



## REVIEW ARTICLE

# ATTACHMENT STYLES, RELATIONSHIP QUALITY, AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN YOUNG ADULTS

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Young adults face high levels of loneliness and difficulties in forming strong romantic relationships. Existing literature suggests a relationship between attachment styles, emotional intelligence (EI), and relationship quality. However, the moderating role of EI in these associations remains unexplored. **Objective(s):** This study aimed to examine whether emotional intelligence moderates the relationship between attachment styles and the quality of romantic relationships in young adults. **Methods:** A total of 310 participants aged 18–26 completed the Relationship Scale Questionnaire (RSQ), Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT), and Investment Model Scale (IMS). Statistical analyses assessed direct relationships and moderation effects. **Results:** No significant relationships were found between attachment styles and emotional intelligence or between attachment styles and relationship quality. However, emotional intelligence significantly moderated the relationship between anxious attachment and relationship quality, but not for other attachment styles. **Conclusions:** Findings highlight the selective impact of emotional intelligence on anxious attachment, suggesting targeted interventions may improve relationship outcomes for individuals with this attachment style.

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## INTRODUCTION

With cell phones and social media being a part of everyday life, young adults often discuss relationships in ways that differ from Indian cultural expectations of marriage. India and its culture are ingrained in the belief that marriage is a holy bond and needs to be engaged in by every individual. But the world's thoughts about this sacred relationship, especially in young adults, are hard to see as firm. The new generation of young adults thinks it is not essential to get married, that there is no want or need for them to get into relationships, and even with the people who find themselves in a romantic relationship, many factors affect their overall satisfaction with being in one. Which either deters their will to continue or enhances their experiences in ways that push them to pursue it even after a break-up. As individuals progress from adolescence to young adulthood, social and romantic connections with others carry more and more importance in an individual's life; a good connection with the world and peers further marks a greater sense of resilience and ability to cope with challenges (Van Harmelen et al., 2017b). On the other hand, a lack of intimate relationships is associated with lower levels of well-being, especially with romantic relationships (Kiecolt-Glaser & Newton, 2001). It is a

developmental stage where engagement in romantic relationships are pivotal aspects during the stage of emerging adulthood. This happens by not only successfully passing through the stage, but also being ready to engage in relationships and also be able to sustain them. (Mayseless and Keren in Emerg Adulthood 2:63–73, 2014; Rauer et al., 2013; Figueroa et al., 2022). This path to success, though, is strewn with challenges. Finding a faithful partner to find a connection, especially in current times, can be demanding. The current reliance on digital communication has likely led to superficial connections, as the medium may compromise the depth of interaction. Young adults frequently report that the rapid pace of relationship development facilitated by technology can lead to superficial connections, which may hinder deeper emotional intimacy and trust (Vaterlaus et al., 2017; Basting, 2023). As they navigate a world filled with constant notifications and online interactions, they are also deterred by factors from their earlier years, putting off the spirit of finding love and romance and affecting their overall relationship satisfaction (Vaterlaus et al., 2017). Married emerging adults report higher life satisfaction and lower degrees of loneliness, according to Beckmeyer & Cromwell's (2018) research. This implies that improving emotional well-being greatly depends on a romantic partner's company and social support. Soni et al. (2018) state that single young people frequently feel more alone than people

