

Research Paper

Roots and Relationships: A Qualitative Comparative Analysis of Interpersonal Attachment in Adopted and Biological Young Adults

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ABSTRACT

Adoption remains a societal taboo in India, with relatively few adoptions taking place, and even fewer openly discussed. This stigma can lead to internal struggles for adoptees as they grow, often impacting their interpersonal attachment and overall well-being. The study aimed to explore the differences and challenges in attachment patterns between adopted young adults and their biological counterparts, with a focus on understanding the unique vulnerabilities of adoptees and their implications for well-being. A qualitative approach was employed, beginning with the development of interview questions rated for relevance and validity by five expert researchers. Semi-structured interviews were then conducted with three adopted young adults and three biological young adults. The interview data underwent open coding to identify key concepts, followed by thematic analysis guided by the research objectives. This process helped uncover the main themes and subthemes related to interpersonal attachment in both groups. The findings revealed that while the overall patterns of interpersonal attachment were mostly similar across the two groups, adoptees exhibited distinct vulnerabilities. Two key differences emerged: (1) Fear of Abandonment, where adoptees showed a pronounced tendency to anticipate abandonment, often stemming from their early life experiences; and (2) Fear of Rejection, where adoptees reported greater feelings of neglect and heightened concern about how others perceived them. These factors highlighted a greater emotional sensitivity and vulnerability in adoptees compared to their biological peers. The study concluded that adopted young adults experience subtle yet significant differences in attachment, particularly related to fear of abandonment and rejection. These findings highlight the need for targeted support to enhance their emotional well-being and foster resilience, emphasizing the importance of addressing their unique attachment-related challenges.

Keywords: *Adoption, Interpersonal Attachment, Relationships, Childhood, Interview, Thematic Analysis*

The formation of interpersonal attachment patterns is a crucial aspect of human development, influencing relationships throughout one's life. The foundational basis of interpersonal attachment begins from childhood. Childhood experiences shape an

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individual's attachment patterns, influenced by the relationship of the child with his/her primary caregiver. This has a lasting impact on an individual's ability to form and maintain healthy relationships, and the attachment pattern usually gets carried into adulthood as well. For a child without a biological family, who has to grow up with a foster or adoptive family, this foundation may become unsteady or shaken up due to the knowledge of abandonment or loss at birth, creating confusion regarding their own identity and eventually, complexities in forming interpersonal relationships, especially during teenage and young adulthood. Adopted individuals' unique experiences, including adjusting to a new family environment and navigating emotions related to their adoption, can shape their interpersonal attachment patterns.

An important point to notice is that adoption remains a sensitive topic in the Indian society, often being stigmatized and lacking open discussion. This can impact adoptive families, potentially influencing the attachment patterns formed by adopted children. While the Indian constitution has its laws and regulations in terms of adoption, such as the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956 (HAMA) and the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015, the Indian society is still evolving beyond conservative patterns and societal judgement poses a threat to several controversial topics even today. According to data from the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA), the percentage of children getting adopted in India every year is very small. Alongside the small number of adoptions, another major difficulty faced is the resistance that is shown when it comes to discussing adoption, by both the adoptive families and the adopted individuals, due to their personal respectable reasons.

This particular research study explores the interpersonal attachment patterns of young adults adopted as children, comparing them to those raised by biological parents. By examining these attachment patterns, this research aims to deepen understanding of the factors influencing attachment development in adoptive families. The study's insights would be used to establish support systems and interventions for adoptive individuals facing internal and external conflicts, promoting healthy attachment patterns and positive relationships in them, and guiding the adoptive families on the right path to support those individuals.

Objective of the present study:

To qualitatively explore and draw a comparison of Interpersonal Attachment patterns in Young Adults who were Adopted as children and Young Adults who are Biological Children.

METHODOLOGY

Sample:

At first, Indian young adults within the age range of 18 to 25 (Mean age = 21.6) who were adopted as children were selected via purposive sampling. Then, Indian young adults within the same age range (Mean age = 20.3) who are biological children were selected via purposive sampling. The exclusion criteria for both groups were as follows: individuals with severe mental or physical disorders, those taking regular medications, and individuals who did not fall within the age group of 18 to 25 years.

Instruments:

One instrument was used to facilitate this study.

