



EFFECTS OF ATTACHMENT STYLES ON HARDINESS AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract: Hardiness is a personality trait or an ability to adjust to unexpected circumstances in life under stress. The purpose of the paper is to examine the effect of anxious attachment style and avoidant attachment style on hardiness among college students. The sample consists of 243(133 Anxious Attachment and 110 Avoidant Attachment) college students ranging between the age of 18-26. The scale used are The Adult Attachment Questionnaire (Simpson 1992) & A Short Hardiness Scale (Bartone 2007). Pearson product moment correlation and linear regression analysis was used to examine the contribution of the predictor variables on the criterion variable. The result showed that there was negative correlation between the predictor variable and the criterion variable. There was significant relationship between the predictor and criterion variable.

Keywords- Attachment styles, Anxious Attachment, Avoidant Attachment, Hardiness, College Students

Introduction

College students face multiple challenges and are affected by many stressors and challenges. They are exposed to academic pressure, social pressure and environmental pressure which impacts their mental health. Students face issues like low self-esteem. They are anticipated to take up new challenges and adhere to new customs and beliefs. They are expected to pursue new interests and attitudes so that they adapt and fit to new positions effectively. Because of these changes, early adulthood is a unique and challenging stage of life. It is particularly challenging because the majority of people, both male and female, have had assistance from friends, parents, teachers, or other caregivers in adjusting to new circumstances. They are expected to make these modifications for themselves now that they are grownups.

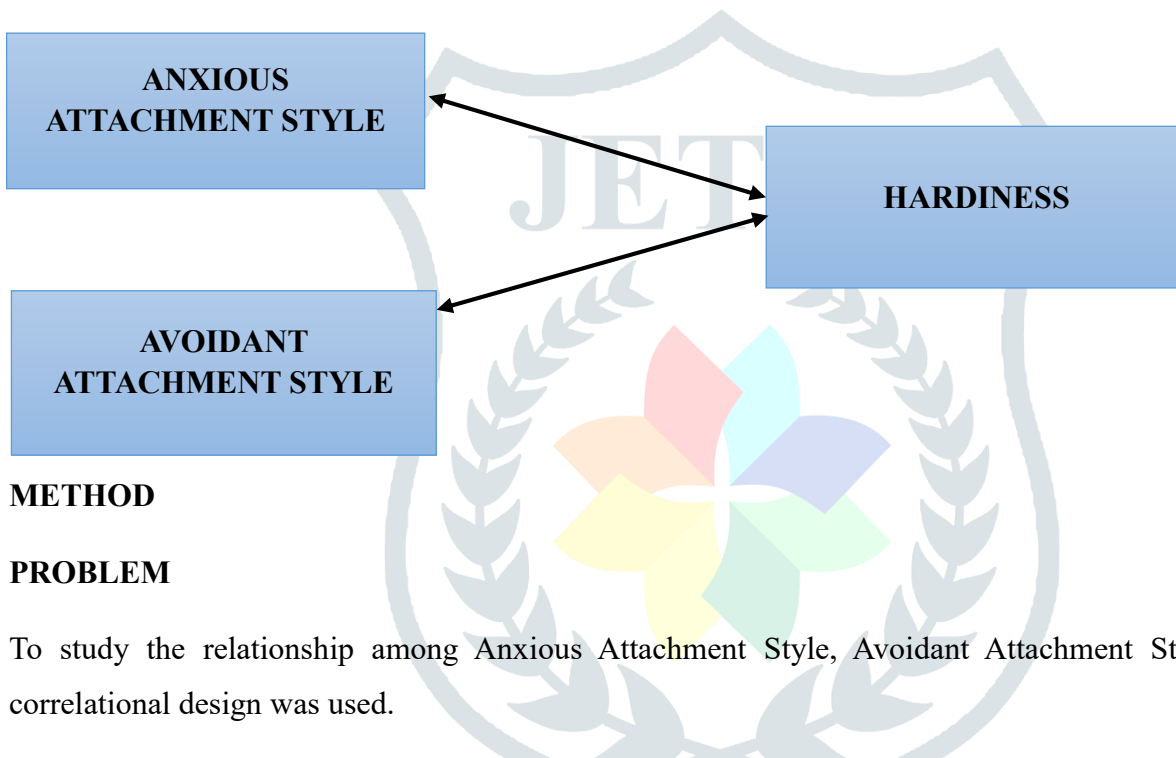
It is a period characterized by significant personal, academic and professional development. There is a shift from dependency to interdependency and establishment of their identities and positions in society.

According to **Ainsworth (1963)** attachment postulates a "secure base from which to explore," and this notion has persisted as a cornerstone of attachment theory ever since. According to **Bowlby (1969/1982)**, attachment is an emotional connection formed between an infant and care-giver. It has influence on the infant's future development as well as their relationships.

