

Research Paper

A Correlational Study on Attachment Styles and Emotional Intelligence Amongst Young Adults

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ABSTRACT

The current study examines the correlation between attachment styles and emotional intelligence in young adults. A sample of 112 young adults (18 -25) from Pune city was used for the study. Participants completed the The Attachment Style Questionnaire – Short Form (ASQ-SF) and The Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS). The data was analyzed using SPSS descriptive statistics and Spearman's rho correlations were used. The findings revealed that insecure attachment styles particularly avoidant and anxious were negatively correlated with higher levels of emotional intelligence factors- self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, emotional stability, managing relations, integrity, self-development, value orientation, commitment, and altruistic behavior.

Keywords: *Attachment Styles, Emotional Intelligence, Young Adults*

An individual's patterns are shaped by their early bonds and attachments and these patterns influences how they navigate through interpersonal relationships, hence understanding attachment styles is important.

Attachment theory suggests that early relational patterns create internal working models and mental templates about oneself and others that continue to influence emotional functioning in later life. Individuals with anxious or avoidant attachment styles often show challenges such as fear of abandonment, hyperactivation of emotions, emotional suppression, or distancing. Early relational experiences also shape how individuals perceive, understand, regulate, and use emotions in themselves and others. Attachment styles originated from attachment theory by John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth in the 1950s and 60s. Attachment style is defined as the characteristic way people relate to others in the context of intimate relationships, which is heavily influenced by self-worth and interpersonal trust. (*APA Dictionary of Psychology*, n.d.)

Emotional intelligence is defined as “the ability to monitor one's own and other people's emotions, to discriminate between different emotions and label them appropriately, and to use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior” (Salovey & Mayer, 1990) Emotional intelligence can act as a catalyst or mediator of attachment. Children who have

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had consistent and responsive caregivers tend to form secure attachments which provides a foundation for higher emotional intelligence. Whereas children with inconsistent and intense caregivers tend to have sensitive emotional cues but seem to be poorly equipped appropriate coping resources and children with neglectful and emotionally distant caregivers seem to struggle to recognize subtle feelings or read between the lines.

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between attachment styles and emotional intelligence among young adults. The research can also guide psychoeducation modules and help young adults recognize how their relational histories influence their emotional reactions. By identifying patterns in their relationships, this research aims to contribute to the development of effective support programs for students experiencing lower emotional intelligence.

Rationale and Significance

Identifying specific attachment patterns associated with particular components of emotional intelligence can help counsellors, educators, and mental-health practitioners design targeted interventions. This research aims to explore this connection of how attachment styles and emotional intelligence interact in young adults.

Along with these, this research will also contribute in educational settings. The findings of this study will guide professionals to organize and develop various training programs and workshops that focus on building secure attachment styles and foster emotional intelligence.

Statement of problem

To study the relationship among Attachment Styles and Emotional Intelligence amongst young adults.

Objectives:

1. To identify the different types of attachment styles prevalent among young adults.
2. To assess the levels of emotional intelligence among young adults.
3. To determine the relationship between attachment styles and emotional intelligence of the participants.

Hypotheses

- **H1=** There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and self-awareness.
- **H2=** There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and empathy.
- **H3=** There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and self-motivation.
- **H4=** There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and managing relations.
- **H5=** There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and emotional stability.
- **H6=** There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and integrity.
- **H7=** There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and self-development.

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- **H8=** There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and value orientation.
- **H9=** There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and commitment.
- **H10=** There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and altruistic behavior.
- **H11=** There will be a negative relationship between anxious attachment style and self-awareness.
- **H12=** There will be a positive relationship between anxious attachment style and empathy.
- **H13=** There will be a negative relationship between anxious attachment style and self-motivation.
- **H14=** There will be a negative relationship between anxious attachment style and managing relations.
- **H15=** There will be a negative relationship between anxious attachment style and emotional stability.
- **H16=** There will be a negative relationship between anxious attachment style and integrity.
- **H17=** There will be a negative relationship between anxious attachment style and self-development.
- **H18=** There will be a negative relationship between anxious attachment style and value orientation.
- **H19=** There will be a positive relationship between anxious attachment style and commitment.
- **H20=** There will be a positive relationship between anxious attachment style and altruistic behavior.

