

THE INFLUENCE OF ATTACHMENT STYLES ON PROACTIVE BEHAVIOUR AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IJEBU NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OGUN STATE

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ABSTRACT

The ability to have close relationships with other people is one of the greatest characteristics of a healthy personality. Close relationships have a significant impact on how people develop personally and socially. A lack of secure attachment can cause problems with emotion control and social interaction, making a person more prone to psychological distress, loneliness, and depression. The research hypotheses were validated using the percentage method and the student t-test of independence. A questionnaire was used to collect data for the analysis. The study involved 150 adolescents who were randomly selected from a stratified sample of students in all secondary schools in the Ijebu North Local Government Area. The study found that proximity avoidance has a significant influence on proactive behavior among adolescents in secondary schools ($t(148) = -9.538$, $P = 0.05$). Secure attachment styles were also found to have a significant influence on proactive behavior among secondary school adolescents ($t(148) = 11.805$, $P = 0.05$). Preoccupied attachment styles were also found to have a significant influence on proactive behavior among adolescents in secondary schools ($t(148) = -12.646$, $P = 0.05$). Finally, analysis of hypothesis four revealed that fearful attachment style has a significant influence on proactive behavior among adolescents in secondary schools in the Ijebu North Local Government area since ($t(148) = -12.472$, $P = 0.05$). Among other things, the study suggested that parents should support the growth of a strong and long-lasting attachment bond with their children.

Keywords: Attachment styles, proactive behavior, adolescents, personality, and depression

INTRODUCTION

The capacity for intense interpersonal relationships is one of the main traits of a healthy personality. A person's personal and social development is significantly impacted by close interactions (Atilgan 2011). Lack of a solid relationship can cause problems with emotion control and social interaction, making a person more prone to psychological anguish, seclusion, and depression (Ouellette and Di-Placido, 2001). If a relationship

exhibits certain characteristics, such as proximity, I look to the attachment figure as a secure base from which to explore the outer world. In other words, attachment behaviour can be regarded as any form of behaviour that causes a person to seek out or cling to a preferred person. Individual attachment differences often emanate from prompt encounters with caregiver availability (secure style), inconsistency (anxious style), or persistent unavailability (avoidant style). According to Davila, Bradbury, Cohan, and Tochluk (1997), severe incidents later in life can also have a negative impact on attachment types (Davila, Bradbury, Cohan, & Tochluk, 1997). A person's attachment style often stabilises in adulthood, and it is best understood in terms of avoidance and anxiety-related traits (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2005). Adults who struggle with attachment anxiety frequently have a weak sense of self and a great need for closeness and support from others. Adults with high levels of attachment anxiety have a poor sense of themselves and a strong desire for intimacy and support from others. However, nervous adults often worry about the erratic availability of other people's availability and are afraid of being rejected or abandoned (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2005).

Children require the assistance of their caregiver to acquire the self-capabilities that allow them to be able to regulate, control, and react to stressful events and situations in an acceptable manner because they are not born with the capability to manage emotions. When these self-capabilities are not well established during childhood, it causes problems with self-soothing and the development of the tendency to look for unhealthy ways to manage and cope with bad feelings, which can lead to aggressive or self-injurious behaviours in adulthood. Insecure attachments may impede the development of appropriate self-control abilities. The individual might be left without the ability to control their arousal levels and fear in reaction to danger or to formulate a suitable response (Briere, 2002). Proactive behaviour is a "self-initiated and future-oriented action that attempts to modify and enhance the situation or oneself" (Parker, Williams, and Turner in 2006). This explanation outlines three characteristics that are shown here as the basis for numerous effective actions (such as speaking up, taking charge, proactive socializing, etc.). (Frese & Fay, 2001). First, proactive behaviour is self-initiated, which implies that it is carried out voluntarily and without explicit direction. Second, since proactive action is future-focused, it shows that it tries to handle anticipated problems or opportunities. Thirdly, proactive behaviour is change-oriented; it requires being prepared to change circumstances or oneself in order to forge a different future rather than simply reacting to them. As a result of the numerous internal working models, likely behavioural patterns are produced, which are frequently referred to as "attachment styles." Attachment is a form of conduct characterised by being near to or estranged from a chosen and/or notable someone. Attachment behaviour does not only occur in infancy; it can also be seen in childhood,

adolescence, and adulthood. One of the primary tenets of the attachment theory is that it endures for the whole life of a person. (Bowlby, 1980).

