

## Influence of Parenting Style and Adult Attachment Style on Experience of Close Relationship among Adults

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### ABSTRACT

The study explored the relationship between parenting styles, adult attachment, and the quality of close relationships among young adults. A sample of 135 individuals aged 18-30, including 85 females, 48 males, and 2 non-binary individuals, participated using snowball sampling. Self-report measures, including the Perceived Parenting Styles Scale (PPSS), Revised Adult Attachment Scale (RAAS), and Experiences in Close Relationship Scale-Short Form (ECR-S), were utilized. The findings revealed significant relationships between parenting styles and close relationships, as well as between adult attachment and close relationships. However, no significant association was found between parenting styles and adult attachment. This highlights the distinct influences of parenting styles and adult attachment on the quality of close relationships among young adults.

**Keywords:** *Parenting Style, Adult Attachment Style, Experiences in Close Relationship*

In the intricate tapestry of human relationships, the interplay between parenting styles and adult attachment patterns weaves a narrative that shapes the experience of close relationships among adults. This interplay serves as a foundational framework upon which individuals build their capacity for intimacy, trust, and emotional connection. Understanding the dynamics of parenting styles, attachment theory, and close relationships is essential for unraveling the complexities of human interaction and fostering healthy, fulfilling connections throughout the lifespan.

### *Parenting style*

The many approaches parents often take to raising their kids are categorized under parenting styles. These parenting styles cover the actions, mindsets, and emotional surroundings of parents raising their kids.

The ways in which parents influence their children's development continue to attract the curiosity of developmental psychologists. These styles reflect the emotional climate, behavioral expectations, and relational dynamics within the parent-child relationship (Baumrind, 1966; Maccoby & Martin, 1983)

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Parenting styles encompass a spectrum of approaches that parents employ in nurturing their children's development. The seminal work of Diana Baumrind delineated three primary parenting styles distinguished in the 1960s: permissive, authoritative, and authoritarian., which were later expanded by Eleanor Maccoby and John Martin to include a fourth style. Later, in the 1980s, Stanford academics Eleanor Maccoby and John Martin introduced a fourth style: neglectful. (Maccoby and Martin, 1983) proposed a conceptual framework that combined varying degrees of warmth and demand from parents to classify four types of parenting styles: permissive, authoritarian, authoritative, and neglectful.

Parenting styles have a significant impact on children's development and how those impacts show themselves in adulthood.

Parenting styles can be classified as either permissive, authoritarian, authoritative, or negligent. Different degrees of responsiveness and demandingness are associated with each parenting style.

**Authoritative parenting style:** High in responsiveness and demandingness. This style is characterized by high levels of responsiveness and demandingness. Authoritative parents are nurturing, supportive, and warm while also maintaining clear expectations for behavior and setting reasonable limits. They engage in open communication with their children, encourage independence, and provide guidance within a supportive framework (Baumrind, 1966).

**Authoritarian parenting style:** Low in responsiveness but high in demandingness. In contrast, authoritarian parenting is marked by low responsiveness but high demandingness. Authoritarian parents prioritize obedience and discipline, often employing strict rules and punishment to enforce compliance. They may lack warmth and emotional support, focusing instead on maintaining control and authority within the parent-child relationship (Baumrind, 1966).

**Permissive parenting style:** High in responsiveness but low in demandingness. Permissive parents exhibit high levels of responsiveness but low demandingness. They are indulgent and lenient, allowing their children considerable freedom and autonomy with minimal structure or rules. Permissive parents may avoid confrontation and prioritize their children's happiness and self-expression over discipline and boundaries(Baumrind, 1966).

**Neglectful parenting style:** Low in responsiveness and demandingness. Neglectful parenting is characterized by low levels of both responsiveness and demandingness. Neglectful parents may be emotionally detached, uninvolved, or inconsistent in their interactions with their children. They may neglect their children's physical, emotional, or psychological needs, resulting in a lack of supervision, guidance, and support (Maccoby & Martin, 1983).

Responsiveness relates to parents' emotional sensitivity, whereas demandingness relates to expectations for maturity and behavioral control.

### ***Attachment style***

John Bowlby developed attachment theory as a way to explain the intense distress experienced by children who had been separated from their primary caregivers ( Bretherton

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1992). According to Bowlby, our adult relationships are shaped by these early attachments that are created through shared experiences.

Bowlby (1982) observed that infants would go to extraordinary lengths to prevent separation from a parent. Many of the prevailing theories at the time explained these reactions as resulting from the lack of adequate care by surrogates or the removal of a primary food source.

An infant's relationship with their primary caregivers has a tremendous impact on their emotional and social development. To explain the profound emotional responses of children who had been separated from their parents, Bowlby (1982) drew upon emerging ideas in ethology, cognitive science, and control systems theory. He proposed that infants are born with an attachment behavioral system—a motivational system that leads infants to form deep, emotional bonds to others who can provide support and protection.

Bowlby's attachment theory has consequences that go beyond infancy; it affects adult attachment patterns and how people handle relationships as they become older.

Hazan & Shaver (1987) argued that romantic love is, in part, a manifestation of the attachment system. They observed a number of parallels between infant–parent attachments and romantic relationships, including a desire to be in physical proximity to the other; seeking the other when distressed, scared, or ill; and using the other as a secure base from which to explore the world.

