emotional and physical intimacy, a variety of tasks and economic resources. People strive to have successful couple relationships, yet for centuries, the exact manner in which to

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accomplish this has remained an enigma. In fact, a great deal is known about the inner working of the couple relationship today than the previous times.

Marriage has long been an important social institution by forming family which occupies a central place in the lives of men, women, and children around the world. The fact that family is "*a source of support, and sometimes an obstacle, to individual and collective achievements; a unit of economic production and consumption; an emotional haven that can sometimes be a source of emotional strain; and a vehicle for extending care giving and culture across the generations, for better and for worse*" (Laura, Lippman and Wilcox, 2013).

Marriage is the privileged institute in Africa too. In fact Africa is one continent with several worlds. Marriage in Africa has been commonly described as early and universal and this situation has partially been blamed for the persistence of high fertility in the region. In Africa, marriage patterns vary across and within countries among different ethnic groups. Such variations could be due to both cultural and socio-economic factors. Although it varies, the major aspect of marriage is to maintain and continue personal and social well being. A study (Tiliouine, 2009) conducted in Algeria on health and subjective well being revealed that there is an association between marriage and personal well being. The healthier group showed significantly higher satisfaction with marriage, friendship and family.

Marriage in Ethiopia is one of the respected social phenomena as a rite of passage and forming well being that many people are going to engage. For instance, the result of the 2007 census (SCA, 2007) showed that 50 percent of the population was married from age of ten and only three percent divorced. Irrespective of the challenges and constraints facing now a days, couples are getting married to form life in an institution.

However, it is important to remember that the simple presence of a spouse is not necessarily protective. A troubled marriage is itself a prime source of stress and dissatisfaction while simultaneously limiting the partner's ability to seek support in other relationships. One of the prime causes that make a relationship in trouble is conflict resolution style.

Researchers argue that conflict only results in relationship dissatisfaction and breakdown if couples are ill equipped to solve or dissolve it (Markman, Stanley and Blumberg, 1994; Gottman, 1997; Hanzal and Segrin, 2011). Markman et al., (2011) have developed and researched this idea and summarized, contrary to popular belief, it is not how much you love each other that can best predict the future of your relationship, but how conflicts and disagreements are handled. Unfortunately, conflict is inevitable and cannot be avoided. So, if someone wants to have a satisfying marriage, he/she would better learn to fight right (Markman et al., 1994). The idea was further strengthened by John Gottman in his popular saying, "*Through my long years of research, I come up with a conclusion that marriage resulted in divorce due to couple's failure to resolve conflict that is inevitable in a relationship*" (Gottman, 1997, pp.103).

There are different factors that predispose the ill style of resolving conflict in couples. Among these the present researcher wants to examine the effect of adult attachment style on conflict resolution style. Bowlby in his attachment theory (1969) suggests that attachment is the deep emotional bond formed between infants and one or more adults; usually a parent or caregiver. This attachment provides a sense of security to children and allows them to explore their environment, returning to the adult during periods of distress. Development of

this emotional bond or attachment involves parents providing love, nurturing, trust, safety and respect to their children and sensitively responding to their children's needs. The quality of the early parent-child relationship creates a framework of internalized expectations and beliefs about the self and the self in relation to others. The blueprint of such framework is long lasting and extended to adult romantic relationship (ISDP, 2004; Feeny, 2008; Simpson and Rholes, 2012). Therefore, attachment system affects the cognitive, emotional and behavioral responses in romantic relationship and expressed in an individual's internal working model of self and others (Collins and Read, 1994). The model of self and model of others can exist in conscious and unconscious level, which is relatively stable and influences later social and environmental interactions as well as personal developmental experiences.