Despite its benefits, proactive behaviour is not necessarily easy to encourage. Being proactive entails looking toward a new future, which brings about ambiguity and makes it impossible to predict how one's activities will turn out. Proactivity also entails bringing about change, and colleagues and superiors are often more comfortable with the status quo and do not necessarily welcome change. A supportive environment where staff members are encouraged to try out various methods of doing their work without worrying about potential hurdles is likely to foster proactivity because of the potential uncertainties and dangers associated with proactive behaviour (Parker & Collins, 2010). This conceptualization is based on two orthogonal dimensions: the self-image and the image of others. The resulting four categories can be taken in terms of the working model's positive and negative valences for these two dimensions. The secure style tends to see others and oneself positively. Self-image and the image of others are the two orthogonal dimensions around which this paradigm is built. The working model's positive and negative valence of these two dimensions can be used to interpret the four groups that resulted. The dismissing style leans toward positive understanding of others and oneself, conforming to the previous avoidant group, whereas the previous model had anxious and ambivalent people as a single group. Bartholomew and Horowitz's (1991) model divides the group into two. The preoccupied attachment style is characterised by seeing oneself negatively while seeing others positively. This result is determined by self-acceptance and the struggle to obtain the acceptance of others. The fearful style has a negative opinion of itself and others (Bartholomew and Perlman 1994).

Research Questions

The following research questions were guided by this study:

1. How will closeness play a significant role in shaping proactive behavior?
2. Does a secure attachment style play a significant role in shaping proactive behavior?
3. What is the role of the preoccupied attachment style? It plays a significant role in shaping proactive behavior.
4. What is the fearful attachment style? is important in shaping proactive behavior.

Hypothesis

1. The hypotheses for this study were tested using the t-test as an independent measure.
2. There is no significant influence of closeness avoidance on proactive behavior among adolescents.
3. There is no significant influence of secure attachment styles on proactive behavior among adolescents.
4. Preoccupied attachment styles have no significant influence on proactive behavior in adolescents.
5. There is no significant influence of the fearful attachment style on proactive behavior among adolescents.

The Theoretical Framework and Empirical Review

Attachment theory

This study's theoretical foundation is attachment theory. This theory was proposed by Bowlby in 1969. This theory holds that a child's attachment to his or her parents determines the interpersonal behaviour of that child throughout the rest of his life. Bowlby's evolutionary theory of attachment states that children are naturally predisposed to create bonds with others because doing so will improve their chances of surviving in the outside world. He claims that attachment theory stresses that the objective of the early object relationship is to offer a child a sense of security in a frightening environment. He argued that in order to increase their chances of survival, children are evolutionarily predisposed to create bonds in early life. Thus, they are genetically prepared to internalise social and emotional interactions with caregivers.

He also maintains that because bonding in early life increases a child's chances of survival, children are biologically predisposed to internalise social and emotional interactions with caregivers. A secure attachment, according to Ainsworth, predicts a child's healthy development in terms of academic achievement, peer connections, self-worth, and identity formation. Based on the relationships between the self and others, other representations begin to form between the child and its primary caregivers; Bowlby dubbed these "internal working models," which serve as models for future relationship formation and maintenance (Bowlby, 1988). For instance, this may imply whether the child believes they are worthy of respect, whether they can trust other

people, and other things. A large body of research has shown that people with obnoxious childhood histories are more likely to experience anxious attachments as adults. But it is not inescapable (Morton & Browne, 1998). This could indicate, for instance, whether the youngster believes they are worthy of respect, whether they can trust other people, and other things. Bowlby (1988) assumed that while childhood attachment is biologically programmed for every person, the type or style of attachment is determined by the child's upbringing. Attachment to others continues to play a central role in interpersonal behaviour throughout one's life. This theory is crucial to this study because it highlights that the main goal of early object relationships is to provide children with a sense of security in frightening environments.