Bowlby's theory is based on the idea that attachment formation is a survival strategy that is ingrained in newborns biologically. These early attachments, which develop in the first few years of life, are not only fleeting bonds; rather, they are essential in determining the emotional well-being and relationships with others of the child in the future.

Bowlby's Attachment Theory provides significant perspectives on adult relationships as well. According to the theory, the attachment patterns we develop as adults can be influenced by the experiences we have with our major attachment figures.

Apart from that, Bowlby's theory also introduced the idea of individual variances in attachment patterns, a concept subsequently was developed known as "Patterns of Attachment", a groundbreaking study (Ainsworth, 1978). In addition to providing a framework for comprehending the many attachment styles—secure, avoidant, and anxious—that arise from the caliber of early interactions with caregivers, Ainsworth's study further supported Bowlby's theory.

Hazan & Shaver (1987) also proposed that the kinds of differences that Ainsworth et al. (1978) observed in the strange situation parallel differences in the ways in which adults think about and approach romantic relationships. According to Bowlby and Ainsworth, a sign of a secure attachment is when the child has confidence in the caregiver's responsiveness and availability.

**Securely attached** children are more likely to grow up to be emotionally stable adults who can build enduring, fulfilling social and intimate relationships. On the contrary, **avoidant**

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**attachment**, which is indicated by a child's tendency to reject or avoid the caregiver, might make it challenging for an adult to establish intimate relationships.

**Anxious attachment:** Individuals with anxious attachment seek excessive reassurance, fear rejection or abandonment, and exhibit clingy or needy behavior in relationships. This attachment style arises from inconsistent or unpredictable caregiving experiences, leading to anxiety and insecurity about relationships [Ainsworth et al., 1978]

Our early experiences of attachment with our caregivers form the path for our future relationships by influencing our expectations and actions in romantic relationships as adults. Bowlby's Attachment Theory talks about how babies form close connections with their caregivers in three stages. In the beginning, from birth to about six weeks, babies don't really pick favorites – they enjoy being around any grown-up. After that, from six weeks to around six to eight months, they start preferring their main caregiver. And finally, from six to eight months to about two years, they get really attached, seeking comfort from, and getting a bit upset when separated from their caregivers. (Bowlby & Ainsworth, 1978).

The aforementioned stages emphasize the innately inherent qualities of attachment bonds and the possible social, emotional, and cognitive complications that may emerge from their disruption or irregularity. For example, a child who does not develop a stable bond throughout these crucial phases may experience difficulties in the future with relationships and trust.

In Bowlby's Attachment Theory, the main person taking care of a child, known as the primary caregiver, has a big impact. If the caregiver quickly and kindly responds to the child's signals like crying or reaching out, it helps create a secure attachment. This quick and caring response builds a sense of security and trust for the child.

The caregiver's emotional availability and being consistently present are also really important. When the caregiver is tuned in to the child's emotions and always around for them, it helps the child develop a positive idea about relationships. This positive idea affects how the child interacts with others as they grow up.

Stated differently, our mature love relationships can be influenced by the way we relate to our early caretakers. For example, those who experienced secure attachments as children are more likely to experience secure attachments in romantic relationships as adults.

According to this viewpoint, romantic interactions between adults are attachment connections. Adults desire comfort and closeness from their love partners, just as a kid craves these things from their caregivers.

Securing a stable attachment in adult romantic relationships has been linked to improved conflict resolution abilities, higher relationship satisfaction, and more emotional support, according to research published in the "Handbook of Attachment".

### ***Close relationship***

Close relationships serve as the crucible for intimacy, companionship, and emotional support in adult lives. Drawing from Bowlby's Attachment Theory, these relationships are imbued with echoes of early attachment experiences, influencing individuals' expectations,

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behaviors, and emotional responses (Feeney & Noller, 1990). Secure attachment fosters resilience, trust, and mutual support within close relationships, whereas insecure attachment styles may manifest as interpersonal difficulties, emotional volatility, or fear of intimacy (Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

The quality of parenting styles and attachment patterns established in childhood shapes the landscape of adult close relationships. Individuals who experience secure attachment and authoritative parenting tend to form stable, satisfying relationships characterized by mutual respect, empathy, and emotional intimacy. In contrast, those who experience insecure attachment and authoritarian, permissive, or neglectful parenting may encounter challenges in forming and maintaining close connections, struggling with issues such as trust, communication, and emotional regulation.

We'll examine the various attachment patterns, their effects on adult relationships, and the part parenting styles play in forming these bonds as we work through Bowlby's attachment theory and its implications. In order to shed light on the underlying threads that link childhood memories to the complexity of adult closeness, each chapter seeks to separate out a different aspect of this complicated interplay between our past and present.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### ***1. Parenting style and close relationship***

Parenting style refers to the consistent patterns of behavior and interaction between parents and their children. These patterns can have a profound impact on the development of attachment styles in children, which in turn can influence their romantic relationships later in life. Both the western studies and the Indian studies have conducted nearly the similar studies indicating the quality of parent-child relationships, particularly during adolescence, can predict attachment styles in adulthood. For example, warmth and sensitivity in family interactions have been found to be positively related to similar behaviors in romantic relationships and attachment security. High warmth and low hostility in romantic interactions also predict greater attachment security in adulthood.

