

The Influence of Family Environment on Adult Attachment Style and Self-Concept Clarity in Young Adults

Manya Bhardwaj^{1*}, Dr. Mohammad Imran²

ABSTRACT

The family serves as a primary social unit, encompassing individuals linked by biological ties, marriage, adoption, or close personal relationships, including extended, step, and chosen families. This study investigated how the family environment impacts adult attachment styles and self-concept clarity in young adults. Data was collected from 180 participants aged 18 to 25 using the Brief Family Relationship Scale, the Experiences in Close Relationships–Relationship Structures Questionnaire, and the Self-Concept Clarity Scale. The research was guided by three hypotheses: (1) there will be a significant difference in family environment across different adult attachment style in young adults, (2) there will be a significant relationship between family environment and self-concept clarity in young adults, and (3) there will be a significant difference in self-concept clarity across different adult attachment styles in young adults. Statistical analyses included the Kruskal-Wallis test, Mann-Whitney U test for post hoc comparison, and Spearman’s rank-order correlation. The findings showed significant variation in both family environment and self-concept clarity across attachment styles. However, no significant direct correlation was found between family environment and self-concept clarity. These results suggest that while family background and attachment styles are closely related, the family environment alone may not be a strong predictor of how clearly young adults perceive their self-concept. The findings underscore the role of attachment in shaping developmental outcomes, pointing toward the value of future longitudinal and culturally contextual research.

Keywords: *Family Environment, Self-Concept Clarity, Adult Attachment Style, Young Adults, Kruskal Wallis H test, Spearman Correlation*

The first social environment in which person’s emotional, psychological, and social foundations are formed is their family. A person’s family environment, which includes elements like warmth, cohesiveness, conflict, and communication style, has a lasting effect on their psychological and emotional development (Moos & Moos, 1976; Shaffer, 2009). While prior research has explored family environment and adult attachment separately, their individual roles in shaping self-concept clarity among young adults are not well understood. This study investigates how each factor independently contributes to the development of self-concept clarity.

¹Student, Amity Institute of Psychology and Allied Sciences, Amity University Noida, India

²Assistant Professor-II, Amity Institute of Psychology and Allied Sciences, Amity University Noida, India

*Corresponding Author

Received: May 05, 2025; Revision Received: May 17, 2025; Accepted: May 21, 2025

The Influence of Family Environment on Adult Attachment Style and Self-Concept Clarity in Young Adults

Family environment is shaped both by physical and emotional factors, which plays a major role in personal growth and behaviour development. It is influenced by parent-child interactions and overall family relationships, significantly impacting children's academic performance, character development, and psychological coping mechanisms. It serves as foundational context where an individual's attachment style, emotional management skill, and cognitive development are shaped.

Siegel's (2012) Interpersonal Neurobiology (IPNB) offers integrated perspective by drawing from neuroscience, psychology, attachment theory, and social sciences to explain how interpersonal experiences influence brain development and emotional well-being. Early relationships influence the neural circuits responsible for stress regulation, emotional control, and relational trust. Attachment theory aligns well with IPNB by explaining how early caregiver-child interaction establishes internal working models which shapes future relationships. Given these insights, Interpersonal Neurobiology provides a valuable theoretical foundation for the present study. By highlighting the lasting influence of early relational experiences on neural development and psychological functioning, IPNB underscores the importance of examining how family environments may shape attachment patterns and self-concept clarity in young adulthood. This perspective supports the investigation into current psychological outcomes as reflections of earlier interpersonal dynamics, making IPNB especially relevant for understanding the developmental underpinnings of attachment and self-identity in this population.

Bowen's family systems theory highlights how a person's attachment style is influenced by family dynamics, including emotional ties and generational trends. Whereas, the importance of different environmental layers, such as family, in influencing young adults' attachment style and self-concept clarity is highlighted by Bronfenbrenner's Ecological systems theory (1979).