Sample

The sample of 112 has been selected. The sample was selected by following Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion Criteria:

- Individuals aged 18–25 years
- Male and Female
- Currently Studying (UG, PG)

Exclusion Criteria:

- Students working part time/full time.
- Not studying
- Disabled Individuals
- Individuals unable to read or comprehend the language of the questionnaire (e.g., English)

Research Design

Correlational Research Design is used to investigate the relationship between attachment styles and emotional intelligence in young adults.

Variables under the study

- Predictor variable: Attachment Styles

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- Criterion variable: Emotional Intelligence

Tools Used

- **Attachment Style Questionnaire – Short Form (ASQ-SF):** The Attachment Style Questionnaire – Short Form (ASQ-SF) is a 29-item self-report measure developed by Alexander, R., Feeney, J., Hohaus, L., & Noller, P. (2001). It is widely used to assess adult attachment patterns in both non-clinical and mental health contexts. It consists of two main attachment styles, Avoidant Attachment and Anxious Attachment alongside subscales. The scoring system is based on a combination of direct subscale scores and adjustments using the Confidence subscale items to provide a more nuanced measure of attachment security. The subscales include Discomfort with Closeness, Relationships as Secondary, Preoccupation with Relationships, Need for Approval and Confidence in Interpersonal Interactions. The scale demonstrates internal consistency coefficients ($\alpha = 0.70\text{--}0.85$) while the test–retest reliability values ($r = 0.70\text{--}0.85$). Additionally, the construct validity findings, including factor loadings ranging from 0.40–0.75 and variance explained between 45%–60%, suggest that the scale effectively measures the theoretical concept it was designed to assess.
- **The Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS):** The Emotional Intelligence Scale, developed by Hyde, A., Pethe, S., & Dhar, U. (2002), is a widely used tool designed to assess various facets of emotional intelligence. The scale comprises 34 statements, each rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree.' These statements evaluate ten components of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, emotional stability, managing relations, integrity, self-development, value orientation, commitment, and altruistic behavior. The scale demonstrates internal consistency coefficients ($\alpha = 0.88\text{--}0.93$) while the test–retest reliability ($r = 0.89$). Furthermore, the construct validity results, with factor loadings ranging from 0.40–0.72 and variance explained between 50%–65%, indicate that the scale adequately measures the theoretical concept it was designed to assess.

Procedure

The data for this research was collected using a quantitative survey and a qualitative questionnaire from individuals aged 18-25. A questionnaire was used for numeric data, while a qualitative questionnaire was developed for demographic details. Participants were given an informed consent form stating the purpose of the study, their rights to withdraw at any time from the study, and terms of confidentiality.

Statistical Analysis

The data analysis was performed using SPSS version 30. Descriptive statistics were used for each variable to provide an overview of the attachment styles and emotional intelligence scores. Measures of central tendency (mean, median and mode) and variability (standard deviation, range) were reported.

To access the relationship between attachment styles and emotional intelligence, Spearman's rank order correlation was used as the data was not normal. Spearman's rho values were calculated to determine the strength and direction of correlations between each pair of variables.

RESULTS

Table 1 showing descriptive statistics of Attachment Styles (Anxious and Avoidant) and Emotional Intelligence (self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, emotional stability)

Measures	Avoidant Attachment	Anxious Attachment	Self Awareness	Empathy	Self-Motivation	Emotional Stability
N= 112						
Missing=0						
Mean	38.16	24.31	13.54	16.79	19.83	13.40
Standard deviation	9.555	8.510	4.157	4.846	4.659	3.507
Skewness	-.182	.112	-.291	-.692	-.248	-.581
Standard error of Skewness	.228	.228	.228	.228	.228	.228
Kurtosis	.024	-.362	-.088	-.532	-.711	-.170
Standard error of Kurtosis	.453	.453	.453	.453	.453	.453
Shapiro-Wilk	.994	.991	.964	.926	.974	.956
Shapiro-Wilk sig.	.887	.641	.004	<.001	.030	<.001