- **Revised Adult Attachment Scale (Collins, 1996):** This scale was developed by Collins in 1996 with 18 total items to test and find out the attachment style of the

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participants. This scale has three subscales, each consisting of six elements. The three subscales are: ANXIETY, DEPEND, and CLOSE. With item numbers 1, 6, 8, (reversed), 12, 13, and 17 (reversed), the CLOSE subscale assesses an individual's comfort level with intimacy and closeness. Item numbers 2 (reversed), 5, 7, 14, 16, and 18 (reversed) on the DEPEND subscale measure how much a person believes they can count on others to be there for them when they need them. Item numbers 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, and 15 on the ANXIETY subscale measure a person's level of anxiety about rejection or lack of affection. A 5-point Likert scale, with 1 denoting "Not at all characteristic of me" and 5 denoting "Very characteristic of me," was used to ask the respondents to rate each item.

Procedure:

The researcher conducted in-depth and semi-structured interviews from June to August 2024 to explore and investigate the interpersonal attachment styles of each participant through learning about their experiences, opinions, thoughts and feelings. By employing qualitative methods, the researcher aimed to gain in-depth knowledge while also understanding and exploring individual experiences and mindsets.

At first, consent was taken from each participant. After having the subjects fill out a questionnaire on Google form, that used Collins Adult Attachment Scale – Revised to get an idea of the participants' estimated attachment style, a date and time were fixed with each of them for an interview, according to the convenience of the participants. Due to the inability of a few subjects to be able to meet in person for the interviews, the interviews were taken over Google meet, with the videos on for each subject in order to avoid confusion and inconsistency in the procedure, and to establish a rapport. The subjects were asked to elaborate and explain each of their answers in the questionnaire, with a few open-ended questions arising in the flow of the interview.

The data was analysed using Thematic Analysis as outlined by Braune and Clarke (2006), which allowed the researcher to find out themes and sub-themes under the research variables. The researched identified several themes, which were then thoroughly elaborated on and discussed. Following data collection, the researcher engaged in active reading and critical analysis, coding the data to highlight significant differences and similarities in responses relevant to the research. Eventually, all research objectives, themes and sub-themes were compiled in a table for better clarity. The final presentation of the themes included data extracts from participants, which were analysed and summarized in details to align with the context of each theme.

RESULTS

Table 1: Contains the Research Objectives, Themes and Sub-themes for Biological Young Adults.

Research Objective	Theme	Sub-theme
Interpersonal attachment	Comfortable with closeness and vulnerability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Setting clear boundaries regarding closeness.• Providing support with a hint of caution.• Evolution of relationships in deciding the degree of emotional closeness.

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	Feels he/she can depend on others to be available when needed and trust them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoying being in control of situations. • Optimism about close people being available in times of need. • Emphasis on the lack of trustworthy people.
	Worried about being abandoned/unloved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only care about losing a select few close people. • Rational outlook on abandonment. • Do not worry about their romantic partners 'hating' them.
	Worried about reciprocation/rejection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not too worried about rejection or reciprocation. • Cautious about showing their feelings for others until they are sure of how the other person feels. • Not worried about how others might think about them or fear being a burden to those who don't consider them important.

Table 2: Contains the Research Objectives, Themes and Sub-themes for Adopted Young Adults.

Research Objective	Theme	Sub-theme
Interpersonal attachment	Comfortable with closeness and vulnerability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy talking to people voluntarily and can befriend others easily. • Enjoy closeness but avoid expressing it to not come off as needy. • Concerned about being hurt by others after extreme closeness.
	Feels he/she can depend on others to be available when needed and trust them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not express their wants too often and are cautious about showing vulnerability. • Take time building trust due to past experiences of being hurt. • Past experiences of people not being there for them in moments of need.
	Worried about being abandoned/unloved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentally prepared for the possibility of losing people in their lives. • Struggle with feelings of being undeserving of love. • Strong fear of abandonment.
	Worried about reciprocation/rejection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel neglected or ignored at times and notice a lack of reciprocation. • Uncertainty regarding who reciprocates their feelings sincerely. • Difficulty communicating feelings due to fear of rejection caused by past experiences.

DISCUSSION

Through the implementation of Thematic Analysis, the researcher was able to gain a deeper understanding of the research subject, enabling them to draw insightful conclusions that can be applied in relevant fields, while understanding the distinctive views on attachment of each participant.