Although unanimously disliked, conflict resolution styles functions as an opportunity to resolve differences between relational partners. However, if a couple is unable to search the potential benefit of conflict and focused only on the negative connotation of it, conflict worsens to unmanageable degree and resulted in unfortunate conditions of violence (any), crime, or divorce (Wilson and Daly, 2001). That is why we always watch violence and crimes between couples probably resulted from ill equipped conflict resolution behavior. The global prevalence of physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence among all ever-partnered women was 30.0% (WHO, 2013). The prevalence was highest in the African, Eastern Mediterranean and South-East Asia Regions, where approximately 37% of ever-partnered women reported having experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence at some point in their lives. Ethiopian condition could not be exceptional. However, researches done in this aspect are hardly possible to get in Ethiopia and scarce in other nations. Therefore, the present researcher focused examine the effect of adult attachment style on conflict resolution style.

RESEARCH METHODS AND MATERIALS

Study Area

The study area is Addis Ababa and was selected purposively. The study included is heterosexual couples. Addis Ababa is the capital city of Ethiopia established in 1886. It is geographically located at the heart of the country. It accommodates about 35% of the total urban population in Ethiopia. Addis Ababa represents a heterogeneous population in many social characteristics. Addis Ababa City has a total population of 2,738,248 with a growth rate of 2.1 percent per annum (additional 57,503 people per year), where around 52% of the populations composed of children and adolescents below age 25. From the total population, 48 percent are males and 52 percent are females (CSA, 2007). There is a seven year gap and recently the total population of Ethiopia assumed to reach to 90 million and the population of Addis Ababa also has increased. However, official documents are not yet revealed.

Addis Ababa City is divided into 10 Sub-cities; again, the Sub-cities are divided in to 99 Kebeles. There is a disparity in Sub-city population distribution which shows uneven distribution. The whole population is urban dweller. The majority of the city population lives in Kolfe Keranyo (15.6%) and Yeka (12.6%), while Arada (7.7%) and Akaki Kality Sub City (6.7%) have the smallest share from the city's total population.

Research Design and Population

A nonexperimental explanatory design was used to investigate the question of interest. The design is nonexperimental because there is no manipulation of independent variables, which were investigated in the study. In this design, the levels or categories of the independent variables were already defined or classified so that the researcher has no opportunity to

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manipulate or randomly assign individuals to certain groups. It is explanatory since the objective of the study is to test hypotheses derived from a given theoretical orientation. Moreover, cross-sectional method was used to collect data at a time to make comparisons across different categories of respondents. The target population of this study was adult heterosexual couples while the study population was adult heterosexual couples in Addis Ababa Administrative City. The study site overview and sampling techniques are presented hereafter.

Sample Size Determination and Sampling Procedure

To determine the size of population having the attribute that is couple relationship (married) Central Statistics Authority (CSA, 2007), 50% was used. Therefore, for single proportion population, to derive the sample size in relation to the total populations sizes the proportional distribution of the attributes taken in to consideration i.e. 50 %. Then at 95% confidence interval and +/- 5 % significance level the sample size calculated became 384. Thus, 384 married (cohabited) from a total of 384 households were included in the study.

Yeka sub city was taken purposely. among the 10 Woredas in Yeka sub city, three Kebeles were selected using simple random sampling method. To reach households which are the analysis unit of the study, systematic simple random sampling was used based on the sampling frame obtained from Keble household registration database.

Data Collection Tools and Process

The researcher used a demographic questionnaire and two structured questionnaires. The demographic questionnaire contains nine items that elicits personal information from each respondent. The structured questionnaire includes: Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (ECR-R), to collect data on adult attachment experience and Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI-II), to make inventory on how respondents resolve conflicts with their partners.

Experience in Close Relationships

Fraley et al.'s (2000) ECR-R includes 36, 7-point Likert scale items in which 18 of them assess romantic attachment anxiety. Attachment anxiety measures the degree to which one fears being rejected, neglected or abandoned by romantic partners. The other 18 items assess romantic attachment avoidance which measures one's degree of discomfort with emotional closeness, openness and interdependence in romantic relationships. Items were rated on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). ECR-R subscale scores for the two attachment dimensions of anxiety and avoidance are determined by calculating mean scores; lower scores on both dimensions reflect more secure attachment styles and higher scores on one or both suggest more insecure attachment styles.

