The Role of Different Demographic Factors in Influencing the Attachment Patterns of Adults

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Abstract

The purpose of this quantitative, cross-sectional research was to determine the normalized predictive value of the demographic factors on the development of attachment pattern of adults. The respondents were asked to fill in a demographic information form, as well as to fill in Addictive Relationship Scale. The data analysis was done by applying neural network analysis, to give the normalized significance of six demographic variables. The most significant variable was identified as age; it had a normalized importance of 100.0%. Monthly income and educational level came after it with 64.1% and 52.4% respectively. The other factors marital status (39.2%), employment status (37.4%) and gender (36.7) were less significant. These observations point conclusively to the idea that the predisposition of an individual towards addictive relationship behaviors has been closely linked with the age and their social-economic environment.

Keywords: Demographic Factors, Adult Attachment Patterns, Addictive Relationship, Age, Monthly Income.

Introduction

Attachment

Attachment is another key psychological term that can be defined as the emotional link that exists between people, the origins of which in most cases are the relationships of early caregiving. The relationships play an important role in emotional control, evoking trust, and personal functioning throughout the whole life of a person (Cherry, 2025; Salcuni, 2015). The attachment theory developed by Bowlby explains that the functioning of the internal working models, expectations, behaviors, and relationships depend on the responsiveness and consistency of early caregivers and persist throughout the lifespan of an individual (Cherry, 2025). It has been found that the impact of attachment is not limited to the infancy age and expands to emotional safety, coping, and social performance in adulthood (Salcuni, 2015; Simpson and Rholes, 2016).

As well, the field of attachment is the basis of adult learning, resilience through emotions and participation in relationships. Studies confirm that when people and their childhood experiences are securely early attached, it gives them a psychological safe base against which they can experiment and ultimately gain trust as well as adaptive interpersonal skills in the later stages of life ((Fleming, Ted. (2008).; Salcuni, 2015).

Adult Attachment

According to Simpson and Rholes (2016) and Ravitz et al. (2009), the concept of adult attachment defines the nature of connections between partners in a particular close relationship, particularly a romantic one, when it comes to their emotional attachment, dependency, trust, and intimacy. The origin of the adult attachment is in the early attachment experiences although they keep changing with changes in social, cultural, and demographic variables. Adult attachment is a powerful factor of emotional regulation, response to stress, relationship satisfaction and overall psychological health.

There also exists evidence that there are life cycle changes in the relationships of adult attachment. Affection to parents, such as, diminishes as an adult but the affection to romantic partners increases with age (Hudson et al., 2015). Attachment patterns are acquired through personal experiences and socioeconomic backgrounds and relationships history and change depending on situations and circumstances (Suneel et al., 2022).

Adult Attachment Style and Type

There are basically three styles of adult attachment:

1. Secure Attachment: This type of attachment is characterized by a sense of comfortable intimacy and independence, trust in partners, emotional disposition, and moderating actions during relationships. Secured individuals are observed to possess stable emotional regulation and improved conflict resolution as well as high satisfaction in their relationships (Cherry, 2025; DeWitt (2024); Simpson and Rholes, 2016).
2. Anxious Attachment: The characteristics of such kind are the fear of abandonment, emotional dependency, excessive reassurance and alertness in relations. Persons trapped by an anxious attachment usually tend to lack corroboration in their relations, emotional imbalance, and obsessive acts.
3. Avoidant Attachment: In this type of attachment, emotional regulation is suppressed, avoidance of intimacy, independence on the self, and dependence aversion are practiced (DeWitt (2024); Simpson and Rholes, 2016). Adults who have been avoidantly attached can have a hard time expressing themselves and having intimate relationships with other human beings (Ravitz et al. (2009).

There are also those models that consider subusions, such as fearful-avoidant or dismissive-avoidant that combine avoidant characteristics with fear of rejection (Ravitz et al. (2009). These differences demonstrate that the insecure attachment may take a large number of different forms based on personal experience and demographics.

Demographic Factors and Adult Attachment Patterns

The demography factors like age, gender, income, education, employment status, and marital status play a significant role in factors that influence adult attachment patterns. Age has an effect on priorities of relationships and emotional control. The parental attachment is normally reduced, and romantic attachment is more prominent as age advances (Hudson et al., 2015).

