



A correlational study to analyze the association among teenagers' self-efficacy, attachment patterns, and coping mechanisms

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ABSTRACT:

Objective: The purpose of this study was to investigate how adolescents' coping mechanisms, self-efficacy, and attachment styles relate to one another.

Methods: In Lahore, this study was carried out from July 2022 to December 2022. 400 students were chosen at random from a variety of private and public academic institutions, ranging in age from 12 to 16 (mean age: 14, SD: 6.23). Along with the Attachment Style Classification Questionnaire, a self-made demographic sheet, a general self-efficacy scale, and a coping scale were given out. The Pearson correlation coefficient, descriptive statistics, and linear regression analysis were all used to analyze the data.

Results: It was discovered that teenagers' levels of self-efficacy and coping are significantly positively correlated with secure attachment style. Additionally, there was a negative correlation between anxious and avoidant attachment styles and self-efficacy ($p < 0.05$). The additional regression analysis has also shown the alteration that the independent variable makes to the dependent variables.

Conclusions: Adolescents' self-efficacy and coping skills can be significantly improved by an effective attachment style. The general populace can also benefit from this.

Keywords: self-efficacy, attachment pattern, copying mechanism

INTRODUCTION

One goes through major social, psychological, physiological, and cognitive changes throughout youth, which separates childhood behavior from adult conduct and has an impact on one's attitude and ability to adapt in later life (2,3). Children crave proximity to the compassion role (including both parents) particularly when they are angry or feel insecure, and attachment has been described as a deep and enduring emotional relationship that binds one person to another beyond time and distance (4,5). Early connections have a favorable impact on coping mechanisms, stress management, emotional regulation, and cognitive health (6,7,8). Additionally, it establishes how teenagers build and sustain relationships via their routines and behaviors (9) According to Bowlby's attachment theory, a baby views an attachment figure as secure if it provides comfort, and support, and is more receptive, and when that figure is separated from the baby, it causes anguish. (10)

When they connect with their parents, children with an anxious attachment will refuse the attachment figure, even though they are more distressed and seem at ease using negative coping mechanisms (such as trying to hurt the parents for abandoning) (11,12). When their parents were separated, children with avoidant attachment did not experience any or very little stress, but as a consequence, they either disregarded or avoided their parents (13). According to attachment theory, people have an internal picture of themselves and other people that helps them deal with relationships and stressors throughout their lives (14). A satisfying connection relies on the capacity of the parents and the kid to fulfill each other's needs for safe attachment, and stable people show a good balance between child and autonomy (15).

Insecure relationships will develop if attachment figures are not empathetic, comforting, compassionate, or readily accessible (16). Early experiences have an impact on a person's

capacity to form healthy connections and bonds with others even after they reach maturity (17). This influences how well-equipped a person is to cope with life's challenges (18).

Anxious people have strong anxiety, and a greater need for assistance, and often fail to get the help they need to deal with pressures (19). Parents have a significant impact on shaping their children's behavior, personality characteristics, and coping mechanisms as they mature from childhood to maturity (20). High levels of attachment demonstrate a high degree of self-efficacy and are positively connected with more effective coping mechanisms. Similar studies have shown that a secure attachment style is positively correlated with higher self-efficacy and negatively associated with psychological distress (21). However, there is a negative correlation between high levels of avoidance attachment and inadequate coping mechanisms and resources for maintaining healthy relationships (22). Self-efficacy and an anxious, insecure, and emotionally distant attachment style have a bad relationship (23).

The current study focuses on examining how adolescents' coping strategies and self-efficacy are related to their attachment style. They can use this to determine the type of attachment style they have and which style is more suitable for boosting their confidence in their ability to handle difficult situations in the future. As is well known, Pakistan's culture values collectivism and is influenced by strong family ties both during a child's formative years and later in life. This is also demonstrated by the many real-world manifestations of our Islamic personalities. Early effective relationship practices within a family, therefore, determine a person's ability to construct and utilize appropriate and effective means for developing better relationships and for dealing with other challenges that arise in one's life at any stage. This study will also help parents evaluate their patterns of interaction with their kids to raise

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psychologically healthy kids who will benefit both the parents and society as a whole.