in relationships emphasizing the psychological effects of relationship status. Psychological constructs of attachment theory and emotional intelligence provide a more descriptive framework for understanding the relational challenges young adults have, in face of research surrounding social media (Freeman *et al.*, 2023; Strauss *et al.*, 2010). Relationship satisfaction that an individual experiences is also affected by their emotional intelligence, which in turn affects life satisfaction, self-efficacy, overall happiness, and quality of life in an individual (Segrin & Taylor, 2007; Fakorede, 2019). Thus, considering these variables, the research aims to understand how the dynamics lie between them and how they affect one another to impact romantic relationships among young adults. There is a need to understand the research carried out before this to understand existing research and knowledge about the same.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Research carried out in 2023 by Kirwan, E. M. *et al.* highlights how loneliness is not just a fleeting feeling but a feature of growth intertwined with social norms and life transitions. The study also emphasizes how social media greatly impacts loneliness perceptions because emerging adults frequently compare their lives to carefully controlled representations of others, making them feel inadequate and excluded. The findings reveal significant stigma associated with loneliness, too, among the youth, as the participants appeared to be hesitant to mention their views because of cultural expectations and shame attached to them. Complementing this is a study conducted by Carolyn McNamara Barry (2017) on perceptions and experiences of young adults in close relationships and romantic relationships, which showed that emerging adults who fulfilled adulthood requirements and advanced in their identity development tended to report having more satisfying romantic relationships with companionship, worth, affection, and emotional support. The growing concern over the interplay of factors leading to loneliness, especially within romantic relationships, an important aspect of the young adulthood period, calls for a deeper understanding. Various researchers using the variables point towards an existing relationship between attachment styles, emotional intelligence, and relationship quality. For example, in the research conducted by Janghu & Bhau (2023) on Romantic Attachment Styles and Conflict Management among Young Adults, differences in avoidant attachment styles are found to be significant, and the levels are more considerable in males than in females. Importantly, with greater levels of anxious attachment having a positive correlation with accommodating conflict management, it shows that when emotionally distressed, relationship harmony is prioritized. Further studies by Meenakshi Shokeen (2023) and Anto, Francis & Srinithi (2019) indicated a significant correlation between attachment styles (close, depend, anxious) and emotional intelligence among young adults. Avoidant attachment styles were linked to lower levels of these relationship aspects, while anxious attachment styles exhibited a mixed pattern of associations. The research highlights the impact of attachment styles on the intensity of emotions an individual experiences within relationships. Secure attachment emerges as a predictor of positive relationship attributes, while avoidant and anxious styles align with distinct challenges, such as reduced trust or commitment. Notably, the study sheds light on gender differences in post-dissolution distress, revealing that highly avoidant men experience less

emotional turmoil after relationship termination. These insights contribute to understanding intricate connections between attachment styles, relationship dynamics, and emotional well-being in adult romantic contexts. Studies conducted by Zysberg *et al.* (2019) and Sidhu *et al.* (2019) examined the interplay of emotional intelligence, attachment styles, and relationship satisfaction and the interplay between Emotional Intelligence and the quality of romantic relationships, respectively. Results pointed out that attachment styles displayed a negative association with satisfaction, while EI showed a positive correlation, indicating that attachment styles moderated the link between EI and satisfaction. There is a positive relationship between long-term relationships and emotional intelligence. Emotional understanding is, therefore, more likely to be enhanced in long-term partnerships. Much research has been carried out concerning attachment styles and emotional intelligence, highlighting their significant roles in relation to the quality of relationships. Attachment styles relate primarily to the important predictors of the satisfaction a romantic relationship receives, whereas the facets of general happiness in relations involve emotional intelligence. However, the interaction of these factors in this regard is lacking and not very well-defined, especially from the Indian cultural context, which may influence the dynamics mentioned earlier. Furthermore, though loneliness is known to be a particular issue for young adults, the causes outside social media contexts are understudied. With the increasing trends of social isolation among young adults, it is essential to look beyond virtual reality and social media as determinants of deteriorating romantic relationships. A strong relationship has been linked to emotional intelligence and attachment styles, yet in the Indian sociocultural context, few research details exist. This gap calls for research on how attachment styles and emotional intelligence are interrelated and form a relationship, further deepening insights into romantic relationships in India.

## METHODS

**Aim:** The aim of the research would be to investigate the relationships between attachment styles, emotional intelligence, and relationship quality.

### Specific Objectives:

- To determine whether there is a significant relationship between Attachment Styles and Emotional Intelligence.
- To determine if there is a significant relationship between Attachment Styles and Relationship Quality.
- To determine whether Emotional Intelligence strengthens the relationship between Attachment Styles and Relationship Quality.

### Hypothesis

- **H1:** There is a significant positive relation between Attachment Styles and Emotional Intelligence.
- **H2:** There is no significant relation between Attachment Styles and Emotional Intelligence.
- **H3:** Emotional Intelligence acts as a moderating variable in the relationship between Attachment Styles and Relationship quality.