The gender influences the attachment patterns. Whereas females complain more of attachment anxiety, the males are more inclined to avoid attachment(Weber, et al., 2022). Attachment security is greatly influenced by the level of the social-economic status. Persons having low income and financial constraint are vulnerable to lack of attachment and their counterparts who are financially stable have higher chances of being emotionally stable. Through education, emotional perception, good communication, and problem-solving skills are enhanced in relationships, which strengthens secure attachment behavior. The employment status as such leads on the self-esteem and emotional regulation: unemployment can be connected to tension in relationships and anxiety (Suneel et al., 2022).

Attachment is also a great attachment background of marital status. Attachment insecurity may be caused by divorce, separation, or an unstable marriage particularly to women. (Jones, 2021). All these findings can be considered to highlight the fact that adult attachment cannot be conceived out of context of demographic and social conditions.

Adult Addictive Relationship Patterns and Attachment

Concerning the information obtained about the addiction relationship styles and their correlations with the adult attachment styles, it is evident within the literature review that there is a definitive association that can be established. Addictive relationships, anxious attachment, and compulsive relationship dependence are connected to the cases of insecure attachment and anxiety attachment (Ustundag et al., 2024).

To evaluate the adult attachment in the current study, the Addictive Relationship Pattern Scale created by (Ishaq, et al., 2024) will be used to assess the emotional dependence, the study of which measures the relational compulsivity and maladaptive attachment behaviors. This model aids in the explanation of the role of attachment insecurity in the development of addictive and maladaptive relationship patterns, which highlights the effect that demographics have in influencing adult attachment on a clinical and psychosocial level.

Rationale of the Study

The collective study of adult attachment has continued to support its central place as a conceptualization of emotional control and relationship functioning at the life span stage. Anxious and avoidant styles of insecure attachment are usually associated with numerous ill-adjusted behaviors such as compulsive relationship dependency and emotional instability all of which add up to addictive interpersonal tendencies.

The literature does not present a clear hierarchical predictive model of demographic factors that have strong predictive power in regards to insecure attachment expression and vulnerability despite the accepted views of the literature that the expression and

vulnerability to insecure attachment depend on the demographic factors of age, gender, and social economic status (Del Giudice, 2011; Sakman et al., 2022; Suneel et al., 2022).

The research is relevant because of two major reasons:

- Its empirical gap consists in ranking the predictive capacity of such demographic variables as Age, Monthly Income, Education, Marital Status, Employment Status and Gender on addictive interpersonal patterns the assistance of more elaborate methods like Neural Network Analysis, than mere correlations.
- In the intervention guidance, by the determination of the most essential demographic factors to influence, the study will offer evidence-centered recommendations to specific counseling, relationships therapy, and culturally aware psychosocial remedies to diminish the occurrence of addictive relationships in adults.

Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to examine Demographic Factors and their role in adult patterns of attachment in the study titled: Exploring Demographic Factors and their Influence on Adult Attachment Patterns.

- Determine the prevalence rates of the existing style of adult attachment within the sample namely, secure, anxious, and avoidant.
- The association between the vital demographic aspects (Age, Gender, Educational Level, Marital Status, Employment Status and Monthly Income) and various attachment styles.
- Correlate avoidant and anxious insecure attachment and the occurrence of addictive interpersonal relationships patterns.
- Determine the best demographic variables among adults that determine addictive interpersonal relationship patterns.
- The hierarchical predictive model should place the normalized significance of such demographic variables contributing to addictive patterns in order.

Methodology

Research Design

In the present quantitative cross-sectional survey, participants were sampled at a single point in time on a diverse sample of adults and this allowed exploring the relationship between the demographic factors and attachment patterns of adults.

Population

It consisted of adult whose age were above 19 years and were in a close relationship either romantic or family based.

Inclusion Criteria

- Adult age population above 19 years or more were included in the study.
- The participant must not live alone or single lived rather have been in a close interpersonal relationship.
- It does not necessarily have to be romantic relationship and may be a family relationship or any other meaningful platonic relationship.

Exclusion Criteria

- Less than 18 years old participants were excluded from the study.
- Has never had any close inter-relationships was also excluded.
- Participant with any physical or mental health issues were also excluded.

Sampling Technique

In the current study purposive sampling technique was used. The purpose for selection was participant's age that must be 19 and above. Further, the adult must be in a close interpersonal relationship either romantically or with family.