An Empirical Literature Review

Akinyi, Odongo, and Aloba (2019) studied the association between secure attachment style and relational aggressiveness. The study used the Bandura (1969), Bowlby (1973), and Ainsworth (1969) theories of aggression and attachment. Several sampling methods, such as random sampling, cluster random sampling, and purposeful sampling techniques, were employed to gather the data. Questionnaires on parent-child attachment and relational aggression were used to collect quantitative data from parents, while interview schedules were used to gather qualitative information from instructors. An observation checklist was also employed to gather data. The professionals also translated the questionnaire into the Luo language. Thematic analysis was utilised to analyse the qualitative data, while descriptive and inferential statistics like Pearson correlation and linear regression were employed to analyse the quantitative data. The findings revealed a moderately negative correlation between secure attachment and relational aggressiveness in preschoolers ($n = 236$; $r = -.679$; $p < 0.05$). The study suggests that the Kenya Institute for Curriculum Development include the best attachment type in the pre-service teacher preparation program's curriculum.

Majimba (2017) investigated how attachment styles affect the academic performance of adolescents in expensive secondary schools in Nairobi County. The Behavioral Systems Questionnaire (BSQ) was used to evaluate the study's instruments. The findings also showed a statistically significant negative correlation between academic performance and anxious attachment patterns. Additionally, this study revealed that adolescents who were firmly bonded performed better than their insecure classmates. Parents who place excessive expectations on their adolescents may be blamed for the increasing tension and pressure on students during the exams.

Ebimoboere and Ekeh (2021) investigated parental attachment styles as correlates of school adjustment in primary school pupils in the Rivers East Senatorial District. The aim

of this study was to determine the extent to which attachment styles (secure, ambivalent, and avoidant) correlate independently and collectively with school adjustment. Simple random sampling and proportionate sampling methods were used. The study was also guided by four research questions and four null hypotheses. The two instruments used for the study were the Attachment Style Questionnaire and the Adjustment Inventory for School Students. For data analysis, simple regression and multiple regression analyses were used. This study showed that the avoidant attachment style had a significant relationship with school adjustment but no such relationship with the secure attachment style or the ambivalent attachment style. Additionally, the findings indicate a combined, significant, and positive relationship between the three attachment patterns and school adjustment. The study concluded that parents should foster a supportive home atmosphere that will help their kids feel more confident, since doing so will help the children feel comfortable outside the home and help them acclimate to school activities. Ehibudu and Obikoya (2017) conducted a study on family conflict and attachment styles as indicators of school adjustment in public senior secondary school pupils in Rivers State. The following metrics were used to analyse the data: mean, standard deviation, Pearson product moment correlation, and multiple regression. The results show that secure attachment styles ($r = .461$), ambivalent attachment styles ($r = .461$), and avoidant attachment styles ($r = .518$) all predict school adjustment, respectively. The findings reveal a strong link between attachment styles and academic adjustment ($P. 05$).

Bin-Bin (2017) studied academic achievement and parent-adolescent bonding. The correlations between adolescents' attachment relationships with both their parents and their academic adjustment were further explored in the study, as was the potential mediation role of self-worth. The population for the study was comprised of 384 Chinese adolescents from Shanghai public schools, of whom 49.6% were male and had an average age of 15.13 years. They completed self-reported questionnaires on their academic involvement, self-worth in general, mother-adolescent attachment, father-adolescent attachment, and school grades. The findings showed that higher levels of academic involvement among the adolescents were connected with their relationships with both parents. Adolescents who had strong parent-adolescent attachment were more likely to have strong self-worth, which in turn boosted their academic engagement and raised their high school grades.