Table 2 showing descriptive statistics of Emotional Intelligence (managing relations, integrity, self-development, value orientation, commitment, and altruistic behavior)

Measures	Managing Relations	Integrity	Self Development	Value Orientation	Commitment	Altruistic Behaviour
N= 112						
Missing=0						
Mean	13.15	10.16	6.88	6.75	6.88	6.57
Standard deviation	3.228	3.033	2.405	2.260	2.190	1.981
Skewness	-.529	-.691	-.570	-.636	-.645	-.483
Standard error of Skewness	.228	.228	.228	.228	.228	.228
Kurtosis	-.405	-.492	-.797	-.497	-.494	-.575
Standard error of Kurtosis	.453	.453	.453	.453	.453	.453
Shapiro-Wilk	.955	.905	.912	.912	.907	.940
Shapiro-Wilk sig.	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001

It was observed from the table no.4.1 A and B, normality of the data has been calculated using the above table. The descriptive statistics for Attachment Styles (Anxious and Avoidant) and Emotional Intelligence (self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, emotional stability, managing relations, integrity, self-development, value orientation, commitment, and altruistic behavior) among 112 participants are presented in table 4.1. The mean scores indicate that participants reported high levels of avoidant attachment style (M=38.16, SD=9.555) and average levels of anxious attachment (M=24.31, SD=8.510) and high levels of

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self-awareness (M= 13.54, SD= 4.157), high levels of empathy (M= 16.79, SD= 4.846), high levels of self-motivation (M= 19.83, SD= 4.659), high levels of emotional stability (M= 13.40, SD= 3.507), high levels of Managing Relations (M= 13.15, SD= 3.228), high levels of integrity (M= 10.16, SD= 3.033), high levels of self-development (M= 6.88, SD= 2.405), high levels of value orientation (M= 6.75, SD= 2.260), high levels of commitment (M= 6.88, SD= 2.190) and high levels of altruistic behavior (M= 6.57, SD= 1.981).

The values of skewness and kurtosis suggests that the distribution is not normal for the above variables. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality indicates that all variables are not normally distributed, Thus, the data is considered appropriate for non-parametric statistical analyses. Hence, Spearman correlation is used to identify significant relationship between the variables:

Attachment Styles (Anxious and Avoidant) and Emotional Intelligence (self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, emotional stability, managing relations, integrity, self-development, value orientation, commitment, and altruistic behavior).

Table 3 Correlational Table of Attachment Styles and Factors of Emotional Intelligence

Factors	Avoidant Attachment Style	Anxious Attachment Style
Self-Awareness	-.255**	-.319***
Empathy	-.169	-.080
Self-Motivation	-.281**	-.302**
Emotional Stability	-.266**	-.252**
Managing Relations	-.282**	.191*
Integrity	-.308***	-.172
Self-Development	-.235*	-.172
Value Orientation	-.197*	-.187*
Commitment	-.171	-.247***
Altruistic Behaviour	-.197*	-.175

Table 4 Regression Table of Avoidant Attachment Styles and Factors of Emotional Intelligence

Outcome	R square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig.	Standardized coefficient Beta
self-awareness	.087	.079	10.456	<.001	-.295
Self-Motivation	.069	.060	8.138	<.001	-.262
managing relations	.082	.073	9.771	<.001	-.286
emotional stability	.065	.057	7.683	<.001	-.256
Integrity	.087	.079	10.533	<.001	-.296
self-development	.050	.041	5.753	<.001	-.223
Value Orientation	.035	.026	3.991	<.001	-.187
Altruistic Behaviour	.094	.086	11.384	<.001	-.306

Predictor: Avoidant Attachment Style

Table 5 Regression Table of Anxious Attachment Styles and Factors of Emotional Intelligence

Outcome	R square	Adjusted Square	R	F	Sig.	Standardized coefficient Beta
Self-awareness	.042	.034		4.853	<.001	-.206
Self-Motivation	.069	.060		8.137	<.001	-.262
Managing Relations	.016	.008		1.842	<.001	-.128
Emotional Stability	.031	.022		3.555	<.001	-.177
Value Orientation	.008	-.001		.862	<.001	-.088
Commitment	.038	.030		4.377	<.001	-.196

Predictor: Anxious Attachment Style

DISCUSSION

H1= There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and self-awareness among young adults.