Measures

Demographic Information Form: This was used to collect the predictor variables like Age, Gender, Educational Level, Marital Status, Employment status and Monthly Income. Addictive Relationship Scale (ARS): One of the measures used was the Addictive Relationship Scale which was developed by Ishaq, Kausar, and Naz (2024). It assesses the existence of compulsive relational dependency, emotional dysregulation and maladaptive attachment behaviors. High scores would indicate greater temptation to such unhealthy tendencies.

Procedure

The quantitative research was carried out based on the standardized protocol that followed the ethical guidelines. The aim of the study was communicated to the potential participants and their confidentiality guaranteed. The consent of the participants was also informed prior to initiation of survey. Information was gathered through demographic form and addictive relationship scale. Subsequently, the participants were administered the Addictive Relationship Scale to be able to measure the outcome variable. At final data integrity was checked. The data gathering was checked against accuracy and comprehensiveness. After the assurance of data integrity, formal statistical analysis was undertaken.

Statistical Analysis

The formal data analysis was performed by use of SPSS (Statistical Package for social science) version 25. This was applied to analyze the obtained demographic data, to provide descriptive summary of the sample characteristics. Further, neural network analysis was done to determine the normalized significance of the demographic items (Age, Monthly Income, Education, Marital Status, Employment Status, and Gender) in predicting attachment patterns of adults.

Results

The research was conducted to find out the demographic predictors of maladaptive relational patterns among adults.

The mean age of respondents was 31year. The gender representation was nearly equal. The majority of the participants had attained FA/BS education level. A good number of the respondents were single. In the case of relationship status, sister was the most frequent connection of primary adult attachment. Regarding employment status, a majority of the participants were employed yet have low incomes with majority having income under 30k.

Table 1:   ***Relative error of Training and Testing***

	Relative error
Training	0.961
Testing	0.973

Table 1 represents the relative error of training and testing and if there was a small difference between the two the model was significant. Thus, established the fact that

predictive relationship between the demographic variables and the probability of the insecure attachment patterns was present.

Table 2:   *Demographic Factors Normalized Importance on Attachment Patterns of Adults*

Demographics Variables	Importance	Normalized Importance
Age	0.303	100.0%
Monthly Income	0.194	64.1%
Educational Level	0.159	52.4%
Marital Status	0.119	39.2%
Employment Status	0.113	37.4%
Gender	0.111	36.7%

The results confirmed that according to the normalized importance age was the most significant factor in determining the attachment patterns of adults followed by monthly income, educational level, marital status, employment status and gender.

Discussion

The present paper has made a strict hierarchical model depicting the effects of demographics on maladaptive relational patterns proving that relational styles of an individual are significantly based on their situation. The significant role of the Age (100.0%) can be linked to the developmental attachment theory that predetermines Age-related progress in the development of attachment relationships (Hudson et al., 2015). This finding demonstrates that the susceptibility to compulsive and dependent tendencies is highly connected to the fact that the consequences of the relational experiences over the course of adult life rely on accumulation (Levinger, 1980).

The high predictive value of Monthly Income (64.1) and Educational Level (52.4) supports the necessity of the socioeconomic stability on the development of emotional security. Money problems would increase susceptibility to insecure attachment (Sakman et al., 2022; Salcuni, 2015). On the contrary, increased education is linked to enhanced emotional regulation and self-awareness that is capable of countering the emotional dysregulation evident in maladaptive behaviors (Handbook of Attachment, n.d.). Marital Status (39.2) remains also active, which agrees with the research that a major shift in relationships, such as divorce, may contribute to the development of attachment insecurity (Jones, 2021). The fact that Gender is the least predictive variable (36.7%) shows that developmental and socioeconomic factors outweigh the traditional differences in gender in the predictive factors (maladaptive relational patterns) (Del Giudice, 2011).

Limitations and Future Directions

High reliance of the study on the use of cross-sectional design is also a significant weakness since it does not permit the development of cause-and-effect relationships (Levinger, 1980). Besides, convenience sampling and self-reported measurement tools limit outside validity and create an issue of reporting bias. Investigations in the future need to be designed based on longitudinal studies aiming at tracking the developments of such patterns over the years and adopt the mediation analyses to clearly establish the effect of the socioeconomic factor (Income and Education) on the relational vulnerability (Suneel et al., 2022).

Conclusion

The study managed to determine the normalized association between the demographics and attachment patterns of adults. It was concluded that age and income was the most significant factor in determining the attachment patterns.

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