- **H4:** Emotional Intelligence does not act as a moderating variable in the relationship between Attachment Styles and Relationship quality.
- **H5:** There is no significant relationship between Attachment Styles and Relationship Quality.
- **H6:** There is a significant positive relationship between Attachment Styles and Relationship Quality.

### Variables and Operational Definition

- **Attachment Styles:** Attachment styles are considered independent variables (IV). For the sake of this research, this variable will be defined as 'the patterns of emotional bonding and connection that people form in their interpersonal interactions, especially when those relationships are tight and intimate.'
- **Emotional Intelligence:** This will be considered the dependent variable (DV). For the sake of this research, this variable will be defined as 'the capacity to identify, comprehend, regulate, and make efficient use of one's own emotions as well as those of others in a variety of contexts.'
- **Relationship Quality:** For the sake of this research, this variable will be defined as 'including people's commitment (relationship commitment) and subjective fulfillment (relationship satisfaction) in their romantic relationships.'

### Research Design

Quantitative non-experimental research involving a correlation along with a moderating study was used in the research. A quantitative research method was used to understand the numerical changes in the characteristics of the sample population, dissect the findings, understand the implementation of one variable on the other, and explain the relationships between the same. A correlational research design is used to investigate the effect of IVs on DVs by comparing the values of one group of individuals to another. Then, a moderating analysis was done, considering that emotional intelligence acts as a moderating variable, for the relationship between attachment styles and relationship quality. This design is chosen for the conduction of the research because it will help us understand the actual dynamics of the relationship between the three variables of the study.

**Sample:** The sample taken up for research is a population falling in the young adults range, that is, from the age group of 18-26 (National Library of Medicine). All of the participants belonged to different cities in India.

### Test for Data Collection

- **Relationship Scale Questionnaire (RSQ):** The Relationship Scale Questionnaire developed by Griffin and Bartholomew (1994) was used to determine the attachment styles of the participants. This is a 17-item inventory that measures four different attachment styles (secure, dismissing, fearful, and preoccupied) using a five-point Likert scale. The reliability coefficients varied between .54 and .78 and parallel form validity of this scale, and the correlation coefficients ranged from 0.49 to 0.61.
- **Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT):** SSEIT, developed by Schutte, Malouff, Hall,

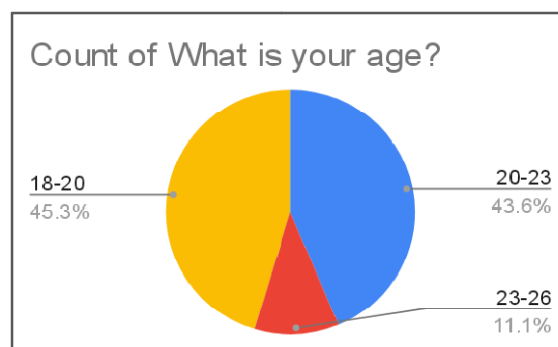
Haggerty, Cooper, Golden, & Dornheim, L. in 1998, is a scale for measuring emotional intelligence. It is also known as the Assessing Emotions Scale. It has a 5-point Likert scale, with an internal consistency of 0.90 and  $R = 0.656$ , concurrent validity.

- **The Investment Model Scale (IMS):** IMS, developed by Rusbult, Martz, and Agnew in 1998, is a scale based on the theory of the Investment Model. Four constructs are measured in the test: Commitment level, Relationship satisfaction, Quality of alternatives, and Investment size. Each factor of the IMS-S has high reliability, with Cronbach's alpha for satisfaction (.94) and commitment (.89). There were high item-total correlations with each component, at  $0.87 < r < .89$  for satisfaction and  $0.64 < r < 0.84$  for commitment, attesting to the internal consistency of the items constituting each factor.