The Spearman correlation table no. 3 shows that, the correlation coefficient between avoidant attachment style and self-awareness is $-.255$ which means $p .01$ and significant at both $.05$ and $.01$ level. Therefore, there is significant negative correlation between avoidant attachment style and self-awareness among young adults. Further regression was done between these two and we have found that Avoidant Attachment brings 7.9% change in self-awareness among young adults from table no. 4 these finding can be supported by the study done by de With et al. (2023) found that avoidant attachment was positively associated (trend level) with disturbed self-awareness and depersonalization in samples including young adults, even after controlling for psychotic and depressive symptoms, suggesting avoidants struggle with a coherent sense of self. Hence, this hypothesis is accepted.

H2= There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and empathy.

The table no. 3 shows that, the correlation coefficient between avoidant attachment style and Empathy is $-.169$, however this correlation is not statistically significant as $p > .05$ Meta-analytic work by Wei et al., (2010; 2022–2023 meta-analyses) shows avoidant attachment accounts for only a small portion of empathy variance. Most participants reported experiencing emotions such as worry, anxiety, anger, and stress, and demonstrated predominantly self-focused coping strategies such as distraction, withdrawal, or self-calming which are indicative of insecure attachment tendencies and may reduce empathic orientation. Therefore, although a negative correlation is observed, the variability across PDS domains weakens the strength of the association, resulting in a statistically non-significant finding and leading to the rejection of the hypothesis. hence, the hypothesis was rejected.

H3= There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and self-motivation.

The table no.3 also shows that, the correlation coefficient between avoidant attachment style and self-motivation is $-.281$ which means $p < .01$ and significant at both $.05$ and $.01$ level. Therefore, there is significant negative correlation between avoidant attachment style and managing relations among young adults. Further regression was done between these two and

we have found that Avoidant Attachment brings 6 % change in self-awareness among young adults from table no. 4. These findings can be supported by study done by Milyavskaya et al. (2018) where it was found attachment avoidance moderated autonomy-supportive priming effects on intrinsic motivation and persistence, meaning where individuals with avoidant attachment showed weaker responses to supportive cues, implying lower self-motivation. Hence, this hypothesis is accepted.

H4= There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and managing relations.

The table no.3 also shows that, the correlation coefficient between avoidant attachment style and managing relations is $-.282$ which means $p < .01$ and significant at both $.05$ and $.01$ level. Therefore, there is significant negative correlation between avoidant attachment style and managing relations among young adults. Further regression was done between these two and we have found that Avoidant Attachment brings 7.3 % change in managing relations among young adults from table no. 4. These findings can be supported by study done by Breña et al. (2022) demonstrated that avoidant attachment predicts lower relationship satisfaction for both partners (actor and partner effects), fully mediated by withdrawal behaviors during conflict rather than aggression. This suggests individuals with avoidant attachment struggle with relational demands, as their deactivation strategies, prioritizing independence over intimacy which blocks effective collaboration, problem-solving, and relationship maintenance in young adults. Hence, this hypothesis is accepted.

H5= There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and emotional stability.

The table no. 3 also shows that, the correlation coefficient between avoidant attachment style and emotional stability is $-.266$ which means $p < .01$ and significant at both $.05$ and $.01$ level. Therefore, there is significant negative correlation between avoidant attachment style and emotional stability among young adults. Further regression was done between these two and we have found that Avoidant Attachment brings 5.7 % change in emotional stability among young adults from table no. 4. These findings can be supported by study done by Bower et al. (2015) found that avoidant attachment was linked to lower positive affect and higher affect instability in daily life among young adults, indicating reduced emotional stability. This suggests individuals with avoidant attachment experience lesser emotional stability. Hence, this hypothesis is accepted.

H6= There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and integrity.