It is basically believed that our adult attachment type reflects the relationships we experienced as babies and kids with our caregivers. A study conducted to examine the connection between students' depression and their attachment types as well as their parents' parenting approaches reveals that there is a strong and positive association between students' depression and their parents' avoidant attachment. (Ebrahimi, et al. 2017)

Suzanne C. Kobasa introduced the idea of "hardiness" in 1979. Hardiness is a personality style or pattern linked to sustained good health and performance under pressure. She was among the first researchers to focus on personality traits, demonstrating that people who suffer high levels of stress without developing mental or physical illnesses had distinct personalities from people who fall ill under stressful circumstances.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



METHOD

PROBLEM

To study the relationship among Anxious Attachment Style, Avoidant Attachment Style and Hardiness correlational design was used.

OBJECTIVES

- To examine the relationship of anxious attachment style and hardiness among college students.
- To examine the association of avoidant attachment style and hardiness among college students.
- To evaluate the comparative influence of anxious attachment style and avoidant attachment style in determination of hardiness among college students.

HYPOTHESES

- Anxious attachment style would be strongly related with hardiness among college students.
- Avoidant attachment style would be strongly related with hardiness among college students.
- Comparative Influence of Anxious attachment style would be much significant as compared to avoidant attachment style towards hardiness.

DESIGN

Correlational Design was used to study the relationship among attachment styles and hardiness.

SAMPLE

VARIABLES

Predictor Variable

Anxious Attachment Style

Avoidant Attachment Style

Criterion Variable

Hardiness

TOOLS



- **The Adult Attachment Questionnaire-** The Adult Attachment Questionnaire was developed by Simpson, Roles and Nelligan, 1992. It is designed to assess individual's different attachment styles. The scale consists of 17 items across two dimensions- Anxious Attachment and Avoidant Attachment to be rated by the subject using the Seven-point scale (1- Strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- somewhat disagree, 4- neutral, 5- somewhat agree, 6- agree, 7- strongly agree). The reliability being 0.81 (Cronbach's Alpha) for both men and women. Higher scores reflected greater anxiousness (Cronbach's alphas = 0.58 and 0.61 for men and women, respectively). Questions measuring Avoidance Attachment- 1,2,3,5,6,7,8,9 and Anxious Attachment- 4,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17. Questions 1,3,4,12,14,16 and 17 were reversely scored.
- **A Short Hardiness Scale-** A Short Hardiness Scale was developed by Paul T. Bartone (2007). It is a brief assessment tool which is intended to gauge psychological hardiness, or the capacity to deal with stress and hardship. The scale consists of 15 items. It is a 4-point scale (1- not at all true, 2- a little true, 3- quite true and 4- completely true). The reliability ranges from 0.70 to 0.77 (Cronbach's Alpha). The test-retest reliability coefficient was 0.78.

Statistical Technique

The quantitative information gathered from the two scales—the attachment style scale and the hardiness scale—was examined using linear regression analysis.

Results

Table 1.1 shows the relationship between the predictor variables and the criterion variables (Anxious Attachment Style & Hardiness)

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Anxious Attachment	Hardiness
Anxious Attachment	39.27	6.931	1	
Hardiness	26.28	6.814	-0.281**	1

**p<0.01

Table 1.2 shows the relationship between the predictor variables and the criterion variables (Avoidant Attachment Style & Hardiness)

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Avoidant Attachment	Hardiness
Avoidant Attachment	37.75	8.098	1	
Hardiness	26.52	6.955	-0.346**	1

**p<0.01

The result shows that anxious attachment style and hardiness is negatively correlated ($r = -0.298$). They were also found to be significant. This shows that rise in anxious attachment style scores tends to decrease hardiness scores.

Thus, the 1st hypothesis stating “Anxious Attachment style would be strongly associated with hardiness among college students” was accepted.

Avoidant attachment style scores and hardiness are negatively correlated ($r = -0.346$). They were also found to be significant. It implies that rise in avoidant attachment style score tends to decrease hardiness scores.

Thus, the 2nd hypothesis stating “Avoidant Attachment style would be strongly associated with hardiness among college students” was accepted.

Avoidant attachment style was calculated to be the highest contributing variable as compared to anxious attachment style towards hardiness.

Thus, the 3rd hypothesis “Relative contribution of Anxious Attachment style would be much remarkable as compared to Avoidant Attachment Style towards hardiness” was rejected.

Table 2.1: Multiple Regression Analysis for Hardiness (Anxious Attachment Style)

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.298
R Square	0.089
Adjusted R Square	0.082
Standard Error	6.641
Observations	133

The table shows the value of R Square= 0.089. This indicates the contribution of the predictor variable (Anxious attachment style) on the criterion variable (Hardiness) is 9% and the remaining 91% can be owing to other factors.

Table 3.1: F Table (Anxious Attachment Style)

	DF	SS	MS	F
Regression	1	562.722	562.722	12.758**
Residual	131	5777.985	44.107	
Total	132	6340.707		

**p<0.01

Table 3.1 indicates that F-Value for resilience and its significance i.e. 0.01 level. This indicates that anxious attachment style plays a significant part in determining hardiness.