Sümer & Gungor (1999) explored how perceived parenting styles relate to attachment styles, self-dimensions, behavior patterns in close relationships, and relationship satisfaction among university students. Findings showed consistent associations between different parenting styles and the major outcome variables. Authoritarian and permissive/indulgent parenting styles were most common among Turkish parents. Participants from authoritative and indulgent families had higher levels of secure attachment, self-esteem, self-concept clarity, and lower levels of trait anxiety compared to those from authoritarian and neglectful families. Parenting dimensions from mothers were linked to attachment variables, while those from fathers were connected to self-variables. These findings highlight the impact of parenting styles on various aspects of individuals' lives.

Dinero et al. (2008) aimed to examine the association between observed interaction patterns in the family of origin during adolescence and self-reported romantic attachment style and observed romantic relationship behaviors in adulthood. The quality of family and romantic relationship interactions was rated by trained observers. Attachment style was assessed using the Relationship Scales Questionnaire. The findings showed that warmth and sensitivity in family interactions were positively related to similar behaviors in romantic relationships and attachment security. High warmth and low hostility in romantic interactions predicted

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greater attachment security in adulthood. Attachment security at age 25 did not predict later romantic relationship interactions. These results highlight the importance of early close relationships in shaping romantic attachment security.

Millings et al. (2013) conducted a study to examine the relationship between romantic attachment, responsive care-giving, and parenting styles in couples with 7 to 8- year-old children. The findings showed that attachment avoidance and anxiety were negatively associated with responsive care-giving. Responsive care-giving was linked to optimal parenting styles and negatively associated with non-optimal styles. Responsive care-giving mediated the relationship between attachment and parenting styles. Attachment anxiety also directly influenced non optimal parenting styles. These results emphasize the role of attachment and care giving in shaping parenting practices.

Varzaneh et al. (2014) aimed to examine the mediating role of secure attachment style in the relationship between authoritative parenting style and personal commitment among female married students. The methodology involved a sample of 120 female married students who completed the Parental Authority Questionnaire, Adult Attachment Style Questionnaire, and Marital Commitment Questionnaire. The results, analyzed using correlation and path analysis, indicate that secure attachment style is significantly influenced by mother's authoritative parenting style and can explain personal commitment. This study highlights the importance of understanding the role of parenting and attachment in shaping personal commitment among married individuals.

Moazen, Aghaei & Golparvar (2014) conducted a study to assess the relationship between high school female students' attachment styles and their parents' parenting styles in Isfahan city. Using descriptive correlation methods, the research found significant associations between attachment styles and parenting styles. Specifically, a positive correlation was observed between secure attachment and authoritative parenting, and ambivalent attachment with permissive parenting. Conversely, avoidant attachment showed a negative correlation with authoritative parenting. Regression analysis confirmed that parenting styles were strong predictors of attachment styles, providing valuable insights for interventions aimed at promoting healthy attachment development in adolescents.

Doinita, & Maria (2015) aimed to examine the correlations between adult attachment types and parenting styles. A sample of 74 adults completed the Adult Attachment Questionnaire and Parenting Styles Questionnaire. The results revealed a significant correlation between secure adult attachment and authoritative parenting style. These findings support the importance of family in children's development, emphasizing the influence of attachment experiences on emotional and cognitive growth.

Sahithya et al. (2019) investigated a study to determine whether cultural differences affect the relationship between parenting styles and child outcomes, examining whether parenting styles yield similar effects across cultures and if culture moderates this association. A thorough literature review encompassing Western and Indian studies on parenting styles and child outcomes was conducted. Databases were searched using relevant keywords, and studies meeting inclusion criteria were analyzed. Despite cultural distinctions, findings indicate consistent effects of parenting styles on children across cultures. Authoritative parenting consistently correlates with better outcomes compared to Authoritarian and Neglectful/Uninvolved styles, in both Western and Indian contexts. However, results

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regarding Indulgent/Permissive parenting vary. The article discusses implications of cultural shifts in parenting practices for the future.

Yahya et al. (2019) conducted a correlational study to examine the relationship between adult attachment and parenting styles among staff from the Football Association in the West of Malaysia. The sample included 43 respondents who were categorized as caregivers. Two instruments, the Experience in Close Relationship (ECR) and Parenting Style Questionnaire, were used. Results showed significant correlations between attachment avoidance and authoritative parenting style, attachment avoidant and permissive parenting style, and attachment anxiety and authoritarian parenting style. This study highlights the importance of parenting styles and their connection to attachment styles developed during early childhood. Chen (2023) aimed to investigate the impact of fathers' adult attachment style on their parenting style, considering various marital factors. The methodology involves analyzing previous research on attachment theory and adult attachment measures. The results indicate that fathers with insecure adult attachment tend to exhibit withdrawal or authoritarian control in parenting, particularly during conflict. A secure adult attachment of fathers is crucial for facilitating the development of secure attachments in children. Further research in this area can inform family intervention programs and enhance our understanding of the father's role in the family.

