

Attachment Style, Inferiority Complex and Self Concealment: A Correlation Study Among Young College Going Adults

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ABSTRACT

This study is focuses on the finding association between Attachment styles, inferiority complex and self-concealment among college going young adults. The feeling of inadequacy and self-concealment can be tracked back to early caregiver interaction encompass heightened stress levels and a decline in psychological well-being, with subsequent impact on academic performance and social adjustment during the college years. This study comprises a sample population of 194 college students aged 18 to 25 years. This research reveals secure attachment style is negatively correlated to Inferiority complex, whereas the avoidant attachment style has positive association with self-concealment and there is positive correlation between ambivalent style, inferiority complex and self- concealment. Overall, the association between attachment style, inferiority complex and self-concealment is been found. The association between inferiority complexes with types of attachment and self-concealment provides substantial insight into the emotional struggles college students encounter. Students may acquire improved stress management skills by comprehending self-concealment and inferiority complex difficulties. This will ultimately lead to a pleasant college experience and future success in life.

Keywords: Attachment Style, Inferiority Complex, Self-Concealment

The most important factor is the nature of the child's early interactions with the primary caregivers. The fundamental and lasting bond that results from these processes generates a variety of attachment patterns that take into consideration individual diversity in maintaining friendly relationships and fulfilling life goals. The relational bonding fosters either positive or negative beliefs about self and others leading to either Secure Attachment styles These styles have been further explored and envisaged as Secure attachment, Avoidant attachment, Ambivalent attachment and disorganized attachment (Kumar, 2023)

The Quality of parental care given into child care is responsible to Child's future psychological wellbeing. It is essential to have warm, intimate and continuous mother child relationship in which both find enjoyment and satisfaction for good mental health. The usual dimension of attachment style is found a) unconscious rejecting the underlying love b) The

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Attachment Style, Inferiority Complex and Self Concealment: A Correlation Study Among Young College Going Adults

excessive demand of love c) satisfactory child behavior relationship, these early relationships have a significant impact on the child's growth in all domains—cognitive, emotional, social, and physical. (Bowlby, 1951). The long-lasting and profound bond formed during a child's early years of life between a caregiver and child is known as attachment. It affects all aspects of the conditioned mind, body, and emotions of humans. Instead of being something that parents do to their children, attachment is something that parents and children establish together over the course of a relationship. (Levy & Orlans, 1998). Secure attachment styles were linked to greater extraversion, friendliness, sociability, and openness to new encounters. Insecure attachment styles were linked to neuroticism, performance anxiety, lower sociability, and less openness to new experiences dimensions. (Narayanan, 2002) "Affectionless psychopathy" is characterized by a lack of regret, chronic anger, poor impulse control, and the inability to build meaningful emotional relationships. It can result from disruption of attachment during the first three years of life. An attitude of connection like this can influence an infant's conduct. Lastly, adults with an unresolved attitude exhibit traits from any of the previous three styles, but they also have a tendency to reason about their attachment experiences in a chaotic and confused manner. (Singh N. , 2021)The psychological and biological systems that govern threat assessment, stress reaction, and resolution of stress continue to be associated with the attachment style of adults. Attachment-related and non-attachment-related stressors elicit distinct threat appraisal patterns, according to research. Individuals who exhibit elevated levels of attachment anxiety demonstrate heightened sensitivity to perceived threats and report significantly increased levels of stress. Defensive regulation mechanisms, such as repression, are more prevalent among individuals with high levels of attachment avoidance. These mechanisms enable individuals to exert control over emotionally distressing situations that are disagreeable. (Shaver, 2007).It's been found in studies that maltreated children in early childhood have showed high level of insecure attachment style (ambivalent -avoidant attachment style) (Crittenden, 1988) (Egeland, 1981) there is association between child abuse and the development of avoidant attachment. An apparent connection between the emergence of avoidant attachment style and child maltreatment, studies suggests that the majority of maltreated children in her sample may be categorized as having avoidant-ambivalent attachment styles. (Main, 1986) (Crittenden, 1988).