METHODS: A randomized sample of 400 teenagers (201 females and 199 boys) from five academic institutions in Lahore, comprising both private and public schools, was collected. Every second student was included in the sample, which was chosen. Their age ranged from 12 to 16 years, and participants older than 16 years old were not included in the research. Those with a minimum level of education of the fifth grade were included, and those with less were excluded. They are from nuclear or blended families and range in socioeconomic status from low to high.

Education level, gender, age, socioeconomic status, family structure, and the father's job status were among the demographic data gathered.

The attachment style was assessed using the Attachment Style Classification Questionnaire. There are 15 questions on this survey, each with a 5-point Likert scale. It consists of three components: (a) secure (Having belief that the close one will not leave), (b) anxious (I occasionally worry that no one truly loves me), (c) Avoidant (When someone attempts to approach me too closely, I feel uneasy and become irritated). The secure, avoidant, anxious, and attachment sub-scales have alpha reliability values.85,70, and.80, respectively. A self-report measure called the General Self-Efficacy Scale had ten items and a Likert scale with four points, from 1. (not at all true) to 4. (exactly true). Low scores reflect the low range, while high scores reflect a high level of self-efficacy. This scale's alpha reliability was 0.93, with male and female scores being 0.47 and 0.63, respectively.

The 13 items on the coping scale represent both behavioral and appraisal coping strategies. It is a 4-point Likert scale, with the range being 4 (mainly accurate about me) to 1. (not true about me). Stronger scores indicate higher coping capacities. The pilot and main samples' internal consistencies (coefficient alphas) are 0.88 and 0.91, respectively.

First, authorization was requested from representatives of several academic institutions. Participants were then approached, and their informed permission was acquired. Following the demographic sheet, the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE), the Attachment Style Classification Questionnaire (ASCQ), and the Coping Scale were given. Descriptive statistics were utilized to calculate percentages in the data analysis, while regression analysis and the Pearson correlation coefficient were performed in SPSS version 26 to determine the association between variables.

RESULTS: The demographic details of the research participants are shown in table 1 below. Secure attachment type is favorably correlated with self-efficacy level, whereas avoidant and anxious attachment styles are adversely correlated with SE, according to table 2's findings. According to the analysis in Table 3, a secure attachment style changes the dependent variable by 14%, whereas avoidant and anxious attachment styles affect self-efficacy by 12% and 11%, respectively.

The relationship between attachment type and copying is seen in Table 4. Results indicated a favorable link between coping strategy and secure attachment, whereas avoidant anxious attachment styles had a negative relationship with coping mechanisms. Table 5 shows that the secure attachment style has a 16% impact on the dependent variable, compared to avoidant and anxious attachment styles, which had a.08% and 13% impact, respectively.

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Table 1: List of the sample's sociodemographic characteristics and variables

Variables	Categories	N (%)
Gender	Male	199 (49.8%)
	Female	201 (50.3%)
Age	16 years	80 (20%)
	15 years	80 (20%)
	14 years	80 (20%)
	13 years	80 (20%)
	12 years	80 (20%)
Education	Matric	173 (43%)
	Secondary	224 (56%)
	Primary	3 (0.8%)
Family System	Nuclear	202 (50.5%)
	Joint	198 (49.5%)
Economic Status	High	63 (15.8%)
	Middle	324 (81%)
	Low	13 (3.3%)
Father Job Status	Other	106 (26.5%)
	Business	175 (43%)
	Private	81 (20.3%)
	Government	38 (9.5%)

Table 2: Association Between Adolescents' Self-Efficacy (SE) and Attachment Style

Variables	Self-Efficacy & Secure Attachment	Self-Efficacy & Anxious Attachment	Self-Efficacy & Avoidant Attachment
<i>r</i>	0.213	-0.102	-0.172
<i>N</i>	400		