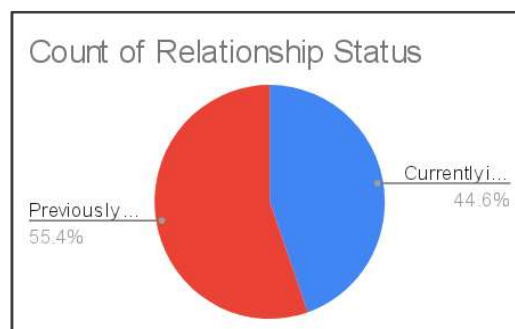
**Procedure of Data Analysis:** After collecting the data from the sample, the data was analyzed for the socio-demographic details and segregated into male, female participants. Based on the nature of the data, a parametric or non-parametric test was done. A correlation analysis was done on the variables of attachment style and emotional intelligence, and emotional intelligence and relationship quality based on the data collected through the tests. Another test to consider emotional intelligence as a moderating variable affecting the relationship between attachment styles and relationship quality would be done.

## RESULTS

**Descriptives Graphs and Table:** Graph no. 1 shows us the age distribution within the sample that was taken up for research. The inclusion criteria included being within the age range of 18-26 years, as the study focused on Indian Young Adults.



Graph no 1. Descriptives table for attachment styles, emotional intelligence, and relationship quality



Graph no. 2. Descriptives table for attachment styles, emotional intelligence, and relationship quality

**Table no. 1. Descriptives table for attachment styles, emotional intelligence, and relationship quality**

	N	M	Median	SD	W	p
Secure	51	3.82	3.80	.431	.974	.326
Avoidant	87	4.07	4.00	.437	.942	< .001
Dismissive	91	3.99	4.00	.443	.976	.098
Anxious	78	3.59	3.50	.451	.969	.054
EI	307	124	124	14.0	.996	.731
RQ	307	78	79	19.9	.975	<.001

N: total number of responses; M: mean; SD: standard deviation

**Table 2. Correlation analysis table for attachment styles and emotional intelligence**

Variable	Correlation with EI	p
Secure	.008	.953
Avoidant	.084	.439
Dismissive	.067	.529
Anxious	-.098	.396

**Table 3. Moderation analysis table for attachment styles, emotional intelligence, and relationship quality**

Moderator	Estimate	SE	Z	p
Dismissive * EI	.522	.219	-1.79	.073
Anxious * EI	-.637	.259	-2.461	.014
Secure * EI	.453	.271	1.671	.095
Avoidant * EI	.186	.271	.689	.491

SE: standard estimate

**Table 4. Correlation between Relationship Quality and Attachment Styles**

Variable	Correlation with RQ	p-value
Secure	.176	.216
Dismissive	-.068	.521
Anxious	-.012	.914
Avoidant	.008	.941

RQ: relationship quality

**Table 5. Correlation between Relationship Quality and Emotional Intelligence**

Variable	Correlation with EI	p-value
RQ	.152	.018

Graph no. 2 focuses on highlighting the percentages of people who were previously in a relationship and who are currently in a relationship. As the graph shows, 55.4% (N=170) of participants from the sample were previously in a relationship, while 44.6% (N=137) of participants from the sample are currently in a relationship. As shown in Table 1, the descriptive statistics were computed for four attachment styles (Secure, Avoidant, Dismissive, and Anxious), as well as for Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Relationship Quality (RQ). Normality tests using the Shapiro-Wilk test were conducted to assess the distributions. Results showed that the distributions for Secure (W = .974, p = .326), Dismissive (W = .976, p = .098), and Anxious (W = .969, p = .054) attachment styles, as well as for EI (W = .996, p = .731), did not significantly deviate from normality. In contrast, the Avoidant attachment style (W = .942, p < .001) and RQ (W = .975, p < .001) showed significant deviations from normality. These findings indicate that while most distributions were normal, the Avoidant attachment style and RQ exhibited significant deviations.

**Inferential Statistics:** Table No. 2 shows the Pearson correlation between EI and Anxious, Secure, and Dismissive

Attachment Styles and a Spearman correlation between EI and Avoidant Attachment Style. Emotional Intelligence (M = 124, SD =14) is not significantly correlated with Secure (M = 3.82, SD =.431, r = .008, p = >.05), Anxious (M = 3.59 SD =.451, r = -.098, p = >.05), Dismissive (M = 3.99, SD =.443, r = .067, p = >.05) and Avoidant Attachment Style (M = 4.07, SD =.437, r = .084, p = >.05). As can be seen in Table 2. for the Secure attachment style, Pearson's r value was .008 with a p-value of .953, Pearson's r value was .067 for the Dismissive attachment style, with a p-value of .529, for Anxious attachment style it showed a Pearson's r value of -.098 and a p-value of .396 all of the indicative of no statistically significant correlation with EI. Avoidant Attachment and EI correlation analysis used the Spearman Rho correlation because avoidant attachment styles distribution deviations from normality. The rho value for Spearman correlation is rho .084 and has a p-value of .439, suggesting no statistically significant relationship exists between Avoidant Attachment style and Emotional Intelligence.