Research Objective 1: Interpersonal attachment in Biological Young Adults

Interpersonal attachment is a complex, dynamic bond that forms between individuals, where one person becomes emotionally significant to another. It involves feelings of affection, trust, and a need for proximity and security. At its core, attachment is about emotional dependency; relying on the other person for comfort, understanding, and validation. This bond typically starts in early childhood with primary caregivers and is essential for healthy psychological and emotional development. As individuals grow older, these attachment patterns influence how they form relationships with friends, romantic partners, and even colleagues.

Under this research objective, four main themes emerged from the interviews of the biological young adults. 1. Comfortable with closeness and vulnerability, 2. Feels he/she can depend on others to be available when needed and trust them, 3. Worried about being abandoned/unloved, 4. Worried about reciprocation/rejection.

Theme 1.1: Comfortable with closeness and vulnerability

A major point that this research delved into was the comfort that biological young adults felt with closeness and vulnerability while creating interpersonal connections with others, be it platonic or romantic. While the early childhood factor does play a role in developing attachment styles, and the 'biological parents' basis does exist for this group, it is not always definite that young adults who grew up with biological parents will have a secure attachment style. This may be due to different parenting styles, the co-existence of siblings and other peer experiences as well. For instance, amidst the information gathered through interviews, a 19-year-old biological young adult said: "Due to the presence of my older sibling, my parents sometimes neglected me. I never blamed them for that, but I sometimes felt a little unimportant." Although these experiences are highly individualistic, there were a few common patterns observed in all their responses.

Under this particular theme, three sub-themes emerged: 1. Setting clear boundaries regarding closeness, 2. Providing support with a hint of caution, 3. Evolution of relationships in deciding the degree of emotional closeness.

1.1.1 Setting clear boundaries regarding closeness

Most biological young adults tend to set clear boundaries when getting close with people. A common pattern was that, they had no issues getting close with friends or family, but they get extremely on-guard with strangers.

1.1.2 Providing support with a hint of caution

They enjoy providing encouragement and support to people they are close with but with a slight hint of caution. Some of them have had experiences in the past with peers and romantic partners where they had felt their vulnerability get exploited. Thus, they tend to be a little cautious regarding such experiences.

1.1.3 Evolution of relationships in deciding the degree of emotional closeness

A lot of importance is given to the role of the evolution of friendships and relationships in terms of determining the level of emotional closeness. They mostly choose to be vulnerable with a few chosen ones, emphasizing the importance of mutual comfort.

Theme 1.2: Feels he/she can depend on others to be available when needed and trust them

Another factor that was investigated was the dependence of these individuals on other people to be there for them and how much they can trust them. This theme was a dive into understanding whether a secure family environment makes young adults more prone to depending on other people or trusting them in times of need.

Under this particular theme, three sub-themes emerged: 1. Enjoying being in control of situations, 2. Optimism about close people being available in times of need, 3. Emphasis on the lack of trustworthy people.

1.2.1 Enjoying being in control of situations

Most biological young adults expressed a tendency to enjoy being in control of most situations, with other people being the ones relying on them instead. This seemed to be due to the occurrence of predictable and sequential events in their childhood, which leads them to still enjoy a similar pattern of situations, which is achieved through them establishing control in most situations. Additionally, they want their immediate family and romantic partners to be dependent on them, so that they can take care of these people.

1.2.2 Optimism about close people being available in times of need

Due to the presence of their biological parents mostly being around for them, this group does not have a fear of others being unavailable for them. They are of the belief that people close to them will be available in times of need and vice versa.

1.2.3 Emphasis on the lack of trustworthy people

One thing that was emphasized on by each of the participants of this group was the lack of trustworthy people, thus causing them to exercise caution in terms of trusting others. However, the degree of closeness is taken into consideration while trusting others. They tend to rely on those who are close and have proved themselves over time. A 21-year-old says: "There are very few trustable people in this world. Everyone's just looking out for their best interests so to trust them would require a lot of... tests."

Theme 1.3: Worried about being abandoned/unloved

This theme, within this research, aimed at investigating whether young adults brought up by their biological families deal with abandonment issues and the fear of being unloved, owing to their childhood parenting experiences. While both these fears/issues are fairly common, regardless of the biological and adoptive basis, the aim of this theme was to examine the same with regard to the family experiences this group had that later shaped their minds as adults.

Under this particular theme, three subthemes emerged: 1. Only care about losing a select few close people, 2. Rational outlook on abandonment, 3. Do not worry about their romantic partners hating them.

