



Reducing Alexithymic Traits Using an Ideal Attachment Style Approach; A Correlational Study

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ABSTRACT

Recent studies underlie the relationship between subgroups of attachment styles and a different component of the alexithymic trait, based on attachment style, we can identify how a person regulation their emotions, copes with stressful environments, and expresses emotion appropriately. This research aimed to explore the relationship between subgroups of attachment style and alexithymic trait and examine attachment styles as a predictor variable of the alexithymic trait. The participants were 144 different adult samples from Bangladesh, India, and Nepal. All participants completed the Perth alexithymia questionnaire (PAQ) with 24 items and three components measure: difficulty identifying one's feelings (DIF); difficulty describing feelings (DDF) and an externally oriented thinking style (EOT); Attachment Style Questionnaire, which has 27 items to measure attachment types which measure ambivalent, avoidant and secure attachment style. Here we wanted to observe how different attachment styles lead to the alexithymic trait and how these subgroups correlate. The result found that secure attachment is moderately negatively correlated with the alexithymic trait, on the other hand, ambivalent and avoidant attachment styles are highly significant and positively correlated with alexithymic traits. This result will help to identify how attachment style correlated to alexithymic traits.

Keywords: Attachment, Attachment Theory, Attachment styles, Alexithymia.

1. Introduction

The present study is based on two important psychological terms that are related to emotion: alexithymic trait and attachment styles, which are interconnected to the human being; people want their lives more secure and organized, and people tend to seek protection, care, and respect knowingly or unknowingly. The purpose of the present study is how attachment styles lead to alexithymic traits. Emotions play a central role in people's cognition, behavior, relationships, and overall well-being. So, we can say that the correspondence between attachment style and alexithymic plays an important role in emotional regulation, effective communication, decision-making, adjustment so on. The study of the association between attachment styles and alexithymic is paramount to society because it sheds light on the emergence of emotional disorders and the influence of individual factors. This information can help develop focused therapies that improve mental health. Furthermore, fostering safe connections and improved control of emotions is facilitated by an awareness of how attachment patterns impact alexithymic.

1.1 Attachment

Attachment style refers to a child bonding with their caregiver and its effects on childhood and the whole life span. It is a strong emotional connection form between two people. John Bowlby founder of the attachment theory, according to his speech parent's or any caregiver's social and emotional response helps to make a schema about the world and themselves (Bowlby, 1969). The childhood experience with the caregiver would lead to the same expectations in later life, such as parents, friends, and love partners (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991).

1.1.1 Attachment theory

Childhood attachment and internal model

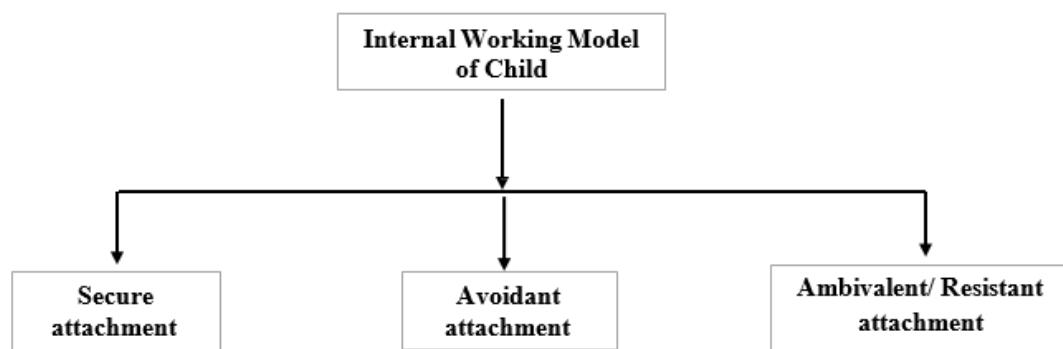
Attachment theory is a captivating psychological model that delves into how humans form emotional bonds and meaningful connections with others. It was pioneered by the renowned psychologist John Bowlby. According to Bowlby, the quality of our childhood emotional bonds can significantly impact our romantic relationships later in life. Interestingly, an individual may have a secure attachment to their parents during childhood but struggle with insecurity in their romantic relationships.

Bowlby's (1977) conceptualization of attachment theory revolves around the innate human tendency to develop deep emotional ties with specific individuals. This unique attachment system is believed to be an evolutionary mechanism designed to ensure infants remain close to their caregivers during potentially perilous situations.

More contemporary theories, such as those proposed by Sroufe & Waters (1977) and Ainsworth et al. (1978), suggest that the attachment system operates continuously to offer children a sense of "felt security." This feeling of security provides them with the confidence to explore and investigate their surroundings. The extent to which infants learn to rely on their attachment figures as sources of safety and comfort serves as a crucial indicator of the quality of their early attachment interactions.

In 1978, a group of experimenters - Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, and Wall - developed a unique laboratory technique known as the Strange Situation. It aimed to evaluate individual differences in newborn attachment security, building upon the hypothesis proposed by Bowlby. By observing the behaviors of the infant, the caregiver, and a stranger in a series of playroom settings, the Strange Situation provided valuable insights into the dynamics of attachment.

In Ainsworth's groundbreaking research, have come to understand that there exist three distinct forms of infant attachment: avoidant, ambivalent/anxious-resistant, and secure. These attachment styles manifest differently when the caregiver is present. Securely attached babies seek comfort and closeness, anxious-resistant babies display ambiguous behavior, and avoidant babies tend to shy away from contact and engagement (Ainsworth et al., 1978).



The present research question of attachment styles is conducted based on an internal working model of the child approach where three main attachment styles fall into secure and insecure attachment (anxious and avoidant) styles. The Strange Situation technique and the examination of maternal attachment classifications provide valuable insights into attachment security and its impact on relationships from infancy to adulthood. By observing and understanding individual differences in attachment, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of human behavior and work towards fostering healthy and secure relationships throughout life.