The table no. 3 also shows that, the correlation coefficient between avoidant attachment style and integrity is $-.308$ which means $p < .01$ and significant at both $.05$ and $.01$ level. Therefore, there is significant negative correlation between avoidant attachment style and integrity among young adults. Further regression was done between these two and we have found that Avoidant Attachment brings 7.9 % change in integrity among young adults from table no. 4. These findings can be supported by study done by Robinson et al. (2015) which found that avoidant attachment predicts utilitarian moral choices over deontological ones (rejecting harm regardless of outcomes), mediated by discomfort with caregiving and lower empathy for individual victims. This preference for outcome-maximization over harm-aversion reflects reduced integrity, as avoidants prioritize self-reliance and emotional distance over consistent moral principles that protect vulnerable others. Hence, this hypothesis is accepted.

H7= There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and self-development.

The table no. 3 also shows that, the correlation coefficient between avoidant attachment style and self-development is $-.235$ which means $p < .05$ and significant at $.05$ and level. Therefore, there is significant negative correlation between avoidant attachment style and self-development among young adults. Further regression was done between these two and we have found that Avoidant Attachment brings 7.9% change in self-development among young adults from table no. 4. These findings can be supported by study done by Downing & Nauta (2010) which found Avoidant attachment linked to higher career indecision and lower exploration in college students, hindering identity and vocational self-development. Hence, this hypothesis is accepted.

H8= There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and value orientation.

The table no. 3 also shows that, the correlation coefficient between avoidant attachment style and value orientation is $-.197$ which means $p < .05$ and significant at $.05$ and level. Therefore, there is significant negative correlation between avoidant attachment style and value orientation among young adults. Further regression was done between these two and we have found that Avoidant Attachment brings 2.6% change in value orientation among young adults from table no. 4. These findings can be supported by study done by Wang et al. (2023) found that avoidant attachment was negatively associated with prosocial social value orientation, while secure attachment was positively linked to prosocial orientation, indicating that higher avoidant attachment corresponds with lower prosocial value orientation. Hence, this hypothesis is accepted.

H9= There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and commitment.

The table no. 3 also shows that, the correlation coefficient between avoidant attachment style and Commitment is $-.169$, however this correlation is not statistically significant as $p > .05$ Meta-analytic work by Wei et al., (2010; 2022–2023 meta-analyses) shows avoidant attachment accounts for only a small portion of empathy variance. Also, The responses to the Personal Data Sheet item assessing comfort in expressing opinions to parents show a lot of variation among participants, including both those who have less and more openness towards their parents. Though people with low openness in sharing views might have avoidant attachment, where people are expected to be less committed, many others reported average or high openness in expressing themselves, implying the existence of secure relationships with higher commitment. The inconsistency among the participants makes the relationship between avoidant attachment and commitment weaker. Although there is a negative correlation, because of the lack of consistency in Q17, there is no significant result. hence, the hypothesis was rejected.

H10= There will be a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and altruistic behavior.

The table no. 3 also shows that, the correlation coefficient between avoidant attachment style and altruistic behaviour is $-.197$ which means $p < .05$ and significant at $.05$ and level. Therefore, there is significant negative correlation between avoidant attachment style and altruistic behaviour among young adults. Further regression was done between these two and we have found that Avoidant Attachment brings 8.6% change in altruistic behavior among young adults from table no. 4.18. These findings can be supported by study done by Pan et al. (2022) found that avoidant attachment negatively predicted adolescents' altruistic

behavior, indicating that higher avoidant attachment is associated with lower altruistic behavior. Hence, this hypothesis is accepted.

H11= There will be a negative relationship between anxious attachment style and self-awareness.

The table no. 3 also shows that, the correlation coefficient between anxious attachment style and self-awareness is $-.319$ which means $p < .05$ and significant at both $.05$ and $.01$ level. therefore, there is significant negative correlation between anxious attachment style and self-awareness among young adults. Further regression was done between these two and we have found that Anxious Attachment brings 3.4 % change in self-awareness among young adults from table no 5. These findings can be supported by study done by de With, et al. (2023) in which they found that anxious attachment was positively associated with disturbed self-awareness and depersonalization, which implies that higher anxious attachment is linked to less coherent or more disturbed self-experience, consistent with a negative relationship between anxious attachment and healthy self-awareness. Hence, this hypothesis is accepted.