Bowlby's attachment framework proposed that initial interactions with caregivers form foundational patterns, which generally remain consistent over time and impact how individuals engage in future relationships, especially the intimate ones. Attachment styles are shaped by early family experiences, as shown by foundational work from Harlow (1958), Bowlby (1969), and Ainsworth (1978). These influences continue into adulthood, impacting both attachment patterns and self-concept clarity (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). This study draws on Bartholomew and Horowitz's four-category model of attachment, which underpins the Experiences in Close Relationships–Relationship Structures (ECR-RS) scale used here. This framework provides insight into how early family dynamics influence both attachment patterns and self-concept. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) conceptualized adult attachment along two dimensions—*anxiety* and *avoidance*—resulting in four styles: *secure*, *dismissive-avoidant*, *preoccupied*, and *fearful-avoidant*. These patterns reflect internal working models of the self and others, shaped largely by early caregiving experiences.

According to Rosenberg (1979), self-concept encompasses the collection of thoughts and emotions a person holds when reflecting on themselves as an object of perception. Some of the dimensions of self-concept are: *physical self*, *emotional self*, *social self*, *cognitive self*, *spiritual self*. Self-concept clarity refers to the extent to which individuals have clearly defined, confidently held, and stable beliefs about themselves (Campbell et al., 1996). It refers to how consistently and clearly one defines their views rather than what they actually

The Influence of Family Environment on Adult Attachment Style and Self-Concept Clarity in Young Adults

believe. It shows how consistent, stable, and confident a person's self-perception is throughout time. On the other hand, self-concept refers to the person's total view of oneself, including their identity, skills, and characteristics.

While a great deal of research has been conducted on attachment and SCC in Western populations, there is a significant lack of studies exploring these dynamics in collectivist societies, particularly in India. Much of the existing literature comes from individualistic contexts, where the development of self-concept is influenced by independence and personal achievement (Campbell et al., 1996; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2019). However, in collectivist cultures like India, where family bonds and social interdependence play a much larger role in identity development, the processes shaping attachment and self-concept may be quite different. Indian young adults, in particular, often experience strong familial influence in shaping their identities and psychological development, but there has been limited research investigating how family environment and attachment contribute to SCC in this group.

Given this gap, this study aims to explore how family environment influences adult attachment styles and self-concept clarity (SCC) in young adults in India, providing a culturally relevant view of these developmental factors. The findings may help us better understand how self-concept and mental well-being are shaped in collectivist cultures. This research can also support clinical and counselling practices by guiding interventions that aim to strengthen self-concept and emotional well-being in young adults from India and similar cultural backgrounds.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Jain & Nayak (2024) investigated the influence of adult attachment styles on self-esteem levels among young Indian adults. Collins adult attachment scale and Rosenberg self-esteem scale were assessed on 150 participants. Distinct patterns were found among attachment styles: individuals with secure attachment displayed highest self-esteem, followed by preoccupied, dismissive, and fearful attachment styles, in descending order.

Yu et al (2024) did cross-sectional and longitudinal study to examine the association between family functioning and adolescents' self-concept clarity. It was found that adolescents with better family functioning have higher balanced time perspective, experience less depression, and are more likely to develop an explicit self-concept.

Wang (2023) investigated how parenting styles influence the development of attachment styles. The findings suggested that parental responsiveness plays a key role in shaping attachment patterns, with insecure parenting styles largely contributing to the emergence of insecure attachment styles.

Zhang et al (2022) explored the connection between mental health and adult attachment, employing robust variance estimation with random effects. The findings indicated increased avoidance and attachment anxiety levels were inversely correlated with pleasant emotions and positively correlated with negative emotions. Attachment anxiety exhibited stronger associations with mental health indicators than attachment avoidance, emphasizing the crucial link between adult attachment styles and overall emotional health.

Mishra & Bhatt (2021) studied link between family environment and self-concept in Indian context among young adults. Qualitative research was done on the sample of 40, questioning

The Influence of Family Environment on Adult Attachment Style and Self-Concept Clarity in Young Adults

them about perceived family environment and self-concept. It was found that when they receive affection, support, expressiveness, and other conditions in the family environment, they show positive self-concept. This reflected that self-concept was interdependent of societal roles and roles assigned by family.

Kawamoto (2020) investigated whether association between self-esteem and self-concept clarity is moderated by an individual's attachment style. Sample of 1042 university students were recruited and was found that there were notable interaction between self-esteem and attachment anxiety. The study highlighted the significant role of attachment style in influencing self-development among adolescents and young adults.

METHODOLOGY

Aim

To study the influence of family environment on adult attachment style and self-concept clarity in young adults.