Self-concealment is the inclination to intentionally withhold from others confidential information that an individual finds distressing or negative. (Dale C. Larson, 1990) Self-concealment and fear of self-disclosure are related to negative social comparison, act submissive in childhood is associated with insecure adult attachment and this in turn predicts fear of disclosure. A second analysis revealed that insecure adult attachment is associated with fear of disclosure and this in turn predicts depression. (Sarah, 2012)According to studies, the perceived social support of adolescents living alone was predicted to be influenced by their self-concealment. The aforementioned effect was mediated by self-concealment as a direct effect and social self-esteem and "psychological needs satisfied via internet gratification" as indirect effects. (Linran Zhang 1, 2022)There was a significant correlation between self-concealment and suicidal behavior among younger adults. Moreover, in older individuals, self-concealment was significantly associated with depressive symptoms. Self-concealment may be an indication of severe distress, according to the new finding of a correlation between self-concealment and suicidal behavior. (Friedlander, 2012)Self-concealment and loneliness serve as serial mediators between feelings of inferiority and subjective happiness, confirming that individuals who experience greater feelings of inferiority are more likely to engage in self-concealment. This leads to a

Attachment Style, Inferiority Complex and Self Concealment: A Correlation Study Among Young College Going Adults

decline in contentment and an increase in loneliness as a result. (Akdoğan & Çimşir, 2019) An inferiority complex is a psychological condition when a person has a pervasive sense of being inadequate, less capable, or less deserving than those around them. People who struggle with an inferiority complex may feel inadequate and exaggerate their flaws, and they may also have low self-esteem (Çekrlija & Mirković, 2017) The studies is been examined in which is found the interpersonal values, inferiority complex, and psychological well-being of adolescent students. There is a negative association between psychological well-being and inferiority complex. Similarly, there was a negative association between interpersonal values and inferiority complex. However, there was a positive association between interpersonal values and psychological well-being. Additionally, it was discovered that male adolescent pupils exhibited greater interpersonal values and psychological well-being compared to their female counterparts. (Rashid, 2017).

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The Snowball sampling approach, a kind of non-probability sampling, was used. The research population was constituted of who are currently going college, within the age group of 18 to 25 years. The sample of research is 194, with 63% women and 37% male within the age of 18-25, who are currently going to college.

Research Objectives

1. To understand and identify association between Attachment style, inferiority complex and self-concealment.
2. To understand and identify association between the sub-factors of Attachment style, inferiority complex and self-concealment.

Hypothesis of the Research

1. HO: There is no significant association between inferiority complex and self-concealment
2. HO: There is no significant association between Attachment style and self-concealment
3. HO: There is no significant association between Attachment style and inferiority complex
4. HO: There is no significant association between Secure attachment and self-concealment
5. HO: There is no significant association between Avoidant attachment and self-concealment.
6. HO: There is no significant association between Ambivalent attachment and self-concealment.
7. HO: There is no significant association between Secure Attachment style and inferiority complex.
8. HO: There is no significant association between Avoidant attachment and inferiority complex.
9. HO: There is no significant association between Ambivalent attachment and inferiority complex.

Attachment Style, Inferiority Complex and Self Concealment: A Correlation Study Among Young College Going Adults

Instruments

Three measures were used in this study,

1. **Measure Of Attachment Style (MOAS)** Measure of Attachment Style (MOAS) By Ahmad, N, Jahan, A., & Imtiaz, N. (2016) is a 27 item, 5 pointer Likert scale. Self-report measure of attachment style. It was designed to know the attachment style of young adults. (Ahmad, 2016) whereas, Strongly Disagree represent 1 and Strongly Agree represent 5. Reliability= 0.80 (Cronbach's Alpha) High construct validity established. This scale consists three sub factor of attachment style.
 - 1) Secure attachment
 - 2) Ambivalent-insecure attachment
 - 3) Avoidant-insecure attachment
2. **SELF-CONCEALMENT SCALE (SCS)** Self-Concealment Scale by Dale C. Larson & Robert L. Chastain Measuring the functional components of self-concealment scale. A 10-items, 5 pointer Likert scale. Where Strongly Disagree represent 1 and Strongly Agree represent 5. Reliability= 0.86 (Cronbach's Alpha) Good construct validity (Dale C. Larson, 1990).
3. **INFERIORITY COMPLEX SHORTENED SCALES** by Sümeyye Derin & Ekrem Sedat Şahin 10- items, 5 pointer Likert Scale. Reliability and validity established. Whereas Strongly Disagree represent 1 and Strongly represent Agree 5. Reliability= 0.88 (Cronbach's Alpha) Good concurrent validity (Derin, 2023)

Procedure

The sample of research is the individuals within the age of 18-25, who are currently going to college because the research demands the population of young college going adults. the sample of data is being collected from Gujarat and Ahmedabad colleges in the hybrid mode (i.e online and offline) the sample of population represent the college going young adults.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The statistical analysis interpreted that the data is normally distributed and analyzed with the help of Shapiro wilk, the data normally distributed correlation is found with the help of Pearson coefficient correlation Total population is 194. In order to better understand the relationship between the attachment style's sub-variables, those who scored highly on the scale's sub-variables of attachment were identified and a correlation was discovered between them and self-concealment and inferiority complex.