Table 3: Analysis of Self-Efficacy and Attachment Style Subscales Using Linear Regression

Model	1	2	3
<i>R sqrd</i>	0.14	0.11	0.12
<i>Adjusted R Sqrd</i>	0.13	0.1	0.11
<i>S.E.</i>	8.39	6.24	7.31
<i>r</i>	0.213	-.102	-0.172

Table 4: Association between Adolescents' Coping and Attachment Styles

Variables	Coping & Secure Attachment	Coping & Anxious Attachment	Coping & Avoidant Attachment
<i>r</i>	0.254	-0.111	-0.174
<i>N</i>	400		

Table 5: Attachment styles and copy: Linear Regression Analysis

Model	1	2	3
<i>R sqrd</i>	0.16	0.08	0.13
<i>Adjusted R Sqrd</i>	0.15	0.09	0.12
<i>S.E.</i>	8.79	6.14	7.21
<i>r</i>	0.254	-0.111	-0.174

DISCUSSIONS: The current study has looked into how attachment style affects self-efficacy and coping mechanisms. Tables 2 and 4 in the analysis of the results show that teenagers with secure attachment styles have a high positive association with self-efficacy and coping skills, while those with anxious and avoidant attachment styles have a negative correlation with these variables (table 2 and table 4). The additional analysis demonstrates that secure attachment results in 14% changes in SE and 16% changes in coping mechanisms (table 3 and table 5).

The results of this study support our hypotheses and are consistent with previous studies showing that adolescents with secure attachment have positive relationships with self-efficacy and coping while those with anxious or avoidant attachment have negative relationships with these traits. According to a study, having a secure attachment to one's parents and peers predicts having a high level of self-efficacy and self-esteem. High avoidant attachment, on the other hand, is negatively correlated with inadequate resources for preserving healthy relationships and inadequate coping mechanisms (24).

The findings of this study may be the result of numerous factors. The way parents or other carers interact and demonstrate attachment with their children has a greater influence on their

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personality and behavior, which is one potential explanation provided by psychodynamic theory. According to our findings (tables 2 and 4), children tend to be self-efficient and demonstrate good coping in stressful situations if they perceive their relationships to be secure. However, if they perceive them to be ambivalent or insecure, they will become fearful, anxious, avoidant, and have low self-esteem. This theory and the current findings are supported by prior research, which shows that early life experiences of connectedness have a positive impact on coping skills and improve stress management, emotional regulation, and psychological well-being (25,26,27).

Even though our culture emphasizes collectiveness and a sense of connection with one another, and is based on moral and humanistic principles, practicality will be lacking. Parents are experiencing financial strain and are spending more time working to provide for their children as a result of the obvious economic conditions. Due to their lack of concern for their children's emotional needs, love, comfort, and sense of belonging, parents no longer spend as much time with them as they once did. Unluckily, this circumstance is causing a sense of detachment and insecurity that will lead to other issues in later stages of life. A study found that when an attachment figure provides comfort, and support, and is more receptive, an infant perceives that figure as secure and experiences distress when that figure is separated. (28) It also determines how adolescents form and maintain relationships, as well as their patterns and habits in doing so (29,30).

Researchers may research people older than 16 years in the future. The current study involved adolescents between the ages of 12 and 16. A larger sample from more academic institutions is also required to generalize the findings for future studies.

CONCLUSIONS: The conclusion drawn from the research is that teenagers' attachment patterns are linked to both self-efficacy and coping mechanisms. Particularly, people who

have a secure attachment style typically have higher self-efficacy and employ adaptive coping mechanisms, whereas people who have an insecure attachment style might have lower self-efficacy and employ maladaptive coping mechanisms.

To increase self-efficacy and copy strategies in adolescents, this study highlights the significance of attachment styles, especially secure attachment. This study contributes to the understanding of a better attachment style that aids in improving self-efficacy and coping in adolescents. The general public will also profit from this research.

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