Table 4.1: Regression Coefficient of Predictor Variables for Hardiness (Anxious Attachment Style)

Variables	b	Standard Error	Beta	t	r	Coefficient of Determination
Anxious	-0.303	0.085	-0.298	-3,572**	-0.298**	0.088
Constant	38.178	0.085		11.292**		

**p<0.01

Regression Equation between Hardiness and Avoidant Attachment Style

$$Y = b_1X + C$$

$$= (-0.303)(39.27) + 38.178$$

$$= (-11.898) + 38.178$$

$$= 26.28$$

The value of Adjusted R Square was 0.082 (Table2.1). This indicates the contribution of the predictor variable (Anxious attachment style) on the criterion variable (Hardiness) is 9%.

The regression coefficient (b value) of Anxious Attachment was -0.303. This implies that rise in one unit in anxious attachment results to a decrease of -0.303 unit in hardiness. Thus, Anxious attachment has a negative contribution of about 9% in determining hardiness. The t-value contribution of anxious attachment style is found to be significant at 0.01 level.

Table 2.2: Multiple Regression Analysis for Hardiness (Avoidant Attachment Style)

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.346
R Square	0.120
Adjusted R Square	0.112
Standard Error	7.631
Observations	110

The table shows the value of R Square= 0.120. This indicates the joint contribution of the predictor variable (Avoidant attachment style & Self-esteem) on the criterion variable (Hardiness) is 12% and the remaining 88% can be owing to other factors.

Table 3.2: F Table (Avoidant Attachment Style)

	DF	SS	MS	F
Regression	1	858.089	858.089	14.735**
Residual	108	6289.374	58.236	
Total	109	7147.464		

**p<0.01

Table 3.2 indicates that F-Value for resilience and its significance i.e. 0.01 level. This indicates that avoidant attachment style plays a significant part in determining hardiness.

Table 4.1.2: Regression Coefficient of Predictor Variables for Hardiness (Avoidant Attachment Style)

Variables	b	Standard Error	Beta	t	r	Coefficient of Determination
Avoidant	-0.403	0.105	-0.346	-3.389**	-0.346**	0.119
Constant	41.749	4.034		10.349**		

**p<0.01

Regression Equation between Hardiness and Avoidant Attachment Style

$$Y = b_2X_2 + C$$

$$= (-0.403)(37.75) + 41.749$$

$$= (-15.213) + 41.749$$

$$= 26.53$$

The value of Adjusted R Square was 0.112 (Table 2.2). This indicates the joint contribution of the predictor variable (Avoidant attachment style) on the criterion variable (Hardiness) is 11%.

The regression coefficient (b value) of Avoidant Attachment was -0.403. This implies that rise in one unit in avoidant attachment results to a decrease of -0.403 unit in hardiness. Thus, Avoidant attachment has a negative contribution of about 12% in determining hardiness. The t-value contribution of avoidant attachment style is found to be significant at 0.01 level.

On the basis of the coefficient of determination from the tables (4.1&4.2), it was revealed that avoidant attachment style (12%) was the highest contributing predictor variable in determining hardiness among college students as compared to anxious attachment style (9%). Thus, hypothesis 3rd stating “Comparative Influence of Anxious Attachment Style would be much significant as compared to Avoidant Attachment Style towards Hardiness” was rejected.

Findings & Discussion

- Evaluations and explanation of the results revealed that Anxious Attachment style was negatively correlated to hardiness.
- Analyses and Interpretation of the results revealed that Avoidant Attachment style was negatively correlated to hardiness.
- Avoidant attachment style was the highest contributing predictor variable in determining hardiness among college students as compared to Anxious attachment style.

Relationship between Attachment Styles and Hardiness

The outcomes revealed that anxious attachment style and avoidant attachment style were negatively correlated with hardiness. Neria, et al. (2001) conducted research to evaluate the relationship of attachment styles and hardiness and mental health in real-life stress on 434 young Israeli men. The study revealed that avoidant attachment style and anxious attachment style were negatively correlated to hardiness. A study conducted by Kelly, S. (2016) to evaluate the association among hardiness, attachment style and trauma among at-risk homeless adolescents revealed that insecure attachment style was inversely related with hardiness. Escolás, Escolás & Bartone (2014) conducted research on adult attachment style, hardiness and mood on 561 military personnel. The results revealed that soldiers high in hardiness showed secure attachment style and very less anxious or avoidant attachment.

Conclusion

College is a time where students go through major changes in their personal, intellectual and social life as they transition from adolescence to adulthood. Understanding attachment styles can help them to know its effect on their relationship and on themselves. It can help them develop resilience and overcome challenges. Hardiness can have a huge impact on student's academic progress. Some students overcome many barriers whereas some students don't. College is a time of heightened stress and students are at risk to various mental

health issues. The study can provide insight into the positive factors that can support psychological health of the students. It can elucidate the influence of attachment styles on their college life experiences whether social or personal.

By gaining insight in these areas, more effective strategies can be developed to support students succeed and adapt to their new surroundings by having a better knowledge of the dynamics.

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