H12= There will be a negative relationship between anxious attachment style and empathy.

The table no. 3 also shows that, the correlation coefficient between anxious attachment style and empathy is $-.080$, however this correlation is not statistically significant as $p > .05$ This finding is further supported by a Meta-analysis study done by Xu et al. (2022) in which they found Empathy is positively correlated with secure attachment and negatively correlated with avoidant attachment, but the correlation with anxious attachment is small and non-significant overall.

Also, the responses from the personal data sheet provide limited support for a negative relationship between insecure attachment styles (avoidant and anxious) and empathy. Most participants reported experiencing emotions such as worry, anxiety, anger, and stress, demonstrated predominantly self-focused coping strategies such as distraction, withdrawal, or self-calming, which are indicative of insecure attachment tendencies and may reduce empathic orientation. Therefore, although a negative correlation is observed, the variability across PDS domains weakens the strength of the association, resulting in a statistically non-significant finding. hence, the hypothesis was rejected.

H13= There will be a negative relationship between anxious attachment style and self-motivation.

The table no. 3 also shows that, the correlation coefficient between anxious attachment style and self-motivation is $-.302$ which means $p < .05$ and significant at both $.05$ and $.01$ level. therefore, there is significant negative correlation between anxious attachment style and self-motivation among young adults. Further regression was done between these two and we have found that Anxious Attachment brings 6 % change in self- motivation among young adults from table no. 5. These findings can be supported by study done by Mikulincer & Shaver (2007), in their work on Attachment in Adulthood: Structure, Dynamics, and Change, they summarize how anxious attachment is associated with negative self-views, fear of rejection, and dependence on external validation, which tend to undermine autonomous, self-driven motivation and shift motivation toward approval-seeking rather than intrinsic goals. Hence, this hypothesis is accepted.

H14= There will be a negative relationship between anxious attachment style and managing relations.

The table no. 3 also shows that, the correlation coefficient between anxious attachment style and managing relations is $-.191$ which means $p < .05$ and significant at both $.05$ and $.01$ level. therefore, there is significant negative correlation between anxious attachment style and managing relations among young adults. Further regression was done between these two and we have found that Anxious Attachment brings 0.8% change in managing relations among young adults from table no. 5. These findings can be supported by study done by Mikulincer & Shaver (2007) show that individuals high in anxious attachment tend to use hyperactivating strategies (e.g., protest, jealousy, clinginess), which disrupt calm, constructive relationship management and increase conflict and emotional reactivity. Hence, this hypothesis is accepted.

H15= There will be a negative relationship between anxious attachment style and emotional stability.

The table no. 3 also shows that, the correlation coefficient between anxious attachment style and emotional stability is $-.252$ which means $p < .05$ and significant at both $.05$ and $.01$ level. therefore, there is significant negative correlation between anxious attachment style and emotional stability among young adults. Further regression was done between these two and we have found that Anxious Attachment brings 0.8% change in emotional stability among young adults from table no. 5. These findings can be supported by Meta-analytic work which further shows that attachment anxiety is associated with less frequent positive emotions and more chronic negative affect, consistent with lower emotional stability. Hence, this hypothesis is accepted.

H16= There will be a negative relationship between anxious attachment style and integrity.

The table no. 3 also shows that, the correlation coefficient between anxious attachment style and integrity is $-.172$, however this correlation is not statistically significant as $p > .05$ This finding is further supported by Shokri et al. (2021) which showed anxious (ambivalent) attachment style negatively predicts moral identity, mediated by lower empathy, indicating anxiously attached individuals prioritize relational security over internalized moral standards.