Sibley, Fischer and Liu (2005), reported that ECR-R measures of anxiety and avoidance were positively correlated ($r = .48$) and internal consistency of .94 and .93 for attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance respectively. For the present sample the internal consistency of attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance were .84 and .76 respectively.

Conflict Resolution Styles

Rahim Conflict Resolution Inventory was used to collect data regarding conflict resolution styles of couples. The instrument contains 28 items and five styles of handling conflict in a 5-point Likert scale. The conflict handling styles are; integrating, obliging, dominating, compromising and avoiding conflict subscales. Higher score in integrating and

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compromising indicates functional conflict resolution style while higher score in obliging, dominating and avoiding conflict indicates dysfunctional conflict resolution style.

The ROCI-II demonstrated adequate test-retest reliabilities ranging from .60 for compromising to .83 for integrating [2]. Moreover, Shi [11] also reported that the reliabilities of the five subscales were .90, .85, .81, .81 and .74 for integrating, avoiding conflict, dominating, obligating and compromising respectively. In the present sample the internal consistency ranged from .59 (compromising) to .86 (integrating).

Methods of Data Analysis

Prior to conducting the analyses, the data collected were examined for accuracy of data entry, normality, missing values and collinearity. The data were found to have dependable data, normal distribution, no significant missing values and the scales and subscales which were considered as independent variables were not collinear. Person correlation was run to examine the relationship adult attachment and conflict resolution style. Multiple regressions were run with attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance as the independent variables and conflict resolution styles (integrating, compromising, obliging, dominating and avoiding conflict) as dependent variables. Moreover, MANOVA was used to compare the conflict resolution styles of male and female research participants.

RESULTS

Table 1: Demographic Data (Categorical) (n=306)

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Valid Percent
Sex		
Female	157	51.3
Male	149	48.7
Total	306	100
Age		
20- 25 years old	21	6.9
26-40 years old	218	71.9
41-60 years old	56	18.5
>60 years old	8	2.6
Total	303	100
Marital status		
Married	245	81.1
Cohabited	19	6.3
Divorced	7	2.3
Single	30	9.9
Total	302	100
Duration in relationship		
< a year	6	2.2
1-5 years	105	39.2
6-10 years	65	24.3
>10 years	92	34.3
Total	268	100

The majority (71.9 %) of the respondents were in the age category of 26 to 40 years old, which is relatively in early adulthood category of chronological age. The other 56 (18.5%) fall in the age category of 41-60 years old which is congruent to the chronological age of middle adulthood. Therefore, most, 90.2% of the respondents were in early and middle adulthood chronological age. The majority, 245 (81.1%) of the respondents reported that

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they are married, 30 (9.8%) reported that they are single, 19 (6.2%). Thirty nine percent of the respondents reported that they are in a relationship for one to five years, while 92 (34.2%) of the respondents reported that they are in a relationship for more than 10 years.

Table 2: Level of Education and Income (n=306)

Variables	Frequency	Valid Percent
Education Level		
Below high school	9	3.0
High school complete	66	21.9
Diploma/Certificate holders	108	35.9
First degree holders	86	28.6
Above first degree holders	32	10.6
Total	301	100
Monthly Income		
No Income	10	3.7
500-1000 birr	15	5.6
1001-1500 birr	30	11.2
1501-2000 birr	20	7.4
2001-2500 birr	32	11.9
>2500 birr	162	60.2
Total	269	100

Approximately 36% of the respondents were diploma/certificate holders, while 28.6% and 21.9 % were first degree holders and those who did finish high school (grade 10/12) respectively. Around 11% respondents hold their second degree and above. This implies that more than 75.5% of the respondents in the present study are trained in different fields with diploma and above. Moreover, 60.2% of the respondents earned more than 2500 Ethiopian birr per month while 11.9% of the respondents reported of getting 2001-2500 per month (Table 5). This implies that 72% of the research participants earned more than 2000 birr per month.