Objective

1. To examine differences in family environment across adult attachment styles in young adults.
2. To examine the relationship between family environment and self-concept clarity in young adults.
3. To examine differences in self-concept clarity across adult attachment styles in young adults.

Hypothesis

- Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant difference in family environment across different adult attachment style in young adults.
- Hypothesis 2: There will be a significant relationship between family environment and self-concept clarity in young adults.
- Hypothesis 3: There will be a significant difference in self-concept clarity across different adult attachment style in young adults.

Research Variable

- Independent Variable: Family Environment
- Dependent Variable: Adult attachment style and self-concept clarity

Sample

The sample consisted of 180 participants who completed all conditions of this study ranging from the age group of 18-25 years. All participants were naïve to the purpose of the experiment.

Instruments

1. **Brief Family Relationship Scale:** The Brief Family Relationship Scale (BFRS; Fok et al., 2014) is a self-report measure designed to assess adolescents' perceptions of family functioning, specifically through three key dimensions of family relationships: Cohesion, Expressiveness, and Conflict. The BFRS is derived from the 27-item Relationship factor of the Family Environment Scale (FES; Moos & Moos, 1994), which originally included subscales for Cohesion, Expressiveness, and

The Influence of Family Environment on Adult Attachment Style and Self-Concept Clarity in Young Adults

Conflict (each with nine items). These subscales evaluate aspects such as family support, the expression of opinions, and angry conflict. Based on feedback from focus groups, the authors revised the original items, conducting a pilot test to eliminate those with poor performance. The revised version comprised an 8-item Cohesion subscale, a 4-item Expressiveness subscale, and a 7-item Conflict subscale, resulting in a 19-item measure. Participants rated items using a continuous analog scale with three semantic anchors: Not at all, Somewhat, and A lot. Factor analysis revealed that a 3-factor, 18-item structure best represented the data, leading to the removal of two additional items and resulting in a final 16-item scale. In a sample of 12- to 18-year-old predominantly Yup'ik Eskimo Alaska Native adolescents from rural and rural-remote villages, the internal consistency values for the three factors ranged from .80 to .88. Convergent and discriminant validity were assessed through correlational analysis (Fok et al., 2014).

- 2. Experiences in close relationship-relationship structure (ECR-RS):** is a self-report tool designed to assess attachment patterns across different close relationships, not limited to romantic partnerships but including various interpersonal connections. The measure allows flexibility for use with individuals of different ages and relationship types. Reliability analysis indicates a test-retest reliability of approximately 0.65 for the romantic relationship subscale (particularly for participants who experienced a breakup) and 0.80 for the parental subscale over a 30-day period. Additionally, research has demonstrated that the subscales are significantly correlated with various relational outcomes, such as relationship satisfaction, breakup likelihood, and perceptions of emotional expressions.
- 3. Self-Concept Clarity Scale (Campbell, 1996):** The Self-Concept Clarity Scale (SCCS), created by Campbell et al. (1996), is a tool used to measure an individual's level of self-concept clarity (SCC). The scale comprises 12 items, where higher scores reflect greater clarity regarding one's self-concept. Respondents are asked to rate how accurately each statement describes them on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Some of the items are reverse scored. Examples of statements include: "In general, I have a clear sense of who I am and what I am" and "It is often hard for me to make up my mind about things because I don't really know what I want." The SCCS has been adapted into several languages, such as German, Polish, Slovak, Korean, Japanese, and Persian, enabling its use in diverse cultural contexts. Psychometric evaluations of the scale show it possesses strong internal consistency, with an average item-total correlation of 0.54 and a Cronbach's alpha of 0.86. The scale also demonstrates excellent temporal stability, with test-retest reliability of 0.79 and 0.70 over four- and five-month intervals, respectively. These results underscore the SCCS's robust reliability and validity across various samples, including those from the general population, undergraduate students, and clinical groups (Glezakis et al., 2024).

Procedure

The questionnaires, including the Brief Family Relationship Scale (BFRS), the Experiences in Close Relationships-Relationship Structures Questionnaire (ECR-RS), and the Self-Concept Clarity Scale (SCCS), were distributed in printed format. Convenience sampling was used, wherein participants were approached through personal networks and in public settings. A total of 180 participants completed the forms. The data was later analyzed using the Kruskal-Wallis H Test and Spearman rho correlation.