In summary, there were no significant correlations found between Secure, Avoidant, Dismissive, and Anxious Attachment Styles and Emotional Intelligence, meaning that the first hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between attachment style and emotional intelligence is rejected in the case of the population from which the data was collected. Table no. 3 highlights the moderation analysis done to understand the moderating effect of emotional intelligence (M = 124, SD =14) on the relationship between the different attachment styles and relationship quality. The outcome variable for the analysis was relationship quality (DV). The predictor variable for the analysis was attachment styles, and each attachment style was run differently at different levels of the variable. Only the interaction terms have been reported, considering the lack of a significant relationship between the moderating variable and IV and DV.

The interaction term for "Anxious \* EI" with a p-value of .014, below the threshold of p = .05, highlights that the moderation effect is statistically significant. The relationship has an estimate of -.6373, indicating a significant negative moderation effect, reinforcing that higher EI weakens the positive association between Anxious and the outcome. This suggests that the relationship between Anxious and the outcome variable is moderated in a negative direction by EI, meaning that as EI increases, the positive relationship between Anxious and the outcome is weakened. The standard error (SE) of .259 measures the precision of this estimate. Thus, we see that there is no significant moderating effect that can be seen in other attachment styles and emotional intelligence on the predicting variable of Relationship Quality.

The 'Dismissive \* EI,' 'Avoidant \* EI,' and 'Secure \* EI' have p-values of .043, .095, and .491, respectively, which highlights that there is no significant moderating effect of Emotional Intelligence when it comes to Dismissive, Avoidant and Secure attachment styles and its relationship with Relationship Quality. This shows that the third hypothesis, 'Emotional Intelligence acts as a moderating variable in the relationship between Attachment Styles and Relationship quality,' was only partially proven. Then, the fourth hypothesis, 'Emotional Intelligence does not act as a moderating variable in the relationship between Attachment Styles and Relationship quality,' was rejected. Table No. 4 shows a Spearman correlation analysis to understand the relationship between



Relationship Quality (RQ) and the different Attachment Styles. The sixth hypothesis states, 'There is a significant positive relationship between Attachment Styles and Relationship Quality.' The results indicate that Relationship Quality ( $M = 78$ ,  $SD = 19.9$ ) is not significantly correlated with Secure ( $M = 3.82$ ,  $SD = .431$ ,  $\rho = .176$ ,  $p > .05$ ), Anxious ( $M = 3.59$ ,  $SD = .451$ ,  $\rho = -.012$ ,  $p > .05$ ), Dismissive ( $M = 3.99$ ,  $SD = .443$ ,  $\rho = -.068$ ,  $p > .05$ ), and Avoidant Attachment Style ( $M = 4.07$ ,  $SD = .437$ ,  $\rho = .008$ ,  $p > .05$ ); thus highlighting that there is no significant relationship between the variables under study. Therefore, the sixth hypothesis is rejected, and the fifth hypothesis, 'There is no significant relationship between Attachment Styles and Relationship Quality.' is proven. As shown in Table 4, the correlation analysis between attachment styles and Relationship Quality (RQ) revealed no significant relationships. For the Secure attachment style, the correlation with RQ was  $\rho = .176$ , and the p-value was  $p = .216$ , indicating no statistically significant correlation. This suggests that individuals with secure attachment styles do not show a strong relationship quality as measured in this sample. The Dismissive attachment style exhibited a correlation of  $\rho = -.068$  with a p-value of  $p = .521$ , indicating no significant correlation. In the case of the Anxious attachment style case, the Spearman correlation value was  $\rho = -.012$  with a p-value of  $p = .914$ , demonstrating no statistically significant relationship between them. This result suggests that anxious attachment style does not negatively impact the relationship quality of the participants. Lastly, the Avoidant attachment style showed a Spearman correlation of  $\rho = .008$  and a p-value of  $p = .941$ , with relationship quality. This highlights that avoidant attachment style does not have a significant correlation with the variable of relationship quality. In conclusion, the results show that, among the population sampled, there are no significant relationships between Secure, Dismissive, Anxious, or Avoidant attachment styles and Relationship Quality. As a result, this study does not support the premise that attachment styles and relationship quality are significantly correlated. Table No. 5 shows a Pearson correlation analysis that was conducted to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and relationship quality quotient (RQ). The results indicated a statistically significant positive correlation between EI and RQ,  $r(305) = .135$ ,  $p = .018$ ,  $r(305) = .135$ ,  $p = .018$ ,  $r(305) = .135$ ,  $p = .018$ . This suggests that higher levels of emotional intelligence are associated with higher resilience quotients.