Lamb et al. (1985) brings forth the notion that the continuity of primary attachment connections serves as a mediator for the continuity of infant attachment patterns. In other words, the attachment bond formed with primary caregivers plays a pivotal role in shaping future attachment dynamics. Bowlby (1973) suggests that children internalize their early attachment experiences, developing models for interactions they will encounter beyond the confines of their family unit. These models include assessments of the self and the attachment figure's propensity for helpful behavior, forming the internal working model. The significance of a child's positive early experiences with their parents. These experiences lay the foundation for effective social and emotional communication with society at large. By internalizing these positive experiences, children acquire the necessary tools to navigate and navigate future interactions successfully. Attachment theory shines a light on the intricate web of emotional connections and its profound impact on various aspects of our lives. Understanding this theory allows us to appreciate the critical role attachment plays in shaping our relationships, both past and present.

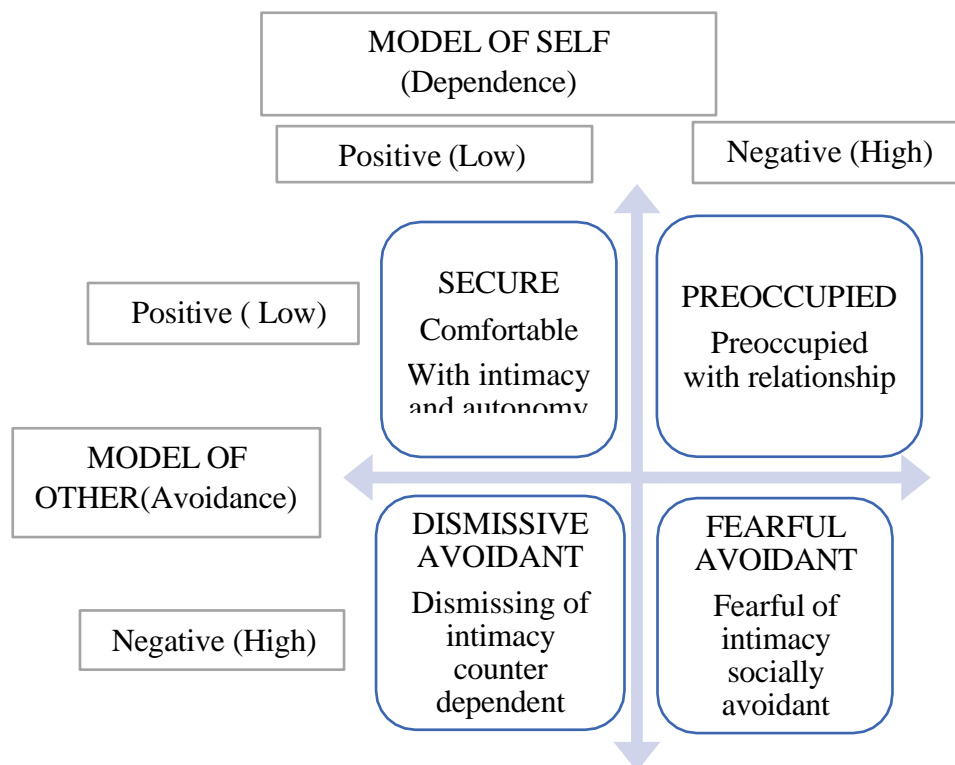
To complement the findings from the Strange Situation, researchers explored maternal attachment classifications as well. These classifications, as studied by Crowell and Feldman (1987), Grossmann et al. (1988), and Main et al. (1985), provided a clearer picture of child attachment security and the quality of

maternal interactions. Main's Adult Attachment Interview, developed by George, Kaplan, and Main (1987) and further expanded upon by Main and Goldwyn (1988), examined the representations of childhood attachment in adults.

One interesting discovery made by Kobak and Sceery (1988) was that dismissive individuals tended to perceive others as unsupportive while viewing themselves as stressed. On the other hand, secure individuals saw themselves as stressed and others as supportive. These findings shed light on the varied perspectives individuals hold about attachment and its impact on their relationships.

Insecure attachment was found to have repercussions on individuals' romantic experiences as well. Hazan and Shaver (1987) conceptualized romantic love as an attachment process. Those with insecure attachment styles reported more negative love experiences and fewer positive memories of early relationships. This suggests that early attachment experiences shape one's perception and approach to romantic relationships. A fourth attachment later identified by Main, & Solomon (1990) known as the disorganized attachment style.

Model of adult attachment



In the realm of attachment theory, Bowlby's adult attachment model serves as a crucial framework for understanding how individuals form emotional bonds and connections. Building upon Bowlby's work, Bartholomew synthesized four distinct patterns of attachment, each shaped by our perceptions of self and others. These attachment patterns influence our beliefs, behaviors, and relationships throughout our lives. According to Bartholomew (1990), the four attachment styles secure, preoccupied, dismissive, and fearful highlight the diverse ways in which individuals form and navigate their relationships.

The adult attachment model encompasses both internal and external validation. A vertical axis measures intimacy avoidance, ranging from low to high dependency, while a horizontal axis represents conceptual proximity. Fearful and dismissive attachment styles demonstrate resistance to intimacy and have distinct needs for validation from others. On the other hand, preoccupied and scared attachment types emphasize emotional closeness, relying heavily on interpersonal validation (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Main et al, 1985).

Secure Attachment:

A healthy perception of oneself and a trust that other people will embrace and encourage oneself are the foundations of security. People who exhibit stable attachment patterns have reasonable hopes for both their personal and interpersonal lives.

Preoccupied Attachment:

Approval-seeking behaviors are displayed by individuals with an anxious attachment style, which is motivated by a combination of anxiety and optimistic thoughts about others. Preoccupied attachment types might make it difficult for them to keep their partnerships going because of their incessant demand for validation.