The Influence of Family Environment on Adult Attachment Style and Self-Concept Clarity in Young Adults

Statistical Analysis:

Kruskal Wallis H Test and Spearman rho Correlation was performed using the SPSS Software to check for the relationship between Family Environment, Adult attachment style and self-concept clarity. Kruskal Wallis test is a non-parametric statistical test which is used to compare two or more independent groups to determine if there are statistically significant differences between them. Spearman rho Correlation measures the strength and direction of the monotonic association between two variables. Although both variables were continuous, the data did not meet the assumptions of normality required for Pearson's correlation.

RESULTS

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>
Family Environment	55.03	55.50	6.65	35	80	0.03	1.67
Avoidance	3.86	3.83	0.99	1.33	6.50	0.19	0.03
Anxiety	4.22	4.33	1.82	1.00	7.00	-0.12	-0.97
Self-Concept Clarity	3.15	3.08	0.78	1.17	4.67	-0.13	-0.42

Note. *M* = Mean; *Mdn* = Median; *SD* = Standard Deviation.

Descriptive statistics such as mean, median, standard deviation, range, skewness, and kurtosis are reported to offer a comprehensive picture of the data distribution for each variable—family environment, attachment-related avoidance and anxiety, and self-concept clarity. These indicators are essential as they help assess whether the data meet the assumptions for further statistical analyses, such as normality and homogeneity of variance. Understanding the central tendency and spread ensures that interpretations of the results are based on reliable and representative data patterns.

Table 2 Tests for Normality for Study Variables

Variable	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Family Environment	0.094	180	<.001	0.973	180	0.001
Avoidance	0.056	180	.200*	0.992	180	.462
Anxiety	0.079	180	.008	.951	180	<.001
Self-Concept Clarity	0.058	180	.200*	0.984	180	.041

Note. *. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Normality was assessed using both the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. Family Environment and Anxiety significantly deviated from normality across both tests. Self-Concept Clarity showed mixed outcomes, with the Shapiro-Wilk test indicating a slight deviation. Only Avoidance met the normality assumption in both tests. Since several variables did not follow a normal distribution, non-parametric methods will be used in the analysis.

Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant difference in family environment across different adult attachment style in young adults.

The Influence of Family Environment on Adult Attachment Style and Self-Concept Clarity in Young Adults

Table 3 Mean Ranks and Kruskal Wallis Test Results for Family Environment Across Attachment Styles

Attachment Style	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	df	p
Secure	39	106.69			
Preoccupied (Anxious)	28	70.96	14.95	3	.002
Dismissive (Avoidant)	55	103.23			
Fearful-Avoidant (Disorganized)	58	76.97			

Note. Higher mean rank values indicate higher perceived family environment scores.

- The Kruskal Wallis H test indicated a statistically significant difference in family environment across the four attachment styles, $\chi^2(3) = 14.95, p = .002$.
- The Kruskal-Wallis test revealed a significant difference in family environment perceptions across attachment styles ($p = 0.002$). Individuals with secure attachment reported the most positive family environment (mean rank = 106.69), followed by dismissive attachment (103.23). Preoccupied (70.96) and fearful-avoidant (76.97) attachment styles perceived their family environment less favorably.
- The Mann-Whitney U test was used as a post-hoc test to conduct pairwise comparisons of family environment across different adult attachment styles.

Post Hoc Test

Table 4 Mann-Whitney U Test Results for differences in Family Environment Across Adult Attachment Styles

Group Comparison	Mean Rank 1	Mean Rank 2	U	Z	p	Size (r)
Secure vs Preoccupied	40.14	25.45	306.50	-3.05	.002	0.37
Secure vs Dismissive	47.91	47.21	1056.50	-0.12	.902	0.01
Secure vs Fearful-Avoidant	58.64	42.52	755.00	-2.77	.006	0.28
Preoccupied vs Dismissive	32.16	47.01	494.50	-2.66	.008	0.29
Preoccupied vs Fearful-Avoidant	42.36	44.05	780.00	-0.30	.768	0.03
Dismissive vs Fearful-Avoidant	65.01	49.41	1154.50	-2.54	.011	0.24