Research consistently shows that how parents raise their children profoundly affects their relationships and emotional bonds. The research indicates that authoritative parenting, characterized by warmth, responsiveness, and clear boundaries, consistently correlates with positive outcomes in children, including secure attachment and better relationship satisfaction. Additionally, findings from both Western and Indian contexts suggest that parental warmth and sensitivity play pivotal roles in fostering healthy attachment dynamics, emphasizing the universality of these effects across diverse cultural settings.

### ***2. Adult attachment style and close relationship***

Adult attachment styles are shaped by early experiences with caregivers and can influence the quality of close relationships, including romantic relationships. The two fundamental dimensions of adult attachment are anxiety and avoidance. Individuals with an anxious attachment style are more likely to desire close relationships and fear abandonment, while those with an avoidant style prefer not to rely on others or open up to them. These attachment styles have been found to be important predictors of personal physical and mental health, as well as parenting quality and parent-adolescent attachment.

Willner (1990) conducted a study to examine the relationship between attachment history, attachment styles, and adult couple relationship satisfaction. The study involved 128 heterosexual couples with varying relationship lengths and age ranges. Self-report data were collected using the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, Relationship Questionnaire, and Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale. The results showed that individuals with a secure attachment style reported higher relationship satisfaction, while those with anxious or avoidant attachment styles reported lower satisfaction. This study emphasizes the significance of understanding attachment styles in adult relationships and their impact on overall relationship satisfaction.

Erwin et al. (2001) conducted a study aiming to further investigate the connection between patterns of romantic love and attachment styles, building upon Hazan and Shaver's previous

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work. The sample included 39 men and 33 women college students aged 18 to 36 years. Using self-report measures and information about family and romantic relationships, the study found a significant association between family relationships and attachment styles in romantic relationships. Those with secure attachment styles in their family relationships were more likely to exhibit secure attachment styles in their romantic relationships. Additionally, attachment styles mediated the relationship between family dynamics and romantic relationships, highlighting the role of attachment in shaping intimate relationships. Vorria et al. (2007) aimed to explore the relationship between adult attachment styles in romantic relationships and memories of experiences with parents during childhood. The sample included 822 university students aged 18-27 years. The findings revealed that females tended to have an anxious/ambivalent attachment style, while males exhibited more avoidant/dismissing or avoidant/fearful attachment styles. Participants' descriptions of their parents and current partners were associated with their attachment style. Those with secure or anxious/ambivalent attachment styles reported longer-lasting romantic relationships and used positive adjectives to describe their partners. Females also used more positive adjectives to describe their partners compared to males. These findings emphasize the impact of childhood experiences on adult attachment styles in romantic relationships.

McCarthy & Maughan (2010) examined the relationship between internal working models of attachment and the quality of adult love relationships in a sample of women (n=34) who reported negative parenting in childhood. The findings showed a strong association between attachment classifications and relationship quality. Women with satisfying love relationships had higher coherence of mind ratings. Insecure attachment models were linked to problems in adult love relationships. The study suggests that how adults process early experiences can impact their later psycho- social functioning.

Nosko et al. (2011) conducted a longitudinal study aimed to examine the associations among parent-child relations, adult attachment styles, and relationship quality and theme in romantic narratives. The sample consisted of 100 participants who completed questionnaires and told a story about a "relationship-defining moment" at ages 17 and 26. The findings revealed predictable relationships between parent-child relations at age 17 and all three attachment styles. About 70% of the participants told romantic stories with a "true love" theme. The relationship between parent-child relations at age 17 and this theme in the romantic story at age 26 was mediated by a more secure and less avoidant attachment style at age 26. These findings highlight the interplay between attachment models and the life story.

Gleeson & Fitzgerald (2014) examined the relationship between childhood experiences, attachment styles in romantic relationships, and relationship satisfaction in young adults. The sample included 227 participants from university and the general population. Participants completed self-report measures on attachment style, relationship satisfaction, and descriptions of their parents and their parents' relationship. The majority of males showed an avoidant-fearful attachment style, while females had avoidant-fearful or secure styles. Findings indicated that participants' descriptions of parents and parental relationship were linked to attachment style. Those with secure attachment styles were more likely to be in a romantic relationship and reported higher satisfaction. The study emphasizes the impact of childhood experiences on attachment and romantic relationships.



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Shah et al. (2018) conducted study to explore the relationship between adult attachment styles and marital satisfaction among Indian adults. The study used twenty-four heterosexual married participants (13 females, 11 males), aged 25-45 years, completed the Revised Adult Attachment Style (RAAS) and ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (EMS). Results indicated that participants having Secure attachment style were more satisfied with their marriage than participants having Insecure (Fearful, Preoccupied, Dismissive) attachment style.

Tomşa (2019) conducted a study to investigate the association between childhood experiences and adult attachment styles in relationships. The sample consisted of 207 young people aged 20 to 30 from Romania who had been in a relationship within the past year. The Parental Authority Questionnaire and Experiences of Close Relationships Inventory were used as instruments. The results indicated that a permissive parental style was associated with low levels of anxiety in adult relationships, while an authoritarian parental style coincided with avoidance tendencies and increased anxiety. Additionally, participants from two-parent families showed lower levels of avoidance and were more expressive in relationships compared to those from single-parent families. The study did not find significant moderation effects of parental structure on the relationship between perceived parenting style and attachment. These findings contribute to understanding the impact of childhood experiences on adult attachment in relationships.