Fearful-Avoidant Attachment:

Interpersonal reluctance is exacerbated for those with an avoidant-fearful attachment style by low expectations of others and doubt about one's. They fluctuate between wanting to get close and being afraid of being let down or disappointed.

Dismissive-Avoidant Attachment:

The traits of dismissive-avoidant attachment include low self-esteem and a depressing perspective on life. Those who identify with this attachment type typically prefer individuality over intimacy and move against close relationships.

Understanding one's attachment style serves as a vital tool in seeking appropriate support and fostering healthier relationships. By recognizing our patterns and tendencies, we can cultivate self-awareness and work towards building more fulfilling connections (Main et al., 1985).

1.2 Alexithymia

Peter Sifneos first used the term alexithymia in 1972 to refer to a situation where a person lacks the vocabulary to express their sentiments to others and is unable to comprehend the feelings they are experiencing. Alexithymia is when a person is unable to understand their feelings and does not understand others and also faces difficulty focusing their attention on their emotional state.

Alexithymia is associated with various cognitive, psychological, social, and neurological conditions, several researchers describe if the alexithymic trait is high, they tend to decline empathy, poor emotion management capacity, pathological gambling, substance use disorder, internet addiction, experience higher psychological distress, depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, schizophrenia, and somatic diseases like diabetes. Furthermore, according to research, this syndrome could be a result of some neurological disorders and injuries like Alzheimer's disease, dystonia, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, stroke, and traumatic brain injury are a few of them (e.g., Cook, Brewer, Shah, & Bird, 2013; Grynberg et al., 2012; Da Silva, Vasco, & Watson, 2017; Swart, Kortekaas, & Aleman, 2009; Mahapatra & Sharma, 2018; Aaron, Blain, Snodgrass, & Park, 2020; Bilotta, Giacomantonio, Leone, Mancini, & Coriale, 2015).

The four elements that make up alexithymic's multidimensional construct; Deficit in affect regulation, specifically referring to difficulty identifying feelings and distinguishing them from bodily sensations stemming from emotional activation, difficulty describing feeling to others, externally oriented cognitive style, and constricted imaginative processes or poverty of imagination (Lane et al., 1997; Luminet et al., 2006; Nemiah et al., 1976).

1.2.1 Types of Alexithymia

There are several types of alexithymic described such as; primary alexithymic which is caused by genetic factors; secondary alexithymic psychological trauma or direct damage to the brain region that may hamper emotion processing. Another type of alexithymic is organic which is also referred to as acquired emotional blindness inability to properly perceive and label own emotions due to brain damage and impaired ability to convey emotion verbally and non-verbally, another term used by specialists is "normative male alexithymic," which is defined as "the incapacity of males to put emotions due to traditional masculine standard (Messina, Beadle, & Paradiso, 2014; Karakis & Levant, 2012; Levant, Allen & Lien, 2014).

1.2.2 Etiology of alexithymia

According to certain theories, childhood experiences including traumatic incidents and/or a dysfunctional parent-infant interaction might cause alexithymic, also parental behavior during childhood plays a notable and crucial aspect in the development of alexithymic in later adulthood; According to attachment theory, a child's capacity to organize and manage their emotions is shaped by their caregivers' level of attunement to the infant's affective manifestations. This also helps the child develop an internal working model of attachment, which serves as a guide for future relationships (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Bowlby, 1969, 1988).

Because it explains the complex interplay between early connections, emotional awareness, and social functioning, the relationship between attachment patterns and alexithymic must be understood. People with alexithymic may struggle to build and maintain healthy relationships because of their difficulties understanding and expressing their emotions. Identifying and treating these issues can greatly enhance a person's psychological health and general quality of life. People with different attachment styles can overcome alexithymic issues through counseling and programs that increase emotional awareness and communication skills.

1.3 Models of Alexithymia

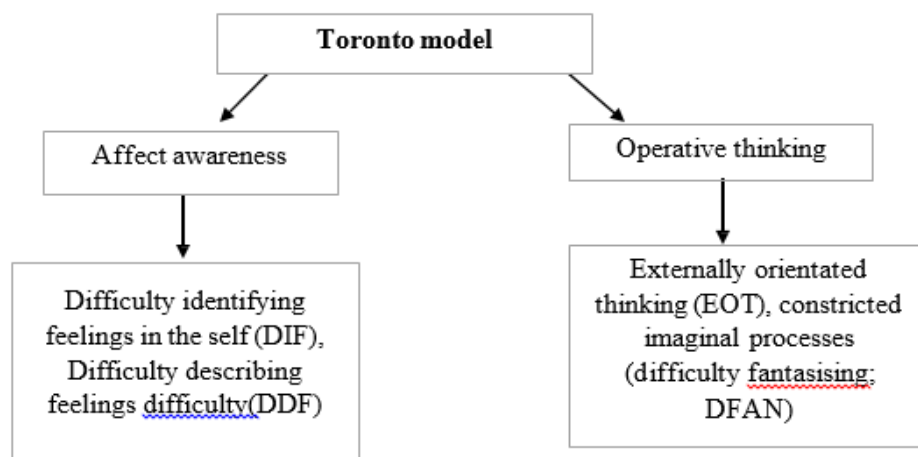
The comprehension of the alexithymic construct has advanced significantly thanks to the work of two well-known experimentation groups, generally mentioned as the Toronto and Amsterdam groups. They have

spearheaded recent efforts to advance and improve the idea.