- A **significant difference** was found in family environment between participants with **Secure and Preoccupied attachment styles** ($U = 306.50, p = .002, r = .37$), with the **Secure group** reporting a more positive family environment.
- Participants with **Secure and Fearful-Avoidant** attachment styles also differed significantly ($U = 755.00, p = .006, r = .28$), with the **Secure group** again scoring higher.
- The difference between **Secure and Dismissive** groups was **not significant** ($U = 1056.50, p = .902, r = .01$).
- A significant difference was observed between **Preoccupied and Dismissive attachment styles** ($U = 494.50, p = .008, r = .29$), with the **Dismissive group** showing a more positive family environment.
- No significant difference was found between **Preoccupied and Fearful-Avoidant** groups ($U = 780.00, p = .768, r = .03$).
- A significant difference was found between **Dismissive and Fearful-Avoidant** participants ($U = 1154.50, p = .011, r = .24$), with the **Dismissive group** scoring higher on family environment.

The Influence of Family Environment on Adult Attachment Style and Self-Concept Clarity in Young Adults

Thus, Hypothesis 1 is supported that there is significant difference in family environment across different adult attachment style in young adults.

Hypothesis 2: There will be a significant relationship between family environment and self-concept clarity in young adults.

Table 5 Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations between each of the variables

Variable	M	SD	Family Environment	Self-Concept Clarity
Family Environment	55.03	6.65	-	.013
Self-Concept Clarity	3.15	0.78	.013	-

A Spearman's rho correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between Family Environment and Self-Concept Clarity. The results indicated that there was no statistically significant correlation between Family Environment and Self-Concept Clarity, $\rho(180) = .013, p = .868$. This suggests that in the present sample, the perceived family environment was not related to levels of self-concept clarity.

Thus, Hypothesis 2 is not supported that there is no significant relationship between family environment and self-concept clarity in young adults.

Hypothesis 3: There will be a significant difference in self-concept clarity across different adult attachment style in young adults.

Table 6 Mean Ranks and Kruskal Wallis Test Results for Self-Concept Clarity (SCC) across Attachment Styles

Attachment Style	n	Mean Rank	χ^2	df
Secure	39	115.73	32.18	3
Dismissive (Avoidant)	56	85.53		
Preoccupied (Anxious)	28	118.55		
Fearful-Avoidant (Disorganized)	57	64.34		

Mann Whitney U test was conducted as post hoc test to check the pairwise comparisons for self-concept clarity between attachment styles.

Post Hoc Test

Table 7 Mann-Whitney U Test Results for Self-Concept Clarity Between Attachment Styles

Pairwise Comparison	Mean Rank 1	Mean Rank 2	U	Z	p	r
Secure vs. Dismissive (Avoidant)	57.38	41.46	726	-2.77	.006	.28
Secure vs Preoccupied (Anxious)	33.62	34.54	531	-0.19	.849	.02
Secure vs Fearful Avoidant	64.73	37.39	478.5	-4.73	<.001	.48
Dismissive vs Preoccupied	37.32	52.86	494	-2.75	.006	.30
Dismissive vs Fearful-Avoidant	63.74	50.38	1218.5	-2.14.507	.030	.20
Preoccupied vs. Fearful-Avoidant	60.16	34.57	317.5		<.001	.49

- Individuals with a **secure attachment style** reported **significantly higher self-concept clarity** than those with a **dismissive (avoidant)** style ($p = .006, r = .28$).

The Influence of Family Environment on Adult Attachment Style and Self-Concept Clarity in Young Adults

- No significant difference in SCC was found between individuals with **secure** and **preoccupied (anxious)** attachment styles ($p = .849$).
- Individuals with a **secure** style had **significantly higher SCC** than those with a **fearful-avoidant (disorganized)** style ($p < .001, r = .48$).
- Participants with a **preoccupied (anxious)** style reported **significantly higher SCC** than those with a **dismissive (avoidant)** style ($p = .006, r = .30$).
- Individuals with a **dismissive** style had **significantly higher SCC** than those with a **fearful-avoidant** style ($p = .030, r = .20$).
- Participants with a **preoccupied** style had **significantly higher SCC** than those with a **fearful-avoidant** style ($p < .001, r = .49$).

Thus, Hypothesis 3 is supported that there is significant difference in self-concept clarity across different adult attachment style in young adults.