1.3.1 Only care about losing a select few close people

The participants in this group did not express severe anxiety about being abandoned but rather reserved their concerns for the potential loss of a small, select group of close individuals. While they generally felt secure in their broader social networks, they indicated that the thought of losing specific, important people (such as close family members, romantic partners or lifelong friends) was a significant source of distress. In line with attachment theory, this finding suggests that while participants may not experience a generalized fear of abandonment, their attachment anxiety is concentrated on a few intimate bonds, emphasizing on the value they place on close connections, rather than general ones.

1.3.2 Rational outlook on abandonment

Despite the underlying emotional significance they attached to certain close relationships, many participants expressed a pragmatic view regarding the abandonment. They seemed to recognize that relationships, including close ones, can evolve or change over time, and they were able to conceptualize these changes without excessive emotional distress. Their attitude regarding abandonment was mostly of the “we shall cross that bridge when we come to it” sort.

1.3.3 Do not worry about their romantic partners ‘hating’ them

Participants also reported not being overly concerned about their romantic partners “hating” them, indicating a level of confidence and emotional security in these relationships. While they value emotional connection, they generally do not experience intense fear of rejection or disdain from their partners, suggesting a more stable and secure approach to romantic attachment.

Theme 1.4: Worried about reciprocation/rejection

Through this theme, the researcher aimed to find out whether biological young adults have a tendency to worry about feeling rejected or not receiving the same amount of reciprocation from their romantic partners/other relationships.

Under this particular theme, three subthemes emerged: 1. Not too worried about rejection or reciprocation, 2. Cautious about showing their feelings for others until they are sure of how the other person feels, 3. Not worried about how others might think about them.

1.4.1 Not too worried about reciprocation or rejection

Most of the biological young adults who participated in this research showed a lack of extreme anxiety in terms of being rejected or not receiving enough reciprocation. While some of them might have indeed been rejected in the past, those experiences do not shape their attachment style into being too anxious, due to their belief that someone else will surely accept them.

1.4.2 Cautious about showing their feelings for others until they are sure of how the other person feels

Despite not being overly anxious, they are however cautious about being vulnerable without having the reassurance that their feelings are mutually reciprocated by the people they are pouring their hearts out to. Thus, they do not show too many feelings until and unless they are completely sure about how the other person feels about them.

1.4.3 Not worried about how others might think about them

A few of these participants have also showed the tendency to not care about how other people, with little to no relevance in their lives, think about them. Most of them only worry about their few close loved ones and their opinions and feelings.

Research Objective 2: Interpersonal attachment in Adopted Young Adults

As discussed in Research Objective 1, the concept of interpersonal attachment begins fostering during early childhood, with primary caregivers playing a significant role. For young adults who were adopted as children, their interpersonal attachment can be significantly influenced by their early experiences, including the nature of their adoption and the quality of the attachment bonds formed in childhood. Adoption can introduce a layer of complexity into attachment dynamics, especially if the child experienced early disruptions in caregiving or was separated from biological parents.

Adopted young adults may also experience a unique set of emotional challenges due to feelings of abandonment, identity confusion, or a desire to understand their biological roots. However, many adopted individuals go on to develop strong interpersonal attachments, especially if they get supportive environments in their foster homes and understanding relationships that help address and work through their attachment-related issues.

Under this research objective, four main themes emerged from the interviews of the young adults. 1. Comfortable with closeness and vulnerability, 2. Feels he/she can depend on others to be available when needed and trust them, 3. Worried about being abandoned/unloved, 4. Worried about reciprocation/rejection.

Theme 2.1 Comfortable with closeness and vulnerability

Due to the aspect of not having a biological family, and due to the possible unpredictable environment faced by adopted young adults in their foster homes, there is a chance that these individuals may wish to ‘find a home’ in the people they develop interpersonal relationships with. This theme attempts to investigate that possibility.

Under this particular theme, three subthemes emerged: 1. Enjoy talking to people voluntarily and can befriend others easily, 2. Enjoy closeness but avoid expressing it to not come off as needy, 3. Concerned about being hurt by others after extreme closeness.

2.1.1 Enjoy talking to people voluntarily and can befriend others easily

Most individuals of this group had a liking for forming close friendships with others, by taking initiative themselves. Most of them mentioned being quick to make friends in any environment. A common pattern noticed by the researcher was the fact that all individuals under this group had a very friendly, but somewhat restless way of talking. These common, recurring patterns emphasized on the researcher’s point of them wanting to ‘find a home’ somewhere in their close friends/partners.