Bhattacharyya and Pradhan (2015) studied how adolescents' coping mechanisms are affected by perceived paternal parenting methods. In the study, moderators such as family structure, adolescent gender, and the father's income were considered. The study's sample size was 180 people, with 45.6 percent being male and 54.4 percent

being female. In Kharagpur, West Bengal, India, adolescents in grades X–XI (77.2%) came from nuclear and joint families, while (22.8%) were chosen from a variety of schools in India. Analysis of variance and hierarchical multiple regression were used for data analysis. The findings showed that adolescents' views of paternal demandingness and autonomy-granting significantly predicted protective and helpful coping mechanisms among themselves. It was also revealed that the association between perceived paternal parenting style and coping mechanisms was moderated by the father's income and the adolescent's gender.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive-quantitative research design that combines a descriptive analysis of the variables of interest through discussion with a quantitative analysis using the data gathered on the variables. The data on how attachment style is influenced by proactive behaviour was primary in nature. The data was collected using a self-designed questionnaire. The population is further delimited to only junior secondary school students in Ogun State. The population is made up of both male and female students at the school. The population for the study was chosen using the purposive sampling procedure. A purposive sample of junior secondary school students in Ijebu North Local Government Area was selected, from which a stratified sample of five schools was drawn from Ago-Iwoye, Ijebu Igbo, and Oru/Awa. Out of the ten (10) selected schools, fifteen (15) students were drawn, making a total sample of one hundred and fifty (150) students. The size is thought to be adequate for carrying adequate estimation. Responses collected from the participants were sorted, coded, and analysed using the proper statistical techniques. The study employed both descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency and percentages are examples of descriptive statistics, whereas an independent student test is an example of an inferential statistic.

RESULTS

Table 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Sex of the respondents	Percentages
Male	64.7
Female	35.3
Age	
15 -19 years	28.7
20-24 years	64.0
25-29 years	7.3
Religion	
Christianity	22.7
Islam	63.3
Others	
Ethnicity	
Yoruba	71.3
Hausa	27.3
Igbo	1.3
Family Type	
Monogamy	44.7
Polygamy	55.3

Source: 2021 Fieldwork

The table on the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents indicates that 64.7% of the respondents were male, while females comprised 35.3%. This result shows that the bulk of the respondents were male. In terms of the age distribution of the respondents, the result shows that 60.0% were between 20 and 24 years of age. This result also signifies that the population is young. In terms of religion, 22.7% of the population were Christians, while 63.3% were Muslims, indicating that Muslims outnumbered Christians in the study area. According to the table, 71.3 percent of the respondents were Yoruba, 27.3 percent were Hausa, and 1.3 percent were Igbo. This result is expected since the study was carried out in a Yoruba-speaking area. The table also shows that 44.7% of the participants are from the monogamous family type, while the remaining 55.3% of the respondents are from the polygamous family type. This is evident in the religious results, which show that Muslims were more numerous than Christians and that Muslims are more known for polygamy than Christians.

Table 2: The influence of closeness avoidance on proactive behaviour among adolescents

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	T	P
Low	110	56.39	12.10	148	-9.238	<.05
High	40	78.28	14.67			

Source: 2021 Fieldwork

The findings above show that closeness avoidance has a considerable impact on adolescents' proactive behavior in secondary schools. ($t(148) = 9.238$; $P.05$) As a result, hypothesis 1, which asserts that closeness avoidance will not significantly affect adolescents' proactive behavior in secondary schools, is rejected. This reveals that closeness avoidance has a major impact on adolescents' proactive behavior in secondary schools in Ijebu North Local Government Area.

Table 3: The influence of secure attachment styles on proactive behaviour among adolescents

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	T	P
Low	118	56.42	12.26	148	-11.805	<.05
High	32	83.62	8.42			

Source: 2021 Fieldwork

Secure attachment styles were found to have a significant impact on proactive behavior among adolescents in secondary schools ($t(148) = 11.805$, $P 0.05$). Thus, hypothesis 2, which states that secure attachment types will not significantly affect adolescents' proactive behavior, is rejected. This suggests that adolescents in secondary schools in Ijebu North exhibit proactive behavior that is significantly influenced by secure attachment styles.

Table 4: The influence of pre-occupied attachment styles on proactive behaviour.