## DISCUSSION

There were three different main hypotheses and three null hypotheses being considered for this research. The first hypothesis says that "There is a significant positive relation between Attachment Styles and Emotional Intelligence." This hypothesis was rejected because there was no significant correlation between attachment styles and emotional intelligence. This suggests that the second hypothesis, "There is no significant relation between Attachment Styles and Emotional Intelligence." was accepted. There were four levels to the variable of attachment styles, Secure Attachment Style, Dismissive Attachment Style, Fearful Avoidant Attachment Style, and Anxious Attachment Style. The data was analyzed using participant scores on these attachment styles and emotional intelligence, highlighting that emotional intelligence is not significantly correlated with Secure, Anxious, Dismissive, or Avoidant Attachment Styles. The reason for this

can be understood through the existing literature, which points out that though there is a significant and positive relationship between secure attachment and emotional intelligence, there is a negative and significant relationship between insecure attachment styles (Hajiabolzadeh, 2014). However, in the Indian young adult context, this relationship may not hold well due to several other variables. Cultural context is an important factor within which attachment styles develop. Research studies indicate that attachment styles are learned from an early age through different forms of socialization, whereby there is a significant difference in one culture compared to another (Olhaberry, 2024). For instance, the cultural beliefs relating to parenting that are commonly seen in Indian society focus more on the family and its duties to the society and community, which may lead to attachment style patterns that are unique and different from individualistic cultures. This may affect emotional intelligence because secure attachment is usually accompanied by better regulation of emotions and skills in interpersonal relationships (Taheri *et al.*, 2019; Mishra & Singh, 2022). The third hypothesis says that 'There is a significant relationship between Attachment Styles and Relationship Quality,' which was rejected considering the lack of relationship between the four attachment styles and relationship quality, leading to the fourth hypothesis, 'There is a significant relationship between Attachment Styles and Relationship Quality' being proven.

A developmental perspective on romantic relationships asserts that the quality of their relationships during young adulthood is highly associated with their engagement with family early in life. Generally, close parent-child interactions have been shown to promote relational skills that can buffer against insecure attachment styles (Xia *et al.*, 2018; Dinero *et al.*, 2011). This might indicate that the quality of familial relationships is acting as a buffer that allows young adults to handle relationships more effectively, regardless of attachment styles. Therefore, this nonsignificant correlation between attachment styles and relationship quality may be because of a compensatory effect of positive interactions with family members. Another finding is that the length of relationships may moderate the association between attachment styles and relationship quality. Longer relationships may allow the partners to build up coping and relational skills, compensating for the detrimental effects of less secure attachment types (Hadden *et al.*, 2013; Li & Chan, 2012). For instance, the cultural form of arranged marriages and the slow development of romantic love with Indian young adults could allow for a scenario whereby relationship quality improves over time and has nothing to do with the initial attachment pattern. In addition, psychological constructs like rejection sensitivity and maladaptive relationship cognitions may also add to it. Individuals with an insecure attachment style are often said to be more rejection-sensitive and, thus, comparatively more inclined toward relational aggression and dissatisfaction (Choi, 2023). However, if placed in supportive environments or relationships that help create emotional security, the negative consequences from these adults' attachment styles may not have to be fully enacted, so their attachment style would not highly correlate with the quality of the relationship. The study's results highlight no moderating effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship between Secure, Dismissive, and Fearful Avoidant Attachment Styles. In contrast, a low moderating effect of Emotional Intelligence can be seen in the relationship between Attachment Styles and Emotional Intelligence. The third hypothesis of the research suggests that 'Emotional Intelligence acts as a moderating

