

Research Paper

The Relationship of Attachment Style with Marital Satisfaction and Positive-Negative Affect Among Homemakers and Working Women

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ABSTRACT

The study examines the relationship between attachment styles (anxiety and avoidance) and various psychological factors (marital satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect) among working women and homemakers. Drawing upon existing literature, we investigate the relationship between attachment style, marital satisfaction, and emotional affect, focusing on how these factors differ between homemakers and working women. The research reveals that attachment styles significantly impact marital satisfaction. Using correlation analyses and ANOVA, significant differences and associations were observed between the two groups. Results indicate that homemakers exhibit higher levels of anxiety attachment, reflecting a propensity towards worry and insecurity in relationships, while working women tend to display more avoidance attachment, indicating a tendency to avoid emotional intimacy. Marital satisfaction was found to be higher among working women, possibly due to factors such as autonomy and financial independence. Negative affect was more prevalent among homemakers, suggesting higher levels of anger, frustration, or sadness. These findings underscore the importance of understanding individual and contextual factors in shaping marital experiences and emotional well-being.

Keywords: Attachment Style, Marital Satisfaction, Positive-Negative Affect, Homemakers and Working Women

Our early experiences with caregivers form the foundation of our attachment styles, shaping how we perceive and engage in relationships throughout our lives. This fundamental aspect impacts our feelings towards our partners and ultimately contributes to our overall happiness within the marital union. Attachment style refers to the way individuals perceive and interact with their romantic partners, influenced by their early experiences with caregivers (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). And then there's another theory about attachment style called the "social cognitive theory" by Bowlby (1969). This theory suggests that our attachment style is formed through our interactions with our caregivers and how they respond to our needs. Understanding the nuances of attachment styles is therefore important in understanding the dynamics of adult relationships.

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Marital satisfaction stands as a crucial determinant of overall well-being and contentment. For both homemakers and working women, the level of satisfaction within their marriages plays a pivotal role in shaping their emotional landscape and overall life satisfaction. Marital satisfaction reflects individuals' overall happiness and contentment within their marital relationship (Bradbury & Karney, 2019). Emotions, both positive and negative, serve as the raw material through which we experience and navigate our relationships. From the exuberance of joy to the depths of sadness or anger, our emotional responses intricately weave into the fabric of our attachment styles and marital satisfaction. Positive affect encompasses emotions such as joy, love, and contentment, while negative affect involves feelings of distress, anger, and dissatisfaction (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988).

Understanding attachment style, marital satisfaction, and emotions is important for all women, but studying homemakers and working women specifically can provide valuable insights. Homemakers often have different daily routines and levels of independence compared to working women. Their roles within the family might influence how they perceive and experience their relationships. On the other hand, working women have additional stressors and responsibilities outside the home, which could impact their attachment styles and marital satisfaction differently. This knowledge can inform tailored interventions and support systems to enhance the well-being and relational satisfaction of both homemakers and working women. By examining these variables, we seek to gain insights into how attachment patterns influence marital dynamics and emotional experiences within different socio-professional contexts. Through a nuanced understanding of these relationships, we can provide valuable insights for enhancing marital interventions and promoting healthier relationship outcomes.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Attachment style, marital satisfaction, and the interaction of positive and negative affect are critical elements that influence people's marital experiences. Attachment style refers to the patterns of emotional connections people have with important persons, which are typically founded in their early interactions with carers. These patterns shape how people experience closeness, support, and security in their love relationships. Marital satisfaction, on the other hand, measures people's overall contentment and fulfillment.

Communication, dispute resolution, shared values, and emotional support are all key contributors to marital pleasure. Positive and negative consequences comprise the variety of emotional experiences that people face in their everyday lives and relationships. Positive affect comprises emotions like joy, love, and happiness, whereas negative affect includes sentiments like anger, impatience, and despair. The literature review investigates the complex link between attachment type, marital satisfaction, life satisfaction, and a variety of demographic characteristics in both homemakers and working women. Drawing on empirical studies, the review sheds light on the elements that influence relationship dynamics and emotional well-being in various circumstances.

Shafique, Yousaf, and Irfan's (2023) studies show that attachment style has a considerable impact on marital satisfaction. Secure attachment types are favorably connected with marital happiness, but anxious and avoidant attachment styles are negatively correlated. Anxious people are afraid of rejection and engage in controlling behaviors, whilst avoidant people avoid conflict, both of which contribute to relationship unhappiness. Building on this knowledge, Farzaneh, Mikaeli Manee, Mehdi Shirzadeh, and Sheler Ab Khir (2022)

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investigate the moderating function of the profession in the link between marriage and life satisfaction. They emphasize that working women may feel more satisfied because of variables such as autonomy, decision-making capacity, and financial independence. Conversely, social support from spouses is critical in alleviating stresses associated with high socioeconomic status, positively affecting marital satisfaction. Renanita and Satiawan (2018) go deeper into the elements that influence marital happiness among both working and non-working spouses, identifying communication, sexual intimacy, and financial relations as key determinants. The significance of effective communication emerges as a common thread, underscoring its pivotal role in shaping satisfaction levels in both groups.