Toronto model	Amsterdam model	Attention appraisal model
Affect awareness	Operative thinking	Cognitive alexithymic
DIF, DDF	EOT, DFAN	DDF, EOT DFAN, DEMO
		Affective alexithymic
		Difficulty appraising
		Difficulty attending
		DIF, DDF
		EOT

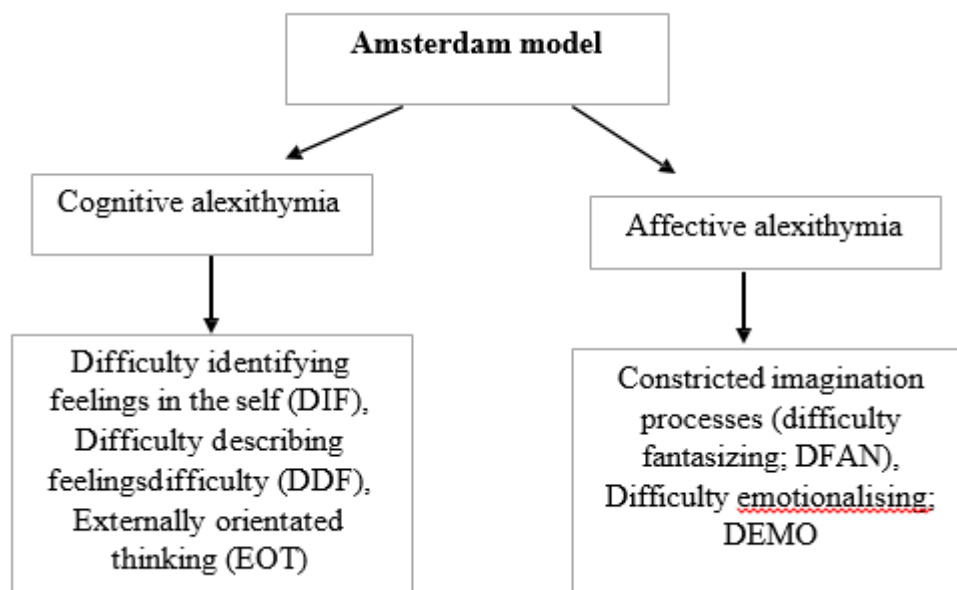
1.3.1 Toronto model

The Toronto group, with the direction of Taylor, Bagby, and Parker (1999), integrated Freudian viewpoints from Marty, de M'Uzan, Nemiah, and Sifneos to expand our knowledge of alexithymic. Four elements were discovered within the Toronto model, which was shaped by Bucci's, (1997) multiple code theory, and Lane & Schwartz's, (1987) cognitive-developmental theory of levels of emotional awareness: limited imaginary processes, external-focused thinking, trouble explaining emotions, and difficulties recognizing emotions. It became widely recognized and gave rise to tools such as the Toronto Structured Interview for Alexithymic (Bagby et al., 2006) and the Toronto Alexithymic Scale (Bagby, Parker, & Taylor, 1994).



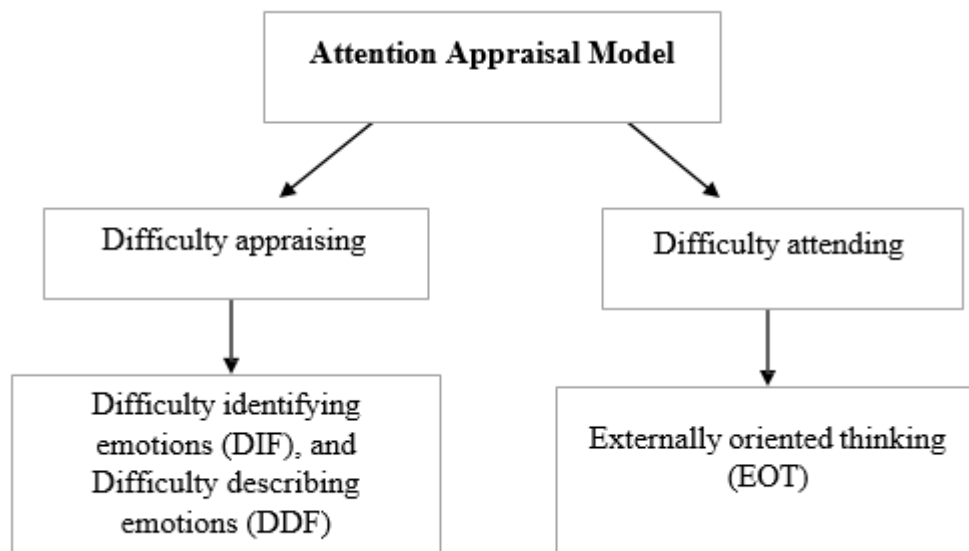
1.3.2 Amsterdam model

In collaboration with DIF, DDF, EOT, and DFAN in Toronto, a group in Amsterdam led by Vorst and Bermond (2001) added an element to the diagnosis of alexithymia: hyperemotional reactivity (DEMO). They present his two types of Bermond-Vorst alexithymia questionnaire (BVAQ), namely emotional (DFAN, DEMO) and cognitive (DIF, DDF, EOT) alexithymic. An orthogonal structure based on Nemiah and Sifneos (1970) provides a deeper understanding of emotions.



1.3.3 Attention appraisal model

Researchers have defined alexithymic in more detail and proposed the following components: externally oriented thinking (EOT), difficulty identifying emotions (DIF), and difficulty describing emotions (DDF). The attentional appraisal model considers alexithymic as a difficulty within the framework of emotion appraisal and integrates both Lane and Schwartz's emotion recognition theory and Gross' emotion regulation process. The terms EOT, DIF, and DDF refer to problems with attention and judgment that are contributing factors to "incompetent loss affective disorder." Here, we introduce an avoidant emotion management technique known as "avoidant alexithymic" that affects the stages of emotional processing in stressful situations (Suslow & Junghanns, 2002; Lundh et al., 2002; Luminet, Vermeulen, Demaret, Taylor & Bagby, 2006; Vermeulen, Luminet & Corneille, 2006; Gross, J.J., 2015a).



2 Review of Literature

The findings suggest that individuals who think inwardly and emotionally are more likely to form a deep emotional bond and connection with their primary caretaker. This study lends support to the idea that children and their primary carers have an emotional bond that is comparable to that of romantic relationships between adults (Hazan, C. & Shaver, P., 1987).