Table 3: Bivariate Correlation among Variables of Interest

Measures	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Aanx	1						
Aavo	.55**	1					
IN	-.15*	-.44**	1				
CO	-.11	-.30**	.55**	1			
OB	-.09	-.37**	.46**	.52**	1		
DO	.33**	.32**	-.30**	-.07	-.07	1	
AC	.18**	.10	.05	.23**	.29**	.17**	1

*Correlations significant at the p<0.01 level are indicated by * and correlations significant at the p<0.001 level are indicated by ***

Note: Aanx= Attachment anxiety, Aavo=Attachment avoidance, IN=Integrating, OB=Obliging DO=Dominating, AC=Avoiding Conflict, CO=Compromising,

A statistically significant relationships exist almost in all variables. Attachment anxiety had statistically significant positive relationship with attachment avoidance ($r=.55$, $p<.001$), dominating ($r=.33$, $p<0.01$), and avoiding conflict ($r=.18$, $p<0.01$). Attachment anxiety had also statistically significant negative association with integrating ($r=-.15$, $p<.01$). Attachment avoidance had statistically significant positive association with dominating ($r=.32$, $p<0.001$)

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and had statistically negative association with integrating ($r=-.44$, $p<.001$), compromising ($r=.30$, $p<.001$) and obliging ($r=-.37$, $p<.001$).

Two patterns of relationship have been found between adult attachment and conflict resolution styles. On one hand, both attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance were inversely related with most conflict resolution styles subscales (integrating, compromising and obliging). Consequently, adult attachment and conflict resolution styles had inverse relationship. On the other hand, both attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance had direct relationship with some of the conflict resolution styles subscales-dysfunctional (avoiding conflict and dominating). Therefore, the nature of the relationship between attachment and conflict resolution depends on the subscales taken under consideration. However, attachment style and conflict resolution styles had statistically significant correlation.

To further elaborate the relationship between adult attachment and conflict resolution style, regression was made. There are attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance dimensions in adult attachment as independent variable. The dependant variables contain integrating, compromising, obliging, dominating and avoiding conflict subscales in conflict resolution styles

Table 4: Multiple Regression of Adult Attachment on Conflict Resolution Style

	Beta	t	p	F	R2
<i>Regression 1</i>					
<i>DV: Integrating</i>					
<i>IV: Anxiety</i>	.1312	.118	.035	36.956	.196**
<i>Avoidance</i>	-.501	-8.126	.000		
<i>Regression 2</i>					
<i>DV: Compromising</i>					
<i>IV: Anxiety</i>	.075	1.140	.255	15.245	.091**
<i>Avoidance</i>	-.337	-5.141	.000		
<i>Regression 3</i>					
<i>DV: Obliging</i>					
<i>IV: Anxiety</i>	.159	2.521	.012	27.915	.156**
<i>Avoidance</i>	-.459	-7.262	.000		
<i>Regression 4</i>					
<i>DV: Dominating</i>					
<i>IV: Anxiety</i>	.225	3.51	1.001	24.019	.137**
<i>Avoidance</i>	.196	3.066	.002		
<i>Regression 5</i>					
<i>DV: Avoiding conflict</i>					
<i>IV: Anxiety</i>	.178	2.636	.009	5.020	.032*
<i>Avoidance</i>	.001	.021	.983		

Note: * $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.001$

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The above five regression results implied the prediction power of adult attachment style on each subscale of conflict resolution styles. The table show attachment avoidance predicts integrating, compromising, obliging and dominating styles of conflict resolution styles while attachment anxiety predicts obliging, dominating and avoiding conflict type of conflict resolution styles.

DISCUSSION

This community based cross-sectional study with the objective of examining the effect of adult attachment style on conflict resolution style was done in Yeka sub city of Addis Ababa. It assessed how conflict resolution style of couples affected by adult attachment style.