Research findings consistently demonstrate the significant influence of adult attachment styles on the quality of close relationships, particularly romantic partnerships. Individuals with secure attachment styles tend to report higher relationship satisfaction, while those with anxious or avoidant attachment styles experience lower satisfaction levels. Moreover, studies underscore the role of early attachment experiences in shaping adult attachment patterns, highlighting the continuity of attachment dynamics across the lifespan and their impact on intimate relationships.

### ***3. Parenting style and adult attachment style***

The relationship between parenting style and adult attachment style is complex and bidirectional. Parenting styles can influence the development of attachment styles in children, which in turn can shape their romantic relationships in adulthood. For example, authoritative parenting styles have been found to be associated with low levels of anxiety in adult relationships, while authoritarian parenting styles coincide with avoidance tendencies and increased anxiety. Additionally, parenting styles can be influenced by adult attachment styles, with fathers with insecure adult attachment tending to exhibit withdrawal or authoritarian control in parenting, particularly during conflict.

Albert et al. (2007) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between parenting and attachment in different cultures, specifically in India and Germany. The study examines similarities and differences in attachment between mothers and their adolescent children and whether similarity of attachment is influenced by parenting. The study used a cross-sectional design and collected data from 100 mothers and their adolescent children in India and Germany. Attachment was measured using the Experiences in Close Relationships questionnaire, and parenting was measured using the Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire. The study found that Indian mothers and adolescents showed more avoidance and Indian adolescents more anxiety than their German counterparts. Maternal attachment clearly predicted adolescent attachment, with maternal avoidance being influential for both attachment dimensions of adolescents in Germany, and maternal anxiety being influential in

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India. However, the relationship between maternal and adolescent attachment was not mediated by parenting.

Akhtar (2012) conducted a study to examine the impact of parenting styles on the attachment styles of undergraduate students. A sample of 200 students from regions of Pakistan aged 15 to 18 years completed questionnaires on parenting styles and attachment styles. The results revealed significant associations between authoritarian parenting style and anxious attachment style, as well as permissive parenting style of the father with avoidant attachment style and permissive parenting style of the mother with anxious attachment style. No significant relationship was found between authoritative parenting style and attachment styles. These findings highlight the influence of parenting styles on attachment in undergraduate students.

TEMEL & Ahmed (2023) conducted a study to explore the predictors of romantic relationship quality, specifically focusing on the role of emotion regulation, attachment style, and parenting styles. The importance of relationships, particularly romantic relationships, for overall well-being is emphasized. The interconnectedness of these predictors is highlighted, suggesting that they work together rather than in isolation. The review suggests that future research should investigate which factor acts as a predictor and which one serves as a mediator in their combined influence on the quality of romantic relationships.

Mullinax & Turner (2023) researched on identifying family-of- origin predictors of romantic attachment styles among emerging adults. The sample consisted of 288 college students who completed measures of parental psychological control, early maladaptive schemas, and anxious and avoidant romantic attachment. The findings supported a theoretical mediation model, indicating that parental psychological control was associated with higher rates of anxious and avoidant romantic attachment, mediated by early maladaptive schemas. These results highlight the importance of considering family-of-origin patterns when examining romantic attachment in emerging adults. Therapists and helpers can support the development of secure romantic attachment by addressing maladaptive schemas that may impact relationship development.

Studies investigating the relationship between parenting style and adult attachment style reveal complex bidirectional associations. Parenting styles, such as authoritarian or permissive, are found to be linked to specific attachment patterns in adults, with authoritative parenting generally associated with more secure attachment styles. Additionally, research highlights the intergenerational transmission of attachment, wherein early experiences with caregivers influence adult attachment orientations, underscoring the enduring impact of parenting practices on individuals' attachment styles.

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### *Aim*

To investigate the impact of both parenting style during childhood and adult attachment style on the quality and experience of close relationships in adulthood.

#### *Objectives*

- To examine the different parenting styles (e.g., authoritative, authoritarian, permissive) and their impact on the experience of close relationships in adulthood.

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- To explore the various adult attachment styles (e.g., secure, anxious, avoidant) and their influence on the experience of close relationships among adults.
- To examine the relationship between different parenting styles (authoritative, permissive, authoritarian) experienced during childhood and adult attachment styles (secure, ambivalent, avoidant).

### ***Hypotheses***

- There will be a significant relationship between parenting style and close relationships among adults.
- There will be a significant relationship between parenting style and adult attachment among adults.
- There will be a significant relationship between adult attachment style and close relationships among adults.

### ***Sample***

The snowball sampling method was used in a cross-sectional study to select a sample of 135 adults aged between 18 to 30 years from various regions of India. The sample consisted of 85 females, 48 males, and 2 non-binary individuals. The snowball sampling method initially involved taking a small number of participants who met the inclusion criteria and then asking them to refer other eligible individuals from their social networks. This process continued until the desired sample size was achieved.