People with secure attachment styles exhibit less negative affect also they can make optimal relationships with others and in any difficult or distress situation they seek emotional support (Hindy & Schwarz, 1994; Rothbard & Shaver, 1994).

The researcher conducted a study on family-related environmental factors where the child doesn't receive the necessary guidance for express emotion, doesn't learn how to navigate and regulate emotions, and expression of emotion is actively discouraged this difficulty can persist into adulthood and contribute to the manifestation of alexithymic (Berenbaum and James, 1994).

During childhood and infancy period those who had secure attachment styles with their primary caregiver showed good interpersonal relationship and self-regulation skills rather than those who had insecure attachment styles (Bowlby, 1969; Bretherton, 1985; Tennant, 1988).

Studies on college students showed that inadequate bonding particularly with the mother exhibits difficulty communicating feelings, the development of affect, and the acquisition of cognitive skills for regulating emotions closely connected with childhood relationships with parents, especially the mother (Fukunishi, Sei, Morita, & Rahe, 1999).

According to the study, those with greater levels of alexithymic are less prioritized in relationships, feel more uncomfortable with proximity, and spend too much time thinking about relationships. This study supports the idea that an attachment theory perspective can offer helpful insights into the composite interlinkage between adult attachment behavior, relationship quality, and alexithymic traits, such as deficits in reasonable and affect regulation. This viewpoint emphasizes the significance of early attachment experiences in determining adult emotional development and functioning (Goleman., 1995; Krystal., 1988).

Several studies were conducted based on brain regions according to these findings, alexithymic may be caused by either a right hemisphere malfunction or a left hemisphere that is overactive (Blair, Morris, Frith, Perrett, & Dolan, 1999).

They were exposed to alexithymic and non-alexithymic participants to chimeric images of faces that combined emotive and unemotional parts. The results showed that alexithymic subjects had a weaker perception of facial expressions than non-alexithymic subjects and showed reduced leftward perceptual

bias (indicating decreased right hemisphere activation) (Jessimer and Markham, 1997).

Analysis of the Results of Inflammation of the Skin White patches or spots are left on the skin as a result of vitiligo, which is characterized by a loss of pigmentation in some parts of the skin. Melanin, the pigment that gives color to the skin, hair, and eyes, is produced by cells that undergo cellular destruction. Stress and alexithymic may be connected in some way, as well as social support. Insecure attachment, which might impede expressing and asking for assistance in close relationships, may be a contributing factor to the reported drop-in perceived support among vitiligo patients. In addition, if alexithymic-related social skill deficiencies are present, it could be difficult to forge and maintain social ties (Cozzarelli C., et.al., 1998; Florian V, et.al., 1995; Bartholomew K et. al.,1997).

Researchers found several links between attachment type attributes and the different alexithymic qualities. The restricted proximity avoidant attachment type characteristic made a significant DDF prediction. Because there would be fewer possibilities to share such experiences with others, greater isolation from attachment or support figures will likely lead to a decreased capacity to articulate one's emotions (Montebarocci, O., Codispoti, M., Baldaro, B., and Rossi, 2004).

High degrees of attachment anxiety people may have extremely intense emotions (such as panic/terror or fear of being valueless) that they are unable to control. As a result, this person unknowingly uses disordered gambling as an external regulator (Porcelli, 2009).

According to a recent study by Karvonen JT et al. (2005), individuals with somatization symptoms have a lower prevalence of alexithymic (6.0%) compared to subjects without such symptoms (4.8%). This outcome contrasts with that of a previous study by Burba et al, (2006), which found that adolescents with a somatoform pain disorder and higher levels of alexithymic did not have significantly higher levels of depression. In contrast, Saarijärvi et al. (2001) discovered that Alexithymic appeared to be related to the severity of depression in outpatients with major depression. According to Fonagy et al. (1996), people with dysthymia were more prone to lack confidence than those with major depressive illnesses.

In this study, alexithymic traits are also associated with violent personal behaviors that are socially inappropriate and cause many problems, while insecure attachment styles such as anxious, disconnected, and insecure attachment styles were found to be positively associated with aggressive and reckless behavior (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2002; Fraley & Brumbaugh, 2004)

Another study looked at the relationship between alexithymic, attachment style, and perceived parenting in adult alcoholic patients. The study highlighted that people with an avoidant attachment system were significant predictors in differentiating between alcoholics with high and low levels of alexithymic attributes. The results also showed that cognitive and social alexithymic has significant relations and affective alexithymic has insignificant relations. Avoidant attachment-type symptoms include discomfort with emotional connection, problems with trust, difficulty relying on others, and nervousness while around people (De Rick, A. and Vanheule, S., 2006)

Individuals with alexithymic, anxiety, and ambiguity frequently avoid going to social events because they have unpleasant feelings there engaging in behaviors like spending time on social media and Instagram. As alexithymic worsens, they will also avoid having direct interactions with other people and develop personal problems (Besharat, 2009). The outcome suggests that the levels of alexithymic are not different by gender. Also, research suggests that deteriorating family behavior control was related to externally oriented thinking and that impaired thought was connected to insufficient family problem-solving. Additionally, current research found that high levels of maternal control have issues with difficulty identifying and expressing feelings (Lumley et al., 1996; Montebarocchi et al., 2004; Pasini et al., 1996).

Mothers who have difficulty expressing and controlling their emotions may also have trouble controlling their emotions, which may show up as somatic or bodily issues, also people with ambivalent attachment styles may express their emotions more strongly to get their carers' attention and care, who they believe to be less attentive (Yürümez E, et al.; 2014).

Another study on undergraduate students showed that secure attachment with alexithymic has a negative association on the other hand ambivalent and avoidant attachment has a positive association with alexithymic where the mediating factor is self-regulation (Besharat and Salimian, 2014).