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	T	P
Low	43	29.28	13.08	138	-12.646	<.05
High	97	48.71	2.82			

Source: 2021 Fieldwork

The findings revealed that preoccupied attachment styles have a significant influence on proactive behavior among adolescents in secondary schools in Ijebu North Local Government Area ($t(148) = -12.646$, $P.05$). Therefore, the third hypothesis, which asserts

that preoccupied attachment styles will not have a major impact on proactive behavior among adolescents, is rejected. This result shows that proactive behavior among adolescents and deviant behavior among adolescents in secondary schools in Ijebu North are significantly influenced by preoccupied attachment styles.

Table 5: The influence of fearful attachment style on proactive behaviour

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	T	P
Low	47		11.35	148	-12.472	<.05
High	103	69.99	11.14			

Source: 20201 Fieldwork

The above results indicated that there is a significant influence of the fearful attachment style on proactive behavior among adolescents in secondary schools in Ijebu North since $t(148) = -12.472$, $P.05$. Thus, hypothesis four, which states that there will not be a significant influence of the fearful attachment style on proactive behavior among adolescents, is rejected. This result shows that a fearful attachment style has a significant influence on proactive behavior among adolescents in secondary schools.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion

From the analysis, the study found that attachment styles have a significant influence on proactive behavior among adolescents in secondary schools in the Ijebu North Local Government Area of Ogun State. The result of the test of hypothesis one established that closeness avoidance has a significant impact on proactive behavior among adolescents in secondary schools in Ijebu. The finding of test hypothesis two shows that secure attachment styles have a significant effect on proactive behavior among adolescents in secondary schools in Ijebu North. The analysis of hypothesis three also revealed that preoccupied attachment styles have a major impact on proactive behavior among adolescents in secondary schools in Ijebu North. Through the mediation of affective commitment, the findings also indicated that attachment security was related to lower levels of quitting intentions and lower levels of job burnout through the mediation of affective commitment. The secure style was also closely related to helpful behavior exhibited in favor of directors and colleagues. The avoidant approach has reliable relationships but is connected to exhaustion. The result was also consistent with the findings of Ryan (2014) on the relationship between the individual attachment styles of followers and their degrees of job satisfaction, employee engagement, and organizational commitment. The result also maintained a negative association between job satisfaction and anxious attachment. Despite being in opposition to the presumptive

predictions regarding commitment, the findings that anxious attachment and continuity commitment and avoidant attachment and normative commitment have a positive association instead contribute to the increase.

Summary

This study looked at the role of attachment styles on proactive behavior among adolescents in secondary schools in Ijebu North. This investigation is imperative because one of the most crucial characteristics of a healthy personality is the capacity for close interactions with others. People's personal and social development processes are significantly influenced by close relationships. A lack of a solid relationship can cause problems with emotion control and social interaction, making a person more prone to psychological distress, loneliness, and depression. Closeness avoidance has a significant influence on proactive behavior among adolescents in secondary schools, according to the study's findings ($t(148) = -9.238$; $P.05$). Secure attachment styles were also found to have a significant influence on proactive behavior among adolescents in secondary schools ($t(148) = 11.805$, $P.0.05$). The result also revealed that preoccupied attachment styles have a significant influence on proactive behavior among adolescents in secondary schools ($t(148) = -12.646$, $P.05$). Finally, the analysis of hypothesis four also revealed that fearful attachment style has a significant influence on proactive behavior among adolescents in secondary schools in the Ijebu North Local Government area of Ogun State since ($t(148) = -12.472$, $P.05$).

Conclusion

This study examines how attachment behaviors affect proactive behavior among adolescents in secondary schools in Ijebu North. Based on the results of the analysis of each hypothesis on the various attachment behaviors raised in the study, the study came to the conclusion that attachment behaviors have a significant impact on proactive behavior among adolescents in secondary schools in the Ijebu North Local Government Area of Ogun State.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were considered desirable:

- Parents should support their children in forming a strong and enduring attachment bond with them.
- The involvement in premarital sexuality between students with secure family attachment and those with ambiguous family attachment patterns is not significantly different.

- Parents should be extreme careful to notice when their children are developing an anxious-avoidant attachment style because these children are more likely to have premarital sexual urges.
- The development of a solid and long-lasting bond between children and their parents must begin in early life.
- Parents should go beyond parenting styles to monitor what their children do outside the home.

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