The analysis of the present study displayed statistically significant associations between variables that have been described in the theoretical framework. Research reports revealed that adult attachment style is related to conflict resolution styles in romantic relationship (Brennan, et al., 1998; Magai, 2008; Feeney, 2008). Analyses in the present research also show attachment anxiety had statistically significant positive association with dominating and avoiding conflict type of conflict resolution styles and statistically significant negative association with integrating type of conflict resolution styles. This implies couples who experience attachment anxiety would involve in dominating and avoiding conflict type of conflict resolution styles than integrating or compromising type of conflict resolution styles. But the relationship between attachment anxiety and avoiding conflict was different from the previous research reports (Shi, 2003; Plessis, 2006). It was reported that one who is anxiously attached would be less likely to involve in avoiding conflict type of conflict resolution styles and more likely to involve in obliging and dominating type of conflict resolution styles (Collins and Read, 1990; Crowley, 2006). However, in this research attachment anxiety had statistically significant positive association with avoiding conflict. The possible explanation may be, as the behavior of anxiety continues without being secured by the attachment figure, eventually anxious behavior would result in detachment which leads to avoiding conflict.

On the other hand, attachment avoidance had statistically significant negative association with integrating, compromising and obliging type of conflict resolution styles and statistically significant positive association with dominating type of conflict resolution styles. This implies couples who experience attachment avoidance are less likely to apply integrating, compromising and obliging type of conflict resolution styles but dominating type of conflict resolution styles. Therefore, similar to the previous research findings, attachment avoidance is inversely related to integrating, compromising and obliging type of conflict resolution styles and directly related to dominating type of conflict resolution styles (Collins and Feeney, 2000; Corcoran and Mallinckrodt, 2000).

Therefore, in the present study it is found that each attachment dimension predicts the conflict resolution styles. Attachment avoidance was the strong predictor of integrating, compromising, obliging and dominating types of conflict resolution styles while attachment anxiety only strongly predicts obliging, dominating and avoiding conflict type of conflict resolution styles. Therefore, attachment avoidance was the strong predictor of conflict resolution styles than attachment anxiety which is analogous to previous research reports (eg. Shi, 2003).

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Those who scored lower on avoidance in terms of attachment were more likely to be integrating, compromising and obliging and less likely to be dominating and avoiding conflict during conflict resolution process. On the contrary those who scored higher on attachment avoidance were less likely to engage in behaviors that satisfy self and others but displaying dominating and avoiding conflict type of conflict resolution styles. Therefore, they would choose not to verbalize their disagreement and they would try to avoid discussion about the issue. On the other hand, those who scored lower on anxiety were more likely to be integrating and compromising type of conflict resolution styles. On the contrary those who scored higher on attachment anxiety could display obliging and dominating type conflict resolution styles but less likely to display avoiding conflict type of conflict resolution styles.

The result found above in present research is consistent with previous research reports (Shi, 2003; Cann et al., 2008). These findings in other ways show individuals who have secure attachment (low score in attachment anxiety and low score in attachment avoidance) are active problem solvers, integrative, compromising while insecurely attached individuals are more likely engaged in obliging, dominating or avoiding conflict type of conflict resolution styles. The present finding is consistent with the theoretical speculation suggested by Bowlby (1980) too. Individuals with a secure attachment have faith in self-worth and others' availability and accessibility. As a result, they tend to communicate more openly with their partners. Individuals with an insecure attachment have less confidence in self-worth and others' availability and accessibility. They tend to be avoidant of conflict, and to be dominant or clinging.

The level of attachment avoidance was negatively related to integrating, compromising and obliging type of conflict resolution styles. Integrating and compromising type of conflict resolution styles reflects the tendency for higher concern for self and higher concern for the concern of others. People with high concern for themselves and high concern for others are striving to satisfy the self and others. This association is consistent with the internal working model of secure type of attachment. Obliging type of conflict resolution styles reflects the tendency for lower concern for self and higher concern for others. In turn this behavior reflects a tendency for low self-satisfaction. Further reflection shows that this association is consistent with the internal working model of being avoidant. Individuals with avoidant characteristics are hesitant to enter into any deep and long interactions with emotionally important figures. Those who scored lower on attachment avoidance but scored higher on attachment anxiety were more likely to engage in obliging behavior, either because they held a more positive model of others or as a way of controlling their anxiety. A higher score on anxiety is associated with a more negative model of self, thinking oneself as unworthy. Individuals with high attachment anxiety tend to sacrifice the concern of one to satisfy the concern of others (obliging). Both attachment avoidance and attachment anxiety predicted the conflict resolution styles of obliging.