It's crucial to remember that the study did not prove a connection between interpersonal relationships, maternal emotional awareness, and the intensity of children's migraines. Instead, it contends that these elements might indirectly affect how youngsters form attachments and control their emotions (Tarantino, S. et al., 2018).

The researchers indicate that persons with a secure attachment style typically experience fewer adverse feelings and are better at building solid, supportive connections, whether in adolescence or adulthood. When in crisis, people with secure attachments can effectively ask for and receive emotional help. In contrast, persons with an insecure attachment style have lower amounts of good emotions and have more difficulty controlling stress, anxiety, despair, and other negative emotions (Lama M. Qaisy & Muna A. Abu Darwish, 2018).

Alexithymic and Facebook addiction are adversely correlated with this attachment type, therefore students with secure attachment styles are likely to experience lower levels of these problems. However, it has a positive correlation with dissociation, suggesting that people with secure attachment patterns may dissociate

more frequently (Toqeer, S., et al., 2021).

3 Research Methodology

3.1 Participants

The study focused on the healthy young adults, with data collected from a sample size of 144 individuals aged 18 to 35 years from Bangladesh, India, and Nepal.

Inclusion Criteria:

1. Participants of all genders.
2. Age range: 18 to 35 years.
3. Minimum educational qualification: Higher secondary level (10+2 Standard)
4. Proficiency in the English language.

Exclusion Criteria:

1. Individuals with psychiatric and neurological disorders.
2. Participants below 18 years of age.
3. Participants above 35 years of age.
4. Individuals who do not meet the minimum educational qualification of higher secondary level.

3.2 Materials

The study utilized a wide range of demographic factors and evaluation instruments, including gender, age, nationality, family structure, number of siblings, socioeconomic level, parenting family typologies, and working conditions for parents. The Perth Alexithymia Questionnaire (Preece et al., 2018) is a carefully crafted 24-item self-report questionnaire that completely examines a variety of characteristics of alexithymia with a Cronbach alpha of 0.96, including both positive and negative affective dimensions. It was one of several instruments used in the data collection paradigm. Alexithymia levels can be more fully understood thanks to this instrument, which makes it easier to derive five subscale scores and six composite scores. Increased alexithymia levels in participants are indicated by higher scores on this task. Moreover, Ahmad, Jahan, and Imtiaz's (2016) Attachment Style Questionnaire, which has 27 items to measure attachment types, was a crucial component of this research. The questionnaire showed noteworthy internal consistency, with a Cronbach alpha of 0.80, highlighting its validity in assessing research participants' attachment types. The combination of these demographic factors with carefully selected evaluation instruments makes for a comprehensive and solid investigation of the study goals.

3.3 Procedure

This investigation aimed to empirically look over the potential link between attachment style and the alexithymic characteristics. The study focused on adults aged 18 to 35, considering factors such as gender, education (with a minimum qualification of higher secondary level), and proficiency in the English language. Participants with psychiatric or neurological disorders were excluded, ensuring a more focused sample. Additionally, individuals outside the specified age range were not considered. Data collection was conducted through an online survey distributed via Google Forms in Bangladesh, India, and Nepal, employing purposive sampling. Before participation, participants were informed about the research objectives, and confidentiality was assured. A total of 170 responses were gathered based on various demographic criteria. Following scrutiny, 144 responses were deemed eligible for final analysis, with the remaining data excluded for not meeting the specified criteria. To examine the data that was gathered, the IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS)-26 student genre was employed.

3.4 Aim

The present study aimed to find which attachment style is more prone to alexithymic trait.

3.5 Objective

- To determine the relationship between secure attachment style, and alexithymic trait.
- To determine the relationship between ambivalent attachment style, and alexithymic trait.
- To determine the relationship between avoidant attachment style, and alexithymic trait.

3.6 Hypothesis

H₀₁: There will be no significant correlation between Secure attachment style and Alexithymic traits.

H₀₂: There will be no significant correlation between Ambivalent attachment style and Alexithymic traits.

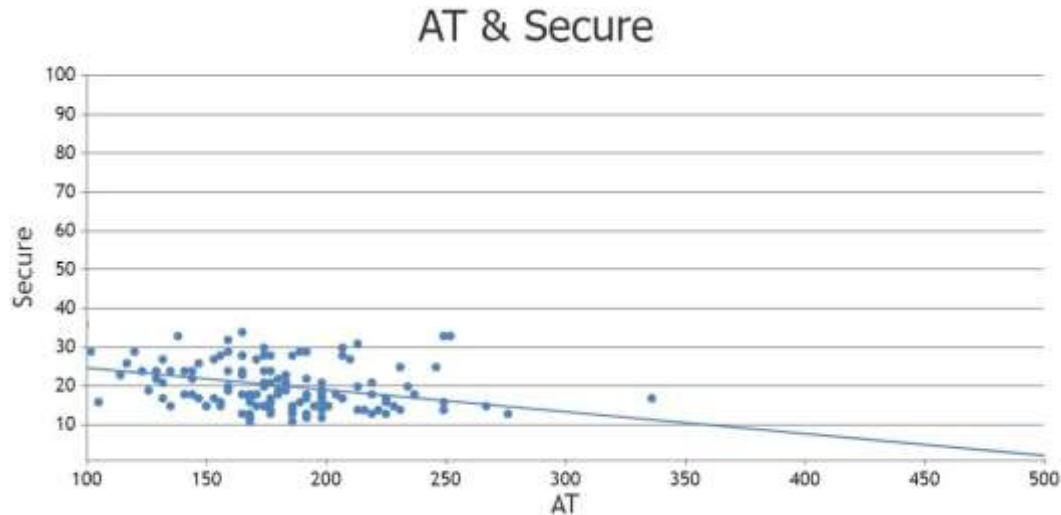
H₀₃: There will be no significant correlation between avoidant attachment style and Alexithymic traits.

