



INTER-PARENTAL CONFLICT, SELF-ESTEEM AND ATTACHMENT STYLE OF ADOLESCENTS

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ABSTRACT

Familial relationships, especially parental relationships, act as primary context for the overall development and well-being of the child and thus are frequently researched. If there is a strain in these relationships, it can lead to significant and long-lasting negative outcomes for children. The current research aimed to study inter-parental conflict as a predictor of self-esteem and attachment styles of adolescents. For this purpose, a sample of 100 adolescents aged 12-17 years was selected. Children's Perception of Inter-Parental Conflict Scale (CPIC), Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) and Attachment Styles Questionnaire (ASQ) were utilized as research tools. Data was analyzed using SPSS and the various statistical tools used included Independent samples t-test, Correlation and Regression analysis. The results showed inter-parental conflict and self-esteem were negatively correlated, however, a significant relationship was not found between inter-parental conflict and attachment styles of adolescents