Furthermore, Zarger and Prateek (2023) and Ms. Deeksha et al. (2023) investigated disparities in life satisfaction between homemakers and working women. Working women, who benefit from autonomy and financial security, report higher levels of happiness than homemakers. This research emphasizes the importance of employment position in determining overall well-being and life satisfaction.

While employment has been linked to a variety of mental health outcomes, as reported by Mishra and Gupta (2023) and Jala and Rani (2020), Mandal, Kumar Arya and Pandey (2012) emphasize the importance of mindfulness in maintaining emotional balance and reducing symptoms of mental discomfort. Mindfulness activities have emerged as a promising pathway for improving mental health for women, regardless of their job situation.

In essence, the literature review emphasizes the intricate web of connections and demographic characteristics that influence attachment style, marital satisfaction, life satisfaction, and mental health in both homemakers and working women. The findings emphasize the relevance of effective communication, social support, occupational status, and mindfulness in promoting healthy relationship dynamics and emotional well-being in a variety of circumstances. The research mentioned shows that attachment styles are favorably connected and anxious and avoidant forms are adversely correlated. Overall, the literature emphasizes the relevance of effective communication, social support, occupational status, and mindfulness in improving relationship dynamics and emotional well-being in a variety of circumstances for women.

Rationale

It has always been very important to understand how people form and maintain relationships and what are the factors that influence one's relationship, particularly in the context of romantic relationships and family. Marital satisfaction is influenced by various factors such as attachment style, communication pattern, and emotional affect encompassing positive and negative affect. Emotional affect plays an important role in shaping an individual's perceptions of marital quality and overall relationship well-being.

The topic of correlating attachment style with marital satisfaction has been of interest to many researchers as well as psychology enthusiasts. This research area assumes that attachment style influences marital satisfaction and emotional affect among females. While existing literature acknowledges the importance of attachment styles, marital satisfaction, and emotional well-being in relationships, there is a notable gap in understanding how these factors interact within the specific contexts of homemakers and working women. By focusing on these two distinct groups, the study aims to fill this gap and provide a more nuanced understanding of how attachment dynamics manifest differently based on occupation.

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The rationale for studying the relationship between attachment style with marital satisfaction and emotional affectivity is multisided. One of the reasons is to explore all the possible connections between attachment style and marital satisfaction as well as emotional affect. Another rationale for this research area is to understand how different attachment dynamics affect a person's relationship dynamic. By exploring the complex interplay between attachment dynamics, marital satisfaction, and emotional well-being, this study endeavors to provide valuable insights that can inform interventions, enhance relationship quality, and promote psychological flourishing within intimate partnerships.

METHODOLOGY

Hypothesis

- H0 - There would be differences between homemakers and working women in attachment style, marital satisfaction, and positive-negative affect.
- H1- Anxiety and avoidance attachment style would be negatively correlated with marital satisfaction and positive affect and positively correlated with negative affect among homemakers and working women.

Variable

- Independent Variable- Attachment Style
- Dependent Variable- Marital satisfaction, Positive-Negative Affect

Sample

Purposive sampling was used for this study. It consists of 25 working women and 25 homemakers.

Research Method

Comparative Study and Correlational Study

Tools

- **Adult Attachment Scale (Collins, 1996):** This scale contains two attachment dimensions- attachment anxiety (model of self) and attachment avoidance (model of other). This scale contains 18 items on the Likert scale. Each item on the AAS is scored based on the participant's response. Items are categorized into two subscales: attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance. Typically measured using Cronbach's alpha, which assesses how consistently items within the scale measure the same construct. The AAS has demonstrated good internal consistency for its subscales, indicating that items within each attachment style cluster together reliably. This assesses the stability of scores over time. The AAS has shown moderate to high test-retest reliability, indicating that individuals' attachment styles tend to remain relatively stable over time. The AAS has been widely used in research to assess attachment styles, and its construct validity has been supported by numerous studies.
- **Kansan Marital Satisfaction Scale (shortened version):** The scale was developed by researchers at Kansas State University to address the need for a reliable and valid measure of marital satisfaction. It contains a total of 16 items with each statement on a Likert scale (e.g., from 1 for Not Pleased at all to 8 for Extremely Pleased).
- **Positive Affect Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS):** It was developed by Watson, Clark, and Tellegan in 1988. It contains a total of 20 items, 10 for positive affect and 10 for negative affect. Positive affect refers to positive, pleasant moods such as

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enthusiasm, activeness, and alertness while negative affect refers to distressed and irritable moods such as anger, fear, and nervousness (Watson et al., 1988). The internal consistency for the PANAS ranged between .86- .90 for positive effect and .84- .87 for negative affect. Test-retest reliability for the PANAS (1 Week) was reported as .79 for positive affect and .81 for negative affect (Watson et al., 1988).