4 Results

Table 4.1: Correlation between Secure attachment and alexithymic trait

	Alexithymic trait(AT)
Secure attachment	-.414**

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

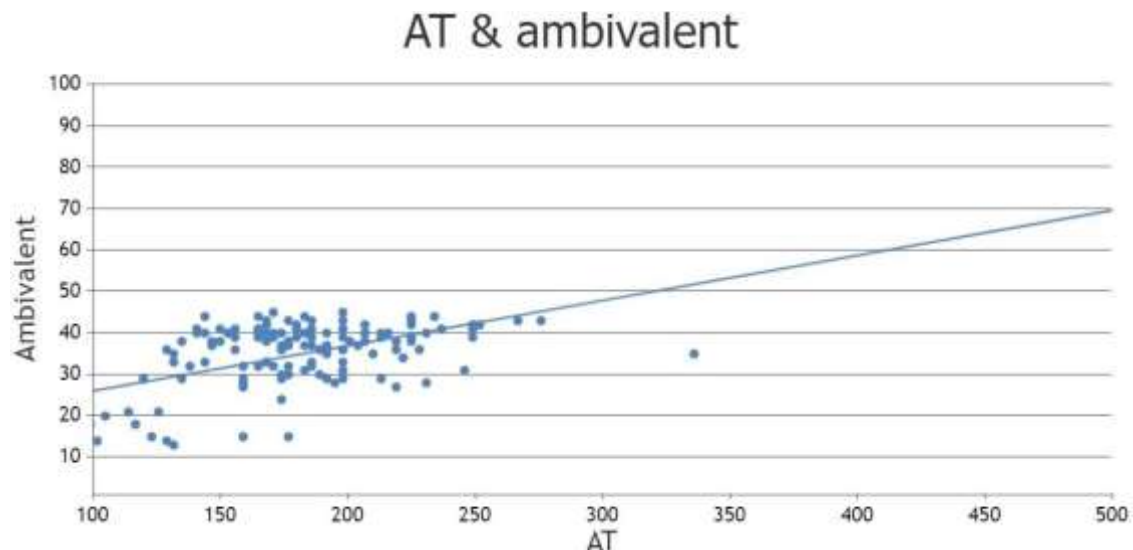


Pearson Product correlation between Alexithymic trait and Secure attachment was found moderately negative and statistically significant ($r = -.414^{**}$, $p < 0.01$). Hence, The Null hypothesis H_{01} is rejected. This shows if secure attachment increases it would lead to decreased alexithymic trait.

Table 4.2: Correlation between Ambivalent attachment and alexithymic trait

	Alexithymic trait(AT)
Ambivalent attachment	.610**

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

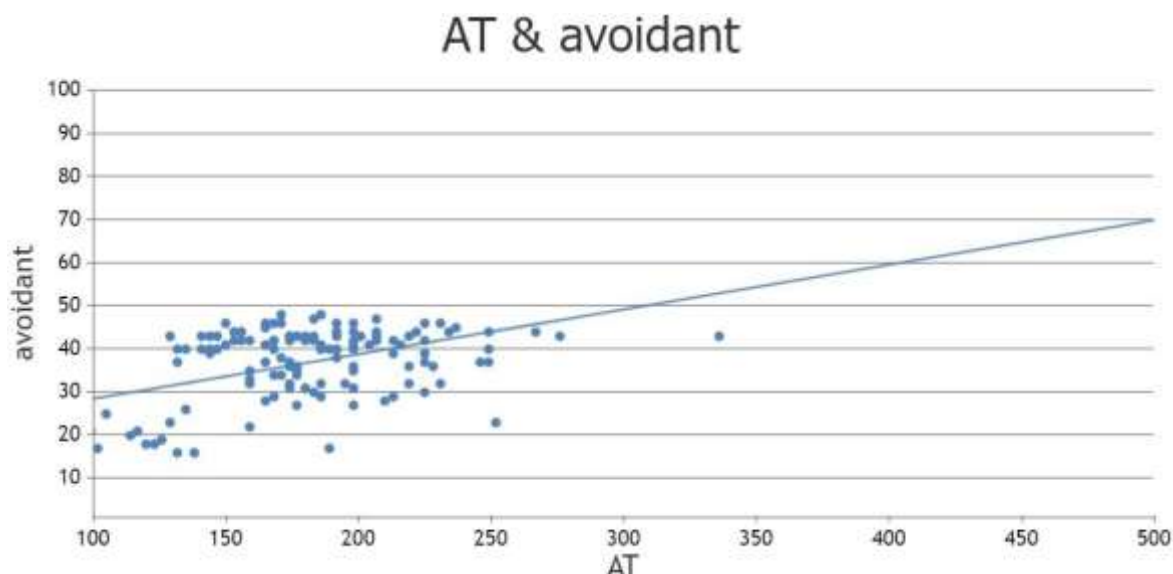


Pearson Product correlation between Alexithymic trait and Ambivalent attachment was found Highly positive and statistically significant ($r = .610^{**}$, $p < 0.01$). Hence, Null Hypothesis H_{02} is rejected. This shows that an increase in ambivalent attachment would lead to a higher alexithymic trait.

Table 4.3: Correlation between Avoidant attachment and alexithymic trait

	Alexithymic trait(AT)
Avoidant attachment	.539**

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).



Pearson correlation between Alexithymic trait and Avoidant attachment was found highly positive and statistically significant ($r = .539^{**}$, $p < 0.01$). Hence, The Null hypothesis H_{03} is rejected. This shows that an increase in avoidant attachment would lead to a higher alexithymic trait.

5. Discussion

The present study was designed to conduct an empirical investigation to find out whether alexithymic traits and attachment style have any correlation. The study utilized a wide range of demographic factors and evaluation instruments, including gender, age, nationality, family structure, number of siblings, socioeconomic level, parenting family typologies, and working conditions for parents.