variable in the relationship between Attachment Styles and Relationship quality.' which is partially proven by the results and the hypothesis that 'Emotional Intelligence does not act as a moderating variable in the relationship between Attachment Styles and Relationship quality.' is rejected. As discussed, the reason for this can be understood through the effect of culture, which plays a vital role in shaping an individual's attachment style, personality traits, and situational aspects. Individuals with insecure attachments who fear or avoid relationships often struggle to regulate their emotions, thus highlighting a struggle to control and interact socially, leading to low relationship quality (Scarlat, 2021). This suggests that while high emotional intelligence can facilitate better relationship dynamics, insecure attachment can nullify these advantages, resulting in poorer relationship outcomes. In contrast, a secure attachment style provides a base for adaptive emotional regulation essential for working towards healthier interpersonal relationships. Moreover, individuals with secure attachments also have an adequate coping mechanism and even greater relationship satisfaction. Thus, the mediating role of emotional intelligence could be negated (Marganska *et al.*, 2013). This results in a weak moderating effect of EI for people with a secure attachment style.

People with an anxious attachment tend to experience the most turbulent relationship and dissatisfaction. Generally speaking, anxious attachment is associated with increased sensitivity to emotional cues and an apprehension of abandonment, in which there is significantly more anxiety in relationships. Although emotional intelligence might mitigate the given individuals and help them manage emotional responses and improve the quality of relationships, the moderation effect does not extend to secure and avoidant attachment styles because their different strategies for emotional regulation and interpersonal processes predominate. According to Taheri *et al.* (2019), failure to cope with stressful events in individuals with insecure attachment styles, especially anxious attachment, aggravates problematic relationships. Overall, apart from the expression of individual emotions being overshadowed by the interests of harmony in groups in collectivist cultures like India, leading to lower emotional intelligence, aspects of social desirability are likely to have played a role in these answers, too. Wanting to answer questions based on what they think is 'acceptable' or probably what the 'other gender' would expect from them could have biased the responses and showed a different image of attachment styles and emotional intelligence. Many of the responses were collected from the couples. At the same time, they sat side by side, which is likely to have further increased the influence of social desirability while responding to the questions. Personality aspects of neuroticism and less openness to experience, commonly found in an Indian community where emotional expression is not encouraged, could have also created a distorted image of the variable presentation.

The research done on Indian young adults highlights that there is no significant correlation between attachment styles, emotional intelligence, and romantic relationship quality. However, emotional intelligence and relationship quality have a slight positive correlation. The moderating role of emotional intelligence on the relationship between attachment styles and relationship quality was also limited only to the anxious attachment style. It wasn't replicated in other attachment styles (secure, fearful, avoidant, and dismissive). These findings show a deviation from the general understanding of dynamics shared between the three variables, but also welcome opportunities for

further research on the population to better understand the role of these variables in their lives and increasing consensus of loneliness. The findings will be highly influential as they offer valuable cross-cultural insights into the evolving nature of modern relationships. Understanding the cultural nuances of attachment and emotional intelligence is essential, and this study expands the existing literature by exploring these dynamics in a collectivist context, complementing Western-centric findings. As young adults navigate relationship challenges amid shifting social expectations, our research highlights the moderating role of emotional intelligence in attachment-related difficulties, contributing to a broader understanding of relational well-being.

**Ethical Considerations:** Informed consent was obtained from the students and working individuals approached for the study and were assured of the confidentiality of the data. The participants had the right to withdraw from participating in the research whenever they wished. Assurance was given that data would not be shared with anyone, and the identities of the individuals would be kept confidential, too. The data would only be handled by the researcher and the research guide; therefore, any information leaking would not be possible.

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