The responses to the Personal Data Sheet items assessing expression of opinions and decision-making processes reveal an inconsistent trend amongst the sample. Participants who reported feeling less comfortable expressing themselves displaying signs of anxious attachment, such as fear of judgment and wanting to be approved by others, which can result in inconsistency between thoughts and actions; thus, they may have lower levels of integrity. Participants who reported inconsistent levels of parental support for career choices also rely on external sources of validation when making decisions about their careers, indicative of an anxious attachment style, as well, which could negatively affect integrity. However, a high number of participants indicated moderate to high levels of comfort when expressing opinions and exhibited independent decision-making capabilities; thereby, exhibiting a high degree of self-concept and consistency of values. However, a high number of participants indicated moderate to high levels of comfort when expressing opinions and exhibited independent decision-making capabilities; thereby, exhibiting a high degree of self-concept and consistency of values.

Therefore, although a negative correlation is observed, the lack of a clear and consistent pattern across these relevant domains results in a statistically non-significant finding. Hence, the hypothesis is rejected.

H17= There will be a negative relationship between anxious attachment style and self-development.

The table no. 3 also shows that, the correlation coefficient between anxious attachment style and self-development is $-.172$, however this correlation is not statistically significant as $p > .05$. This finding is further supported by Mikulincer et al. (2009), in which they found that individuals with higher levels of anxiety in their attachment styles experience more negative feelings, experience more stress in their evaluations of situations, and feel more likely to be rejected socially compared to individuals with securely attached styles. This hyperactivation pattern characterized by emotional preoccupation and relational distress diverts cognitive resources from autonomous goal pursuit and intentional self-improvement, creating a weak inhibitory effect on self-development.

Responses from the Personal Data Sheet related to emotional experiences and how people make their decisions show that people in this sample demonstrate both an anxious attachment style, in that they reported feeling worried, anxious, and self-doubting, which can hinder one's ability to self-develop, while depending on external validation hence making it challenging for them to know what they want to develop towards and how to develop. Respondents also reported variability in the levels of support they received from their parents in making career-related decisions such that some respondents relied on their parents for guidance and support when they made decisions regarding how they wanted their careers to develop; whereas other respondents reported receiving positive parental support, which, in conjunction with the ability to make their own career-related decisions, created a unique opportunity for them to grow in ways that were self-directed. Considering this sample demonstrates some variability in these three variables, a negative correlation will exist, but the lack of a clear, uniform relationship across these three variables will also create a statistically non-significant finding; therefore, the hypothesis will be rejected.

H18= There will be a negative relationship between anxious attachment style and value orientation.

The table no. 3 also shows that, the correlation coefficient between anxious attachment style and value orientation is $-.187$ which means $p < .05$ and significant at $.05$ level. therefore, there is significant negative correlation between anxious attachment style and value orientation among young adults. Further regression was done between these two and we have found that Anxious Attachment brings -0.1% change in value orientation among young adults from table no. 5. These findings can be supported by Liu et al. (2023) further showed that secure attachment is positively linked to prosocial social value orientation, whereas insecure attachment is associated with more individualistic and competitive orientations. Because anxious attachment forms part of the insecure attachment spectrum, this pattern indicates that anxious attachment is negatively related to prosocial or communal value orientations. Hence, this hypothesis is accepted.

H19= There will be a negative relationship between anxious attachment style and commitment.

The table no. 3 also shows that, the correlation coefficient between anxious attachment style and commitment is $-.247$ which means $p < .05$ and significant at both $.05$ and $.01$ level. therefore, there is significant negative correlation between anxious attachment style and

commitment among young adults. Further regression was done between these two and we have found that Anxious Attachment brings 3 % change in commitment among young adults from table no. 5. These findings can be supported by a meta-analysis-style review on anxious attachment reports that anxious attachment predicts lower relationship satisfaction, trust, and commitment, even though anxious individuals highly value being appreciated and staying close. Hence, this hypothesis is accepted.

H20= There will be a negative relationship between anxious attachment style and altruistic behavior.