DISCUSSION

The present study examined the influence of family environment on adult attachment styles and self-concept clarity (SCC) in young adults. Utilizing a sample of 180 participants and standardized instruments—the Brief Family Relationship Scale (Fok et al., 2004), the Experiences in Close Relationships–Relationship Structures Questionnaire (Fraley et al., 2011), and the Self-Concept Clarity Scale (Campbell et al., 1996)—the study tested three hypotheses. Results indicated significant differences in perceived family environment across adult attachment styles and significant differences in SCC across attachment styles. However, no significant relationship was found between family environment and SCC.

The first hypothesis, which proposed a significant difference in family environment across adult attachment styles, was supported by the findings. Participants with a secure attachment style reported more favorable perceptions of their family environment compared to those with preoccupied and fearful-avoidant styles. This aligns with previous research suggesting that emotionally supportive and cohesive family environments contribute to the development of secure attachment (Bowlby, 1969; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2019). Moreover, the result lends support to Bartholomew and Horowitz's (1991) four-category model, highlighting distinctions not only between secure and insecure attachment styles, but also among different subtypes of insecure attachment.

The second hypothesis, which anticipated a significant relationship between family environment and self-concept clarity (SCC), was not supported. While theoretical frameworks—such as those proposed by Campbell et al. (1996)—highlight the importance of supportive early environments in fostering a stable and coherent sense of self, the present findings indicate that family environment alone may not be a strong predictor of SCC in young adulthood. It is possible that other contextual and developmental factors, such as peer relationships, individual personality traits, and broader sociocultural influences, play a more substantial role in shaping self-concept during this life stage.

The third hypothesis was confirmed, indicating significant differences in self-concept clarity (SCC) across adult attachment styles. Participants with secure attachment styles reported higher SCC than those with dismissive or fearful-avoidant styles. This finding is in line with theoretical accounts such as Self-Verification Theory (Swann, 1983) and Narrative Identity Theory (McAdams, 2001), both of which highlight the importance of stable and supportive relationships in developing a coherent and consistent sense of self.

The Influence of Family Environment on Adult Attachment Style and Self-Concept Clarity in Young Adults

Theoretical Implications

This research contributes to theory in three important ways. First, it not only supports but also extends Bartholomew and Horowitz's (1991) adult attachment model by showing that individuals' perceptions of their family environments vary systematically across attachment styles. Second, it adds to the literature on self-concept clarity (SCC) by illustrating how attachment experiences may influence the coherence and stability of one's self-view—emphasizing the formative impact of early relationships on identity development. Finally, the findings offer a culturally grounded perspective. In collectivist contexts like India, where family ties and social expectations carry significant weight, the development of self-concept clarity may be shaped more by interpersonal roles and relational harmony than by individual autonomy.

Practical Implications

The findings hold practical value across various domains:

- **Clinical Practice:** Mental health professionals may integrate attachment-based frameworks when addressing identity issues and low SCC in therapy.
- **Parental Education:** Raising awareness about the impact of family dynamics on long-term psychological development may guide parents toward fostering healthier environments.
- **Youth Development:** Educational institutions could implement programs aimed at enhancing identity clarity and emotional literacy in young adults.
- **Mental Health Interventions:** Given the links between insecure attachment, low SCC, and psychological distress, therapeutic approaches that target attachment and self-concept may improve emotional well-being and resilience.

Limitations:

- **Sample Dimension and Generalizability:** The relatively small sample size (N = 180) may limit the generalizability of findings.
- **Cultural Specificity:** The study's context within a collectivistic culture like India may restrict how far the results can be applied to other sociocultural settings, where attachment patterns and identity development may differ.
- **Self-Report Measures:** The use of self-report instruments introduces possible biases, such as erroneous self-evaluation and social desirability effects, which may influence the reliability of responses.
- **Correlational Design:** The cross-sectional, correlational design and reliance on non-parametric analyses (e.g., Kruskal-Wallis, Mann-Whitney U) restrict causal interpretation.
- **Excluded Variables:** The study did not account for other relevant variables such as self-esteem, personality traits, and mental health conditions, which may also impact self-concept clarity and should be examined in future research.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. **Longitudinal Designs:** To track changes in attachment styles and SCC over time to better understand their developmental trajectories.
2. **Experimental Interventions:** Explore the impact of therapeutic or educational interventions on SCC through controlled studies.
3. **Cross-Cultural Comparisons:** Investigate family dynamics and identity development across individualistic and collectivist societies.