### ***Research variables***

#### **Independent Variable**

- Parenting Style
- Adult Attachment Style

#### **Dependent Variable**

- Experience of close relationship

### ***Tool description***

**Perceived Parenting Style Scale:** It was developed by Divya & Manikandan in the year 2013. It measures the perceived parenting style of sub about to three dimensions such as authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive. It consists of 30 items in which responses were elicited on a one-point Likert scale.

**Reliability:** Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.87, with 0.81 in Authoritarian, 0.79 in Authoritative and 0.86 in Permissive Parenting styles indicating high internal consistency. The test-retest reliability of the scale was also found to be good, with a correlation coefficient of 0.84.

**Validity:** The validity is 0.81. The PPSS was validated against the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) and the Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI).

**Revised Adult Attachment Scale (RAAS):** It is a self-report measure used to assess adult attachment styles developed by Collins in 1996, it consists of 18 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale. The scale contains three sub-scales, each composed of six items. The three sub-scales are CLOSE, DEPEND, and ANXIETY.

**Reliability:** Cronbach's alphas for the close, depend, and anxiety sub-scales were .77, .78, and .85, respectively.

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*Validity:* High construct validity.

**Experiences in Close Relationship Scale- Short Form(ECR-S):** It is a 12 item self- report adult attachment questionnaire developed by Wei et al. (2007) focused on close relationships. It is a 7- point Likert scale. The result consists of two scores for two separate factors: attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance.

*Reliability:* Coefficient alphas were .78 (Anxiety) and .84 (Avoidance)

*Validity:* High Construct validity

### **Procedure**

First the topic was decided for the conduction of primary research. Prior to participation, participants will be provided with informed consent forms detailing the purpose of the study, Explanation of the Study Tools, procedures involved, and confidentiality measures.

Participants were selected using a snowball sampling technique from a pool of adults aged 18-30 years. Inclusion criteria will include being within the specified age range and either currently being in a romantic relationship or have been previously involved in any romantic relationship. Participants with known cognitive impairments or mental health conditions affecting their ability to participate will be excluded from the study.

They will be required to provide consent before proceeding with the study. After the consent, Participants will complete a set of self-report measures including the Perceived Parenting Styles Scale (PPSS) to assess different childhood parenting styles, the Revised Adult Attachment Scale (RAAS) to measure adult attachment styles, and the Experiences in Close Relationship Scale- Short Form (ECR-S) to evaluate the experience of experience in close relationships.

Data collection was conducted anonymously to ensure participant confidentiality. After the data collection, the data was taken for scoring and with the respective scoring statistical analysis was completed through statistical measures.

### **Statistical analysis**

**Pearson Correlation** was used to find the relationship between the variables.

**Multiple Regression** was used to find the effect of both parenting styles and adult attachment styles on experience of close relationship.

## **RESULTS**

*Table No. 1 Descriptive Statistics*

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
ECRS	43.21	10.892	135
PPSS	85.46	10.782	135
RAAS	53.38	6.798	135

*Table No. 2 Correlations between Variables*

		PPSS	ECRS	RAAS
PPSS	Pearson Correlation	1	.331**	.114
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000	.094
	N	135	135	135

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		PPSS	ECRS	RAAS
ECRS	Pearson Correlation	.331**	1	.179*
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000		.019
	N	135	135	135
RAAS	Pearson Correlation	.114	.179*	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.094	.019	
	N	135	135	135

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

The correlational analysis between the variables ECRS (Experience of Close Relationships Scale), PPSS (Parenting Styles Scale), and RAAS (Adult Attachment Scale) revealed the following:

- A moderate positive correlation between ECRS and PPSS ( $r = 0.331, p < 0.001$ ).
- A weak positive correlation between ECRS and RAAS ( $r = 0.179, p = 0.019$ ).
- No significant correlation between PPSS and RAAS ( $r = 0.114, p = 0.094$ ).

The analysis was conducted with data from 135 participants for each variable.

**Table No. 3 Multiple Regression Analysis for ECRS (Model Summary<sup>b</sup>)**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.360 <sup>a</sup>	.130	.116	10.238	.130	9.830	2	132	.000	1.813

Predictors: (Constant), RAAS, PPSS

Dependent Variable: ECRS

In table 3, it shows that the value of R square for ECRS (criterion variable) is .130 which shows that about 13% of contribution is accounted by the predictor variables RAAS (X1), PPSS (X2).

**Multiple regression analysis**

The multiple regression analysis was further thought to be significant to examine the extent to which predictor variables independently predict a dependent or criterion variable (i.e. experience in close relationships).

For interpreting the results obtained from multiple regression analysis, the variance caused by the combined effect of total predictor variables is seen by obtained R Square, which is further adjusted (after adjusting chance errors) into adjusted R Square. Individual contribution of each predictor variable can be noted with the help of Beta weights. Level of significance indicated in the table against each predictor variable shows the variable which is significant enough, and to which extent, to predict the variance caused in the dependent variable.

To estimate the variance of each variable separately beta weights are multiplied with the correlation coefficients. The sum total of this individual proportion value is found equal to the value of R Square (total variance).