The major objective of the academic work was to investigate and to observe the relationship between subgroups of attachment style, and alexithymic trait. Three hypotheses were formulated for the present study. The H_{01} stated that there would be a no significant relation between the alexithymic trait and secure attachment by applying Pearson's correlation it was found (Table:4.1) that there is a Moderately significant negative correlation between the alexithymic trait and secure attachment ($r = -.414$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that if the secured type of attachment styles is practiced during the child's development it is more likely that the child will have lesser alexithymic traits (lack of identifying, recognizing, and expressing of emotions).

Lama M. Qaisy & Muna A. Abu Darwish (2018) proposed that individuals with a secure attachment approach typically experience fewer pessimistic feelings and are better at building solid, supportive connections, whether in adolescence or adulthood. When in crisis, people with secure attachments can effectively ask for and receive emotional help.

Toqeer, S., et al. (2021) found that Alexithymic and Facebook addiction is adversely correlated with this attachment type, therefore students with secure attachment styles are likely to experience lower levels of these problems. However, it has a positive correlation with dissociation, suggesting that people with secure attachment patterns may dissociate more frequently.

The researcher conducted a study on family-related environmental factors where the child doesn't receive the necessary guidance for express emotion, doesn't learn how to navigate and regulate emotions, and expression of emotion is actively discouraged this difficulty can persist into adulthood and contribute to the manifestation of alexithymic (Berenbaum and James, 1994).

The H_{02} stated that there would be a no significant relation between the alexithymic trait and ambivalent attachment. By applying Pearson's correlation, it is found (Table:4.2) that there is a strongly significant positive correlation between the alexithymic trait and ambivalent attachment ($r = .610$, $p < 0.01$). previous researchers got some similar findings on this variable Yürümez E, et al., (2014) found that mothers who have difficulty expressing and controlling their emotions may also have trouble controlling their emotions, which may show up as somatic or bodily issues, people with ambivalent attachment styles may express their emotions more strongly to get their carers' attention and care, who they believe to be less attentive.

Shaver & Mikulincer (2002); Fraley & Brumbaugh (2004) support the result, of this study, alexithymic traits

are also associated with violent personal behaviors that are socially inappropriate and cause many problems, while insecure attachment styles such as anxiety, disconnected, and insecure attachment styles were found to be positively associated with aggressive and reckless behavior.

TheH₀₃ stated that there would be no significant relation between the alexithymic trait and avoidant attachment. By applying Pearson's product-moment correlation it was found (Table:4.3) that there was a highly significant positive correlation between the alexithymic trait and avoidant attachment ($r = .539$, $p < 0.01$). Some research findings supported the present result De Rick, A. and Vanheule, S. (2006) Another study looked at the correlation between alexithymic, attachment pattern, and perceived parenting in adult alcoholic patients. The study highlighted that people with an avoidant attachment style were significant predictors in differentiating between alcoholics with high and low levels of alexithymic traits. The results also showed that cognitive and social alexithymic has significant relations and affective alexithymic has insignificant relations. Avoidant attachment-type symptoms include discomfort with emotional connection, problems with trust, difficulty relying on others, and nervousness while around people.

Besharat (2009) proposed that individuals with alexithymic, anxiety, and ambiguity frequently avoid going to social events because they have unpleasant feelings there engaging in behaviors like spending time on social media and Instagram. As alexithymic worsens, they will also avoid having direct interactions with other people and develop personal problems.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, it may be said that the alexithymic trait may be influenced by attachment styles. Alexithymic traits and attachment style are very important for maintaining good mental health conditions. According to certain theories, childhood experiences including traumatic incidents and a dysfunctional parent-infant interaction might cause alexithymic, also parental behavior during childhood takes part in a significant and crucial part in the development of alexithymic in later adulthood; According to attachment theory, a child's capacity to organize and manage their emotions is shaped by their caregivers' level of attunement to the infant's affective manifestations. This also helps the child develop an internal working model of attachment, which serves as a guide for future relationships (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Bowlby, 1969, 1988).

Consequently, the findings of the present study will help education planners, researchers, and policymakers of Bangladesh, India, and Nepal to make appropriate and realistic policies. Also, it will help to understand alexithymic can cause depression and that depression leads to suicide tendency, so the present research result focuses on attachment style as the early component of later lifespan. According to a recent study by Karvonen JT et al. (2005), individuals with somatization symptoms have a lower prevalence of alexithymic (6.0%) compared to subjects without such symptoms (4.8%). This outcome contrasts with that of a previous study by Burba et al. (2006), which found that adolescents with a somatoform pain disorder and higher levels of alexithymic did not have significantly higher levels of depression. In contrast, Saarijärvi et al. (2001) discovered that Alexithymic appeared to be related to the severity of depression in outpatients with major depression. According to Fonagy et al. (1996), people with dysthymia were more prone to lack confidence than those with major depressive illnesses.

7. Limitation

Although the present study tried to maintain a sound methodology, nevertheless it was not free from drawbacks and limitations. One of these limitations was the small sample size ($N=144$). So, this sample may not be representative of the entire Bangladesh, India, and Nepal students.

Moreover, all the scales were self-report measures. So, factors like social desirability might contaminate the reliability of the results. Further studies may be conducted on a large sample to decide these issues. Notwithstanding these constraints, the result of the study provides basic foundations for future researchers in this field.

8. Future Direction

Future researchers can do more research on this topic and utilize its results for tailoring the clinical and therapeutic approaches for individuals who are dealing with any type of emotional instability or problems. We can use the neuroimaging technique electroencephalography, and functional near-infrared spectroscopy with virtual reality to understand the brain mechanism of specific attachment styles and alexithymic traits which helps to give proper intervention and will help to manage a mental health condition, violation behavior so on.

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