RESULT

Table 1 Mean Table

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
A1 Working Women	16.4400	4.50922
Homemakers	19.8400	4.32062
Total	18.1400	4.71409
A2 Working Women	36.2800	6.29558
Homemakers	33.4200	3.75847
Total	34.8500	5.35483
MS Working Women	108.7800	28.11441
Homemakers	85.0200	23.43858
Total	96.9000	28.38462
PA Working Women	35.7400	5.59449
Homemakers	35.0800	6.58644
Total	35.4100	6.08873
NA Working Women	23.7600	5.78019
Homemakers	27.3400	3.47357
Total	25.5500	5.07395

Table-2 Anova

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
A1 Between Groups	289.000	1	289.000	14.820	.000
Within Groups	1911.040	98	19.500		
Totals	2200.040	99			
A2 Between Groups	204.490	1	204.490	7.607	.007
Within Groups	2634.260	98	26.880		
Totals	2838.750	99			
MS Between Groups	14113.440	1	14113.440	21.068	.000
Within Groups	65649.560	98	669.893		
Totals	79763.000	99			
PA Between Groups	10.890	1	10.890	.292	.590
Within Groups	3659.300	98	37.340		
Totals	3670.190	99			
NA Between Groups	320.410	1	320.410	14.091	.000
Within Groups	2228.340	98	22.738		
Totals	2548.750	99			

A one-way ANOVA was performed to compare the attachment style, marital satisfaction, and positive-negative affect among homemakers and working women.

It revealed that there was a statistically significant difference in mean Anxiety attachment styles ($F(1,98) = [14.820]$, $p = 0.000$), in Avoidance Attachment with ($F(1,98) = [7.607]$, $p =$

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0.007), in Marital Satisfaction with ($F(1,98) = [21.068]$, $p = 0.000$), in Negative affect with ($F(1,98) = [14.091]$, $p = 0.000$). There was no statistically significant difference in mean positive affect in two groups ($F(1,98) = [0.292]$, $p = 0.000$).

Table 3 Correlation of Working Women

	MS	PA	NA
A1 Pearson Correlation	-0.713**	-0.401**	0.633**
A2 Pearson Correlation	-0.354**	-0.199*	0.172

Pearson product correlation of anxiety attachment and marital satisfaction was found to be highly negative & statistically significant ($r = -0.713$, $p < 0.001$) in working women. The correlation of anxiety attachment with positive affect in working women was negative & statistically significant with ($r = -0.401$, $p < 0.001$), and the correlation of anxiety attachment with negative affect in working women was moderately positive and statistically significant with ($r = 0.633$, $p < 0.001$). Hence, *this shows an increase in anxiety attachment style would lead to a decrease in marital satisfaction and positive affectivity and, an increase in negative affectivity.*

The Pearson product correlation of avoidance attachment and Marital satisfaction in working women was found to be negative and statistically significant with ($r = -0.354$, $p < 0.001$). Meanwhile, the correlation between avoidance attachment and Positive Affect in working women was negative and statistically significant with ($r = -0.199$, $p < 0.001$), and the correlation between avoidance with negative affect was positive and statistically significant with ($r = 0.172$, $p < 0.001$). Hence, *the result shows an increase in avoidance attachment style would lead to a decrease in marital satisfaction and positive affectivity and an increase in negative affectivity.*

Table 4 Correlation of Homemakers

	MS	PA	NA
A1 Pearson Correlation	-0.403**	-0.327**	0.372**
A2 Pearson Correlation	-0.219*	-0.289**	-0.021

The Pearson product correlation of anxiety attachment and marital satisfaction in homemakers was found to be negative and statistically significant with ($r = -0.403$, $p < 0.001$). Meanwhile, the correlation between anxiety attachment and positive affect in homemakers was negative and statistically significant with ($r = -0.327$, $p < 0.001$), and the correlation between anxiety attachment and negative affect in homemakers was positive and statistically significant with ($r = 0.372$, $p < 0.001$). *It means that an increase in avoidance of attachment would lead to a decrease in Marital satisfaction and positive affectivity and an increase in negative affectivity.*