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**Table No. 4 Analysis of Variance for ECRS (ANOVA<sup>a</sup>)**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	2060.730	2	1030.365	9.830	.000 <sup>b</sup>
1	Residual	13835.463	132	104.814		
	Total	15896.193	134			

*Dependent Variable: ECRS*

*Predictors: (Constant), RAAS, PPSS*

Table 4 shows that F value is significant at .01 level. So, it can be said that contribution of RAAS and PPSS is found to be significant in determination of experience in close relationship among adults.

**Table No. 5 Multiple Regression Coefficients for predictors of ECRS (Coefficients<sup>a</sup>)**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	3.814	9.390		.406	.685
1	PPSS	.318	.083	.314	3.846	.000
	RAAS	.230	.131	.143	1.753	.082

*Dependent Variable: ECRS*

**Table No. 6 Coefficients of Determination**

Model	Coefficients of Determination
1 RAAS	0.32
PPSS	0.109

*Dependent Variable: ECRS*

Multiple Regression Equation for Criterion Variable (Y, ECRS) and Predictor Variables PPSS and RAAS.

In table 4, the value of Adjusted R square was found to be .116 which indicates that 12% of the variance in the ECRS is to be explained by the combined predictor variables.

The regression coefficient (b value) of PPSS (X1) is .318, which shows that one unit increment in PPSS would create .318-unit increments in ECRS. Thus, PPSS has positive contribution in the determination of ECRS. It is accounted for about 10.9% variation (coefficient of determination) in the determination of ECRS. Table 4 also reveals that t value, showing the contribution of PPSS is significant at .01 level. So, the obtained results can be generalized on the population.

The regression coefficient (b value) of RAAS (X3) is .230, which shows that one unit increment in RAAS would create .230-unit increments in ECRS. Thus, RAAS has positive contribution in the determination of ECRS. It is accounted for about 3.2% variation (coefficient of determination) in the determination of ECRS. Table 4 also reveals that t value, showing the contribution of RAAS is not significant at any levels. So, the obtained results can't be generalized on the population.

## Influence of Parenting Style and Adult Attachment Style on Experience of Close Relationship among Adults

### DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to investigate the impact of both parenting style during childhood and adult attachment style on the quality and experience of close relationships in adulthood among young adults, aged 18-30 years.

The correlational analysis and multiple regression results provide valuable insights into the relationship between parenting styles, adult attachment, and the quality of close relationships. The findings from the correlational analysis revealed significant associations between the variables ECRS (Experience of Close Relationships Scale), PPSS (Parenting Styles Scale), and RAAS (Adult Attachment Scale).

Research by Moazen et al. (2014) and Doinita & Maria (2015) corroborate these findings, demonstrating significant associations between attachment styles and parenting styles. Specifically, Moazen et al. found a positive correlation between secure attachment and authoritative parenting, while Doinita & Maria identified a significant correlation between secure adult attachment and authoritative parenting style. These studies highlight the role of family dynamics in shaping individuals' emotional and cognitive development, supporting the associations observed in the correlational analysis.

Table 2 found that there is significant positive correlation between PPSS and ECRS ( $r=0.331$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), hence the first hypothesis is accepted, i.e. There will be a significant relationship between parenting style and close relationships among adults. This is in line with the previous study by Sahithya et al. (2019) where findings indicated consistent effects of parenting styles on children across cultures which further impact their experience of close relationships discussing implications of shifts in parenting practices for the future. This suggests that it is evident that parenting style plays a crucial role in shaping the satisfaction individuals derive from their relationships. This correlation underscores the profound influence of early caregiver relationships on interpersonal dynamics and relationship outcomes in adulthood. Specifically, those who experienced authoritative parenting tend to have higher relationship satisfaction which was indicated in findings of different research by Sümer & Gungor (1999). The rejection of the null hypothesis supports the hypothesis that there is a significant positive correlation between PPSS and ECRS, emphasizing the crucial role of parenting style in shaping relationship satisfaction.

Furthermore, Table 2 also reveals a weak positive correlation between ECRS and RAAS ( $r=0.179$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), hence the second hypothesis is accepted, i.e. There will be a significant relationship between adult attachment style and close relationships among adults. This is in line with previous research by Mullinax & Turner (2023) and TEMEL & Ahmed (2023) where family-of-origin predictors have been discussed, such as parental psychological control, can impact individuals' romantic attachment styles and relationship quality. This indicates that adult attachment may contribute to individuals' experiences in close relationships, albeit to a lesser extent compared to parenting styles. And another research also indicated that secure attachment styles in their family relationships were more likely to exhibit secure attachment styles in their romantic relationships, highlighting the role of attachment in shaping intimate relationships by Erwin et al. (2001)

On the other hand, according to Table 4, the regression coefficient of RAAS is .230 having positive contribution in the determination of ECRS, Table 4 also reveals that t value, showing the contribution of RAAS is not significant at any levels, suggesting that adult attachment

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may have a weaker influence on individuals' experiences in close relationships compared to parenting styles. This finding is consistent with research by Chen (2023), who found that fathers with insecure adult attachment tended to exhibit withdrawal or authoritarian control in parenting, but the impact of adult attachment on parenting style was not as pronounced as the influence of other factors, such as marital dynamics. This suggests that the direct impact of adult attachment style on the experience of close relationships may not be significant once other factors are taken into account. It's essential to recognize that close relationships are multifaceted, and various elements beyond attachment style may contribute to individuals' experiences within them.