Table 1. Correlation Of Attachment Style, Inferiority Complex and Self Concealment

<i>CORRELATION</i>				
		INFERIORITY COMPLEX	SELF-CONCEALMENT	ATTACHMENT STYLE
INFERIORITY COMPLEX	PEASON CORRELATION	1	.608**	.373**
	Sig (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	194	194	194
SELF-CONCEALMENT	PEASON CORRELATION	.608**	1	.331**
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	194	194	194
ATTACHMENT STYLE	PEASON CORRELATION	.373**	.331**	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	194	194	194

Attachment Style, Inferiority Complex and Self Concealment: A Correlation Study Among Young College Going Adults

As observed in Table 1 correlation between Inferiority Complex and Self-concealment is 0.608 (p-value - .000). There is Significant positive correlation exist between two variables and null hypothesis which states “There is no significant relationship between inferiority complex and self-concealment” is rejected. The interpreted data shows that Null hypothesis H0 “There is no significant relationship between inferiority complex and self-concealment” is rejected. Its been found that There is Significant positive correlation exist between two variables which means that increase in inferiority complex lead to increase in self-concealment. The studies is done in which its been seen that self-concealment and inferiority complex are mediators variables subjective to happiness and the increase in inferiority complex lead to self-concealment . (Ramazan Akdoğan, 2019) the feeling of inadequacy ,low self-esteem and low interpersonal skill leads to Self-concealment which involves actively hiding negative personal information, including feelings, actions, and events perceived as distressing, intimate, and/or negative.

The correlation between Attachment style and self-concealment is r .331 (p-value - .000). There is Significant positive correlation exist between two variables and null hypothesis which states “There is no significant relationship between Attachment style and self-concealment” is rejected. There is positive correlation between self-concealment and ambivalent and avoidant attachment style this mean the individual which have this attachment style are more likely to conceal their information.

The correlation between Attachment style and Inferiority complex is r .373 (p-value - .000). There is positive Significant correlation exist between two variables and null hypothesis which states “There is no significant relationship between Attachment style and Inferiority complex” is rejected. The dynamic between a child and their primary caregiver results in the development of several types of Attachment style and Inferiority complex. Consequently, persons with an insecure attachment style tend feel the feeling of inadequacy.

Table 2 correlation of sub variables attachment style, inferiority complex and self-concealment

<i>Correlation</i>				
		Attachment styles	Inferiority Complex	Self-concealment
Secure attachment style	Pearson correlation	1	-.276*	-.228
	Sig.(2-tailed)		.030	0.74
	N		62	62
Avoidant Attachment style	Pearson correlation	1	.192	.730**
	Sign (2-tailed)		.182	.000
	N		50	50
Ambivalent Attachment style	Pearson correlation	1	.658**	.283*
	Sign (2-tailed)		.000	.046
	N		50	50

As observed in above table 2.the population size 62 shows high on the secure attachment style from the 194 N size, correlation between Secure Attachment style and self-concealment is r -.228 (p-value .074). “There is no significant relationship between Secure Attachment style and self-concealment” is retained. Individuals with a strong sense of secure attachment, who exhibit empathy and possess the ability to establish suitable boundaries,

Attachment Style, Inferiority Complex and Self Concealment: A Correlation Study Among Young College Going Adults

generally experience feelings of safety, stability, and greater satisfaction in their intimate relationships. Although they do not experience anxiety when alone, they typically flourish in intimate and significant connections. This leads to persons exhibiting receptivity towards new experiences and no self-concealment.

The correlation between secure Attachment style and inferiority complex is $r = -.276$ (p-value .030). There is Negative Significant correlation exist between two variables and our null hypothesis which states “There is no significant relationship between secure Attachment style and inferiority complex” is rejected. Individuals who possess a strong sense of secure attachment, exhibit empathy, and are capable of establishing appropriate boundaries experience increased feelings of safety, stability, and fulfilment within their personal relationships. Although they do not fear alone, they typically thrive in close, significant alliances. This outcome suggests that individuals are open to novel experiences and possess a less feeling of inferiority.

As observed in above table 2, the population size 50 shows high on the Avoidant attachment style from the 194 N size, correlation between Avoidant Attachment style and inferiority complex is $r = .198$ (p-value .182). There is No Significant correlation exist between two variables and our null hypothesis which states “There is no significant relationship Avoidant Attachment style and inferiority complex” is accepted. Individuals who possess a pronounced avoidant attachment style typically demonstrate significant self-reliance, autonomy, and a general unease with closeness, reliance, and reducing emotional bonds. These individuals are characterized by a fear of commitment and exhibit a considerable ability to rationalize their avoidance of any close or personal situations.

The correlation between Avoidant Attachment style and self-concealment is $r = .730$ (p-value .000). There is Positive Significant correlation exists between two variables and our null hypothesis which states “There is no significant relationship Avoidant Attachment style and self-concealment” is rejected. Individuals with a high level of avoidant attachment style tend to exhibit strong independence, self-direction, and a general discomfort with intimacy, trust, and minimizing emotional connections. They are individuals who fear commitment and possess a high level of skill in justifying their avoidance of any close or personal circumstances. Hence, diminishing the emotional bond and feeling uneasy about placing trust in others results in individuals adopting to self-concealment.

As observed in above table 2 correlation between. the population size 50 shows high on the Ambivalent attachment style from the 194 N size, Ambivalent Attachment style and inferiority complex is $r = -.286$ (p-value .046). There is Positive Significant correlation exist between two variables and our null hypothesis which states “There is no significant relationship Ambivalent Attachment style and inferiority” is rejected. which shows that higher on the ambivalent attachment style the individual tends to reflect the self-concealment in the behavior. The individual has a pronounced ambivalent attachment style characterized by heightened performance anxiety, decreased willingness to accept new experiences, and a tendency to become overly dependent on others. Relying heavily on the acceptance and attention of others can hinder adults from forming stronger friendships and result in self-concealment.

The correlation between Ambivalent Attachment style and Self concealment is $r = .658$ (p-value .000). There is positive Significant correlation exist between two variables and our

Attachment Style, Inferiority Complex and Self Concealment: A Correlation Study Among Young College Going Adults

null hypothesis which states “There is no significant relationship Ambivalent Attachment style and Self-concealment” is rejected. which shows that higher on the ambivalent attachment style the individual tends to reflect the self-concealment in the behavior. The individual has a pronounced ambivalent attachment style characterized by heightened performance anxiety, decreased willingness to accept new experiences, and a tendency to become overly dependent on others. Relying heavily on the acceptance and attention of others can hinder adults from forming stronger friendships and result in self-concealment.

CONCLUSION

The research findings indicate correlations between attachment types, self-concealment, and inferiority complex. The findings suggest a direct link between inferiority and the act of concealing one's true self, indicating that an escalation in sentiments of inadequacy is connected to a greater inclination to hide unfavorable personal details.

The research rejects the null hypothesis that there is no significant association between attachment type and self-concealment. Individuals with ambivalent attachment patterns often exhibit heightened degrees of self-concealment. These symptoms are characterised by an elevated level of performance anxiety, less inclination to participate in unfamiliar activities, and a greater dependence on others.

Likewise, persons who have avoidant attachment styles exhibit a direct relationship with the tendency to hide or keep secret aspects of themselves. The results indicate that individuals with a high degree of avoidant attachment display significant autonomy, self-reliance, and unease with emotional closeness, resulting in a tendency to hide their true selves.

In contrast, the research supports the null hypothesis for people who display a secure attachment style, indicating that there is no significant relationship between secure attachment and self-concealment. Individuals with a secure attachment style have traits such as empathy, the ability to create suitable boundaries, and a sense of safety and stability in relationships. Consequently, they often exhibit diminished levels of self-concealment.

Moreover, the study reveals a direct relationship between attachment type and feelings of inferiority. Individuals who possess ambivalent attachment types and avoidant attachment styles are particularly prone to experiencing sentiments of inadequacy. The study also uncovers a negative association between secure attachment and inferiority complex, indicating that persons with higher degrees of secure attachment report reduced emotions of inadequacy.

To summarize, the research offers useful insights into the complicated connections among attachment types, self-concealment, and inferiority complex. These findings enhance our comprehension of how initial experiences and attachment dynamics impact individuals' emotional well-being and interpersonal behaviors.

Limitation

Mediating Factors Not Explored: The research does not thoroughly investigate the various mediating elements that could impact the observed results. Additional factors, such as individual personality qualities or significant life experiences, may influence the connections between attachment types, self-concealment, and feelings of inferiority. Subsequent research

Attachment Style, Inferiority Complex and Self Concealment: A Correlation Study Among Young College Going Adults

endeavors could explore these supplementary variables in order to provide a more all-encompassing comprehension of the intricacies implicated.

The research has employed a correlational design, which examines the relationships between variables at a particular moment in time. This approach lacks the capability to prove causation or investigate the dynamics of how these interactions may evolve over time. Conducting longitudinal investigations is essential to establish stronger findings regarding the causal relationship of these linkages.

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Attachment Style, Inferiority Complex and Self Concealment: A Correlation Study Among Young College Going Adults

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Conflict of Interest

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