The table no. 3 also shows that, the correlation coefficient between anxious attachment style and altruistic behavior is $-.172$, however this correlation is not statistically significant as $p > .05$. This finding is further supported by an et al. (2022) demonstrated that attachment anxiety significantly increases personal distress ($\beta > 0$), which mediates reduced altruistic behaviors through emotional overwhelm, despite elevated empathic concern. Anxiously attached individuals thus exhibit lower donation rates, volunteering, and helping behaviors compared to secures, as self-focused anxiety overrides capacity for other-oriented altruism. The responses to the Personal Data Sheet items assessing emotional experiences and coping strategies show limited consistency or correlation within the participants due to the frequency with which unexpected responses are found in the sample; however, both emotional responses and coping strategies related to anxiety have the potential to lead to greater amounts of individual self-focused distress and decreased focus on others as well as the potential to lower prosocial behaviour and altruism through the greater amount of time spent focusing inward rather than engaging with other individuals. Hence the hypothesis was rejected.

CONCLUSION

1. There is a significant negative correlation between avoidant attachment style and self-awareness.
2. There is no significant correlation between avoidant attachment style and empathy.
3. There is a significant negative correlation between avoidant attachment style and self-motivation.
4. There is a significant negative correlation between avoidant attachment style and managing relations.
5. There is a significant negative correlation between avoidant attachment style and emotional stability.
6. There is a significant negative correlation between avoidant attachment style and integrity.
7. There is a significant negative correlation between avoidant attachment style and self-development.
8. There is a significant negative correlation between avoidant attachment style and value orientation.
9. There is no significant correlation between avoidant attachment style and commitment.
10. There is a significant negative correlation between avoidant attachment style and altruistic behavior.
11. There is a significant negative correlation between anxious attachment style and self-awareness.
12. There is no significant correlation between anxious attachment style and empathy.
13. There is a significant negative correlation between anxious attachment style and self-motivation.

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14. There is a significant negative correlation between anxious attachment style and managing relations.
15. There is a significant negative correlation between anxious attachment style and emotional stability.
16. There is no significant correlation between anxious attachment style and integrity.
17. There is no significant correlation between anxious attachment style and self-development.
18. There is a significant negative correlation between anxious attachment style and value orientation.
19. There is a significant negative correlation between anxious attachment style and commitment.
20. There is no significant correlation between anxious attachment style and altruistic behavior.

Limitations

- The data were collected using self-report tools, which may be affected by social desirability or inaccurate responses.
- Since the data were collected at one point in time, we cannot understand how these variables change over time.
- The study did not account for factors like personality, family background, or prior living away-from-home experience, which could influence results.
- The study focused only on college students from one city, which might not reflect students from different cultural or academic backgrounds.

Future Implications

- The study highlights the role of attachment styles in shaping emotional intelligence, suggesting the need for early identification of insecure attachment patterns. Awareness programs for parents and young adults can help promote healthier emotional development.
- The findings support the use of attachment-based interventions in counselling. Therapists can focus on improving emotional regulation, self-awareness, and interpersonal functioning by addressing underlying attachment issues.
- Educational institutions can incorporate emotional intelligence training, life skills programs, and workshops to enhance students' self-awareness, empathy, and relationship management, especially for those with insecure attachment tendencies.
- The study emphasizes the importance of self-development and adaptive coping. Young adults can benefit from understanding their attachment patterns and working towards building more secure and emotionally balanced relationships.
- The study adds to existing literature by establishing links between attachment styles and emotional intelligence, encouraging further research in this area with diverse populations and additional variables.

Suggestions for Future Studies

- Future studies can include participants from varied cultural, socio-economic, and educational backgrounds to improve generalizability of findings.
- Conducting longitudinal studies can help understand how attachment styles influence the development of emotional intelligence over time, rather than relying only on cross-sectional data.

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- The present study focused on avoidant and anxious attachment; future research can include secure attachment to provide a more comprehensive comparison across all attachment patterns.
- Future research can examine other related factors such as self-esteem, coping styles, personality traits, mental health, and relationship satisfaction to better understand the dynamics involved.
- Experimental research can be conducted to assess the effectiveness of attachment-based or emotional intelligence training programs in improving emotional and interpersonal outcomes.
- Since the present study is correlational, future research can use experimental designs to determine causal relationships between attachment styles and components of emotional intelligence.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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