2.1.2 Enjoy closeness but avoid expressing it to not come off as needy

Most individuals of this group expressed content and enjoyment with being close to other people. However, they do not express it too often so as to not come off as needy or attention-seeking. This hinted towards an unconscious fear of abandonment in them, if they end up being too needy or vulnerable.

2.1.3 Concerned about being hurt by others after extreme closeness

While these individuals may feel comfortable being vulnerable and open with others, they often have a deep fear of getting hurt once they allow themselves to be truly close. This subtheme raises the question of how early experiences, such as being separated from birth families, influenced their trust in others and their hesitation to fully embrace emotional intimacy.

Theme 2.2 Feels he/she can depend on others to be available when needed and trust them

This theme looks at how young adults who were adopted as children might feel unsure about relying on others when it counts. While they may long for support and connection, there's a silent doubt on whether they can fully trust others to be there during tough times. Given their early life challenges, trusting people might feel complicated, leading to questions about whether others will really be there when they need them most

Under this particular theme, three subthemes emerged: 1. Do not express their wants too often and are cautious about showing vulnerability, 2. Take time building trust due to past experiences of being hurt, 3. Past experiences of people not being there for them in moments of need.

2.2.1 Do not express their wants too often and are cautious about showing vulnerability

Due to unstable conditions early on in their lives, they may be fearful of being ignored/abandoned after showing vulnerability. As a result, they choose to keep their wants to themselves. This tendency to hold back affects how they interact in relationships, making them less likely to ask for support or sharing their true feelings, even when they may need it most.

2.2.2 Take time building trust due to past experiences of being hurt

A pattern observed with this subtheme was that the individuals of this group had past experiences where they were hurt, either being left out by friends or getting cheated on by partners, causing more turbulence in their relationships and making them more fearful of building trust right away, especially due to similar patterns in their childhood. Thus, they may be a little slow and careful with trusting new people completely.

2.2.3 Past experiences of people not being there for them in moments of need

A few of these individuals have had experiences in the past where their family, friends and partners have not been there for them in times of need. They have felt that they do not receive back what they give to others. A 22-year-old said: "When I need people to be there for me, I only find them to be there about 40 percent of the time. Otherwise, they aren't there." Whether this occurrence is indeed a common pattern, or a perceived pattern due to early life experiences, serves to remain the main point of exploration here.

Theme 2.3 Worried about being abandoned/unloved

This theme examines the concerns that young adults who were adopted as children might have about being abandoned or unloved. These individuals may carry doubts about their place in others' lives, unsure if their relationships are secure or if they truly belong. The fear of being left behind or forgotten could be a deep-rooted anxiety, stemming from early experiences of loss or separation.

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Under this particular theme, three subthemes emerged: 1. Mentally prepared for the possibility of losing people in their lives, 2. Struggle with feelings of being undeserving of love, 3. Strong fear of abandonment.

2.3.1 Mentally prepared for the possibility of losing people in their lives

Some young adults who were adopted may carry a constant sense of being prepared for loss, shaped by their early experiences of separation. These individuals might have developed an awareness that people in their lives could leave, either emotionally or physically. This may act as a coping mechanism which can lead to some emotional distance, as they brace for what feels like an inevitable outcome. This observation aligns with another study that highlighted how early adversities have long-lasting effects on adoptees' attachment patterns. (Raby, K. L., & Dozier, M., 2019).

2.3.2 Struggle with feelings of being undeserving of love

The pain of early abandonment or separation and the knowledge of living with foster families, may lead to an internal belief that they don't deserve the care or attention they seek from others. These feelings can prevent them from fully embracing love or support, as they may subconsciously feel that such affection is out of reach for them. Some of them may even struggle with feelings of "not being enough", be it physically or emotionally.

2.3.3 Strong fear of abandonment

The possibility of being left behind, either by friends, partners, or family, can trigger intense anxiety. This fear is often rooted in past experiences of loss, making it difficult to trust that relationships will remain stable and secure. However, there is a strong desire for love and attention that opposes this fear, making things worse. A 20-year-old Adoptee said: "Since childhood, I didn't receive any amount of love. I grew up all alone, did not have a mom or dad. So, a part of me always craves for love and attention in this regard." As a result, they may find themselves overly cautious or hesitant in forming deep emotional bonds, always worried that those they care about might walk away, reinforcing a cycle of emotional distance and hesitation.