The Influence of Family Environment on Adult Attachment Style and Self-Concept Clarity in Young Adults

- 4. Gender Differences:** Analyze whether gender moderates the relationship between attachment, family environment, and SCC.
- 5. Clinical Populations:** Extend research to clinical samples (e.g., individuals with anxiety, depression, or identity disturbances) to enhance therapeutic relevance.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the influence of family environment on adult attachment styles and self-concept clarity in young adults aged 18 to 25 years. The findings revealed significant differences in both family environment and self-concept clarity across different adult attachment styles, indicating that individuals with distinct attachment patterns perceive their family environments and sense of self differently. However, no significant relationship was found between family environment and self-concept clarity, suggesting that while both constructs relate to attachment style, family dynamics alone may not directly influence how clearly individuals understand and define themselves. These results emphasize the importance of attachment patterns in shaping developmental outcomes and psychological clarity. The study holds implications for mental health professionals and educators in supporting young adults' emotional development and identity formation. Future research could explore additional psychological factors such as personality traits, emotional regulation, or social support, as well as longitudinal designs to better understand how early family experiences continue to shape the self-concept across the lifespan.

REFERENCES

- Ainsworth et al (1978). *Patterns of attachment: A psychological study of the strange situation*. Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Bartholomew, K., & Horowitz, L. M. (1991). Attachment styles among young adults: A test of a four-category model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 61(2), 226–244. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.61.2.226>
- Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss: Vol. 1. Attachment*. Basic Books.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press.
- Campbell, J. D. et al (1996). Self-concept clarity: Measurement, personality correlates, and cultural boundaries. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 70(1), 141–156. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.70.1.141>
- Fraley, R. C. et al (2015). The experiences in close relationships–relationship structures (ECR-RS) questionnaire: A method for assessing adult attachment. *Psychological Assessment*, 27(2), 471–481. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pas0000003>
- Fok, C. C. T., Allen, J., & Henry, D. (2014). *Brief family relationship scale* [Dataset]. PsycTESTS. <https://doi.org/10.1037/t32614-000>
- Glezakis, K., et al (2024). Self-concept clarity in social anxiety: Psychometric properties and factor structure of the Self-Concept Clarity Scale in a social anxiety disorder sample. *Clinical Psychologist*, 28(2), 111–121. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13284207.2024.2311104>
- Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52(3), 511–524. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.52.3.511>
- Harlow, H. F. (1958). The nature of love. *American Psychologist*, 13(12), 673–685. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0047884>

The Influence of Family Environment on Adult Attachment Style and Self-Concept Clarity in Young Adults

- Jain, A., & Nayak, S. (2024). Influence of adult attachment styles on self-esteem among young Indian adults. *World Journal of Behavioral, Psychological and Health Sciences*, 4(4), 19–25. <https://wjbphs.com/sites/default/files/WJBPHS-2024-0404.pdf>
- Kawamoto, T. (2020). The moderating role of attachment style on the relationship between self-concept clarity and self-esteem. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 152, 109604. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2019.109604>
- McAdams, D. P. (2001). The psychology of life stories. *Review of General Psychology*, 5(2), 100–122. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.5.2.100>
- Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2019). *Attachment in adulthood: Structure, dynamics, and change* (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.
- Mishra, A., & Bhatt, S. (2021). Perceived family environment and self-concept among young adults in the Indian context. *International Journal of Academic Research in Social Science and Humanities*, 4(3), 148–159. <https://doi.org/10.48175/IJARSCT-873>
- Moos, R. H., & Moos, B. S. (1976). Family environment and the development of children: A typology and its implications. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 38(1), 59–68. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1545-5300.1976.00357.x>
- Rosenberg, M. (1979). *Conceiving the self*. Basic Books.
- Shaffer, H. R. (2009). The role of the family in psychological development. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 18(3), 302–313. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011128708321359>
- Siegel, D. J. (2012). *The developing mind: How relationships and the brain interact to shape who we are* (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.
- Swann, W. B. (1983). Self-verification: The search for coherence. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 44(1), 39–51. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.44.1.39>

Acknowledgment

The author(s) appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Bhardwaj, M. & Imran, M. (2025). The Influence of Family Environment on Adult Attachment Style and Self-Concept Clarity in Young Adults. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 13(2), 1836-1847. DIP:18.01.170.20251302, DOI:10.25215/1302.170