Attachment avoidance predicted four conflict resolution styles whereas attachment anxiety predicted only two of the subscales. The results from this study indicated that, in the context of conflict resolution styles, attachment avoidance is relatively important factor than attachment anxiety. This means individuals who are avoidant of intimacy, uncomfortable with closeness and are unreasonably self-reliant are at a greater drawback in functional conflict resolution styles. A potential explanation for the discrepancy in the ability of prediction of the two attachment dimensions may lie in their characteristics. The pursuit of anxious person is for a temporary relief from anxiety than to resolve conflict which might

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result in real conflict resolution engagement and unexpectedly become a positive contribution to conflict resolution. However, attachment avoidance kills any possibility for conflict resolution. Anxious individuals are occasionally rewarded with satisfactory conflict resolution, but very avoidant individuals hardly ever are.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined effect of individual attachment style and conflict resolution styles in couple relationship. Building on previous researches attachment theory provided a framework that clarified individual differences and an individual's process of perceiving and reacting to conflict; the present researcher specifically addressed two approaches of conflict, functional and dysfunctional approaches and their association with attachment style. Three hundred six (157 female and 149 male) respondents completed a demographic question and four surveys questions that measured adult attachment style and conflict resolution styles. A corelational analysis and regression analysis were computed to test the formulated hypotheses.

Level of education had positive impact on adult attachment style. Couples who are more educated have the likelihood to control their emotion (less anxious) and confront problems (less avoidant) than those participants whose education level is low. However, level of education had no significant relationship with conflict resolution styles and relationship satisfaction. Therefore, it can be concluded that although the level of education has the likelihood to contribute for secure attachment style in couple relationship but it did not guarantee for having functional conflict resolution styles.

Income had significant impact in all adult attachment style and conflict resolution styles. The higher the income of the couples, the lower the score in their attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance. The higher the couple's income, the more probability to have functional conflict approach and the less probability to have dysfunctional conflict approach between couples. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that level of income is one of the factors that increase emotional bond and enhance functional conflict approach.

In the regression analysis it is also possible to conclude that secure attachment style predicts functional conflict resolution approach.

Implications of the Study

The findings of the present study help to explain people's behavior for intervention. Some people have difficulties in starting and continuing adult intimate relationship and some others even seem to lack the wish or competence to become deeply involved with others. Moreover, it is observed that though couples love each other very well, they go through hard times with uncomplicated problems due to lack of effective conflict resolution styles.

Because of the importance of adult attachment style to conflict resolution, it is helpful for marriage /couple/ therapists to address attachment issues and highlight how they are displayed in romantic relationships. The counselor/therapist/social worker can work on changing negative models of the self and others by helping the couples to provide a secure base for each other.

Moreover, the counselor should understand the conflict approach that couples use in their conversations. By listening and observing their conversational emotions the therapist can understand the approach of conflict that couples are using. Therefore, the therapist can teach

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and counsel clients on how their conversation and emotion affects to reach in to common consensus during communication. Therefore, teaching and practicing more effective conflict resolution styles may assist in building a secure base for each member of the partner. The therapist needs to pay special attention to the more delicate characteristics of avoidant behaviors, and highlight their dynamics and effects when necessary.

Limitation of the Study

I remind the readers of this article to read it with the following drawback. The present researcher more rely on self-report measures and open-ended questions. However, it may result in some inaccuracy in report of attachment style, and conflict resolution styles due to social desirability effect. Because insecure attachment involves defensiveness, participants with insecure attachment styles may under-report their sense of insecurity. The same concern exists for the assessment of conflict resolution styles. In addition, although the self-report adult attachment measure seems to be an effective assessment of attachment style, more and better understanding of the association between adult attachment style and conflict resolution styles could be achieved by including observational methods. Moreover, it would be necessary to assess the importance of attachment style relative to other factors like social desirability that may influence attraction and partner's choices.

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Conflict of Interest

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