Theme 2.4 Worried about reciprocation/rejection

Some young adults who were adopted may find themselves unsure about whether their feelings will be returned or if they'll face rejection in their relationships. Because of their early experiences with uncertainty and loss, they may worry about not getting back the same care or attention they give to others. This can make them hesitant to open up or invest too much emotionally, as they fear their efforts might not be reciprocated.

Under this particular theme, three subthemes emerged: 1. Feel neglected or ignored at times and notice a lack of reciprocation, 2. Uncertainty regarding who reciprocates their feelings sincerely, 3. Difficulty communicating feelings due to fear of rejection caused by past experiences.

2.4.1 Feel neglected or ignored at times and notice a lack of reciprocation

Most individuals of this group have expressed a feeling of being neglected by close people and have noticed a lack of reciprocation. A 22-year-old mentioned receiving "only about 70 percent" of the effort from his romantic partner, further mentioning feelings of neglect and forced interactions. This ignorance, neglect and lack of reciprocation may cause their 'walls' to feel shaky, due to similarities with feeling neglected early on in their lives.

2.4.2 Uncertainty regarding who reciprocates their feelings sincerely

For some young adults who were adopted, it can be hard to tell who truly feels the same way they do. They might wonder if the love or support they get from others is real or just given out of obligation. There is also some doubt regarding who may be ‘plotting’ against them. This uncertainty and suspicion can make it difficult for them to trust people completely, leaving them unsure of who they can count on for genuine, heartfelt connections.

2.4.3 Difficulty communicating feelings due to fear of rejection caused by past experiences

As explored in an earlier subtheme too, they have difficulty communicating their feelings or cannot be completely vulnerable due to the fear of rejection that early life abandonment and separation may have caused for them. A 20-year-old Adoptee said: “I really, I think I get attached to people very easily, because whenever they are kind to me or whenever they are good to me, I get feelings or I get attached to them and I feel bad about it because I know they will not feel the same way and I feel bad about it, and I feel super bad about it, so I don't like to communicate my feelings most of the time.” This aligns with past studies that found that recent relationship issues in adoptees tends to cause insecurities in them (Feeney, J. A., Passmore, N. L., & Peterson, C. C., 2007).

The final summary shows that the basic difference between Adopted and Biological Young Adults lies in their perception of abandonment and reciprocation. While the participants of the Biological group approach both phenomena as natural occurrences that are brought about by time and circumstance, considering them to be “bridges that shall be crossed when they get to it”, the members of the Adopted group showed a stark fear and anxiety towards both, having stemmed from the loss and hurt faced by them during their childhood. This aligns with another study that found that adoptees reported lower levels of attachment security, lower relationship satisfaction, and lower overall well-being compared to their biological counterparts. (Vaccarino, V. L., 2024).

Some other major differences were:

- Young adults who were adopted as children have a **significantly higher presence of anxiety** in their interpersonal relationships as compared to young adults who are biological children.
- Young adults who were adopted also show a **lower inclination towards dependence**, preferring mostly to be self-dependent, with a common tendency to “stay mentally prepared for sudden loss at any moment”.
- It was also noted that while the desire to be close with other people is a common trait in most humans due to our social nature, most adopted young adults showed a **tendency to want to get closer with new people** more often than the biological young adults.
- The Adopted Young Adult group also showed conflict between their desire for closeness with others, and their hesitation with self-expression and trusting others.

However, both groups shared similar concerns about the lack of trustworthy people and a reluctance to depend on others, likely due to the competitive atmosphere in young adulthood. Both groups also preferred to not depend on anyone else too much. This aligns with former studies that found no significant behavioural differences between adoptees and their biological counterparts (Escobar, M. J., Pereira, X., & Santelices, M. P., 2014).

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Overall, the findings of this research pointed towards the general difference in interpersonal attachment pattern of both groups, with the adopted young adults having a severely anxious pattern of attachment. This highlights the importance of therapeutic intervention with positive psychology techniques, social support, guidance and understanding.

CONCLUSION

This research managed to successfully reveal the key challenges faced by adopted young adults in terms of interpersonal attachment, as compared to biological young adults. Adopted young adults experience more anxiety in relationships, prefer self-reliance, and tend to desire closer connections with others.

The overall findings suggest a potential need for therapeutic guidance, including positive psychological techniques and social support, to address the attachment issues seen in adopted young adults to improve their overall emotional and mental well-being.

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Conflict of Interest

I hereby declare that there were no conflicts of interest in carrying out this research.

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