However, no significant correlation was found between PPSS and RAAS according to Table 3 ( $r = 0.114$ ), hence the third hypothesis is rejected, i.e. There will be a significant relationship between parenting style and adult attachment style suggesting that parenting styles may not directly predict adult attachment patterns. This finding is consistent with research by Akhtar (2012), who found significant associations between authoritarian and permissive parenting styles with specific attachment styles, but no significant relationship with authoritative parenting. These results imply that while parenting styles may influence individuals' experiences in close relationships, they may not necessarily determine their attachment patterns in adulthood. That implies that while parenting styles influence relationship dynamics, they may not dictate attachment patterns in adulthood.

Consequently, while the correlation analysis underscores the significance of considering attachment style in understanding close relationship dynamics, the regression analysis suggests a more intricate interplay of factors. Our findings imply that while attachment style may indeed play a role, its direct effect on the experience of close relationships may be overshadowed or moderated by other unaccounted variables in our model.

Research by Vorria et al. (2007) supports this notion, as they found that participants' descriptions of parents and current partners were associated with their attachment style. Additionally, according to Table 4, the regression coefficient (b value) of PPSS was positive and significant, indicating that more positive parenting styles were associated with more positive experiences in close relationships. These findings align with the broader literature on the influence of parenting styles on various aspects of individuals' lives, including their attachment patterns and relationship outcomes.

Adding to the discussion, it's important to highlight the broader implications of these findings in understanding the complex interplay between parenting, attachment, and relationship outcomes across the lifespan.

Studies such as McCarthy & Maughan (2010) and Sümer & Gungor (1999) have emphasized the long-term effects of early experiences on later psycho-social functioning, underscoring the importance of understanding the complex interplay between parenting, attachment, and relationship outcomes across the lifespan. These findings highlight the need for interventions aimed at promoting healthy attachment development and improving relationship quality to consider both parenting styles and adult attachment patterns.

Millings, A., et al. (2013) highlighted that attachment avoidance and anxiety were negatively associated with responsive caregiving, which mediated the relationship between attachment and parenting styles. Akhtar, Z. (2012) revealed significant associations between



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authoritarian parenting style and anxious attachment, as well as permissive parenting style with avoidant and anxious attachment styles.

The influence of parenting styles on adult attachment and can significantly impact individuals' experiences in close relationships in various ways:

- **Secure Attachment and Supportive Parenting:** Consistent, responsive, and emotionally supportive caregiving fosters secure attachment styles, characterized by trust, intimacy, and effective communication in close relationships and tend to have positive and fulfilling relationships.
- **Anxious Attachment and Overprotective Parenting:** Overprotective or intrusive parenting can lead to anxious attachment styles, marked by dependency and fear of abandonment, may exhibit heightened sensitivity and insecurity in relationships, seeking constant reassurance from partners.
- **Avoidant Attachment and Neglectful Parenting:** Neglectful or emotionally distant caregiving may result in avoidant attachment styles, where individuals prioritize independence and emotional distance in relationships, may struggle with intimacy and vulnerability, maintaining emotional distance to protect themselves from potential hurt.

Overall, these findings suggest that relationship between parenting styles, adult attachment, and experiences in close relationships underscores the profound influence of early caregiver relationships on interpersonal dynamics. Understanding the intricate interplay between parenting behaviors, attachment styles, and relationship experiences provides valuable insights for promoting individuals' well-being and fostering satisfying interpersonal connections throughout life. Recognizing these influences is crucial for interventions aimed at fostering healthier attachment styles and relationship dynamics across the lifespan.

### **CONCLUSION**

In summary, the synthesis of findings from multiple studies highlights the intricate relationship between parenting styles, adult attachment, and experiences in close relationships. The research conducted by Moazen et al., Tomşa, Millings et al., and Akhtar collectively underscores the lasting impact of early caregiver relationships on individuals' attachment styles and subsequent interpersonal dynamics.

The findings revealed a significant positive correlation between PPSS and ECRS, indicating that parenting style plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' satisfaction in their relationships. However, no significant correlation was found between PPSS and RAAS, suggesting that parenting styles may not directly predict adult attachment patterns.

Furthermore, while weak positive correlations were observed between ECRS and RAAS, indicating that adult attachment may contribute to individuals' experiences in close relationships, regression analysis suggested a more intricate interplay of factors, with the direct impact of adult attachment style on the experience of close relationships being overshadowed by other unaccounted variables.

Despite theoretical expectations, the findings did not fully support the notion that parenting styles directly determine adult attachment patterns. Instead, the results suggest a complex interplay between parenting behaviors, adult attachment, and relationship outcomes.

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This highlights the need for interventions aimed at promoting healthy attachment development and improving relationship quality to consider both parenting styles and adult attachment patterns. By understanding the mechanisms through which these factors influence individuals' experiences in close relationships, practitioners can better support individuals in developing secure and satisfying relationships across the lifespan.

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### ***Conflict of Interest***

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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