Pearson product correlation of avoidance attachment and marital satisfaction in homemakers was found to be negative and statistically significant with ($r = -0.219$, $p < 0.001$). The correlation between avoidance attachment and positive affect in homemakers was negative and statistically significant ($r = -0.219$, $p < 0.001$), and the correlation between avoidance attachment and negative was negative and statistically significant ($r = -0.021$, $p < 0.001$). Hence, *it shows that an increase in avoidance attachment style would lead to a decrease in marital satisfaction, positive affectivity, and negative affectivity.*

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DISCUSSION

Based on the results and correlation analyses, it's evident that there are significant differences and associations among attachment styles, marital satisfaction, and affect in both working women and homemakers. The results indicate statistically significant differences between working women and homemakers regarding attachment styles, marital satisfaction, and negative affect. Specifically, significant differences were observed in anxiety attachment styles, avoidance attachment, marital satisfaction, and negative affect. However, no significant difference was found in the positive effect between the two groups.

The significant difference in anxiety attachment suggests that *homemakers are more prone to have or develop anxiety attachment styles* which means that homemakers are more likely to worry, be afraid of abandonment, or feel insecure in their relationships compared to working women. On the other hand, *working women tend to display higher levels of avoidance attachment* compared to homemakers suggesting that they tend to avoid intimacy or emotional closeness in their relationship. It is evident from the results that *marital satisfaction in working women is higher than in homemakers* which is supported by a previous study done by (Farzaneh, Mikaeli Manee, Mehdi Shirzadeh, and Sheler Ab Khir, 2022) investigating the moderating function of the profession in the link between marriage and life satisfaction. They emphasize that working women may feel more satisfied because of variables such as autonomy, decision-making capacity, and financial independence. Conversely, social support from spouses is critical in alleviating stresses associated with high socioeconomic status, positively affecting marital satisfaction. The result shows that *marital satisfaction is negatively correlated with both anxiety and avoidance attachment style* in both working women and homemakers which is supported by a previous study done by (Shafique, Yousaf, and Irfan, 2023) showing that attachment style has a considerable impact on marital satisfaction. Anxious and avoidant attachment styles are negatively correlated. Anxious people are afraid of rejection and engage in controlling behaviors, whilst avoidant people avoid conflict, both of which contribute to relationship unhappiness.

The *lack of significant difference in positive affect between the two groups* suggests that working women and homemakers may experience similar levels of positive emotions within their marriages. There is a *significant difference in negative affect implying that homemakers exhibit more negative affect than as compared to working women*. This could include feelings of anger, frustration, or sadness, which may be influenced by factors such as stressors related to work, family dynamics, or personal expectations. The demands of managing multiple tasks simultaneously can lead to feelings of overwhelm, stress, and frustration, contributing to higher levels of negative affect. Negative affect is positively correlated with anxiety and avoidance attachment style, reason can be that anxious people may be more sensitive to rejection or abandonment, making them see uncertain circumstances as frightening, which can generate unpleasant emotional reactions. Similarly, avoidant people may be prone to minimize emotional connection or vulnerability, which causes them to conceal good feelings and suffer negative affect when confronted with relational closeness. and positive affect is negatively correlated with anxiety and avoidance attachment styles.

In conclusion, the findings from both the ANOVA results and correlation analyses shed light on the nuanced interplay between attachment styles, marital satisfaction, and affect among working women and homemakers. The results revealed significant differences between the two groups, particularly in attachment styles, marital satisfaction, and negative affect.

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Specifically, homemakers were found to be more prone to anxiety attachment styles, while working women displayed higher levels of avoidance attachment. Moreover, working women reported higher levels of marital satisfaction compared to homemakers, which can be attributed to factors such as autonomy, decision-making capacity, and financial independence. These findings underscore the importance of considering individual and contextual factors in understanding marital experiences and emotional well-being.

Implication

The outcomes of this study highlight the necessity of personalized therapies and support systems for addressing disparities in attachment patterns, marital satisfaction, and affect among working women and homemakers. Interventions aimed at anxiety attachment types in homemakers and avoidance attachment tendencies in working women, in particular, might help to improve marital dynamics. Couples therapy that focuses on treating attachment issues might improve marital happiness by encouraging open communication and emotional openness. Employers may help working women achieve marital happiness by creating rules that promote work-life balance, but homemakers with higher degrees of negative affect and anxious attachment types require tailored assistance and resources. Education and awareness programs can help people recognize and overcome problematic relationship patterns. More study is needed to investigate other elements impacting these dynamics and the efficacy of treatments in fostering healthy relationship outcomes. Furthermore, the findings of this study have far-reaching consequences for society's understanding of marital experiences and emotional well-being. Policymakers and stakeholders may establish policies and programmes to support healthy relationships and family dynamics by understanding the intricate interplay of attachment types, marital happiness, and affect among working women and homemakers. This involves implementing family-friendly policies in the workplace, such as parental leave and flexible working arrangements, in order to improve work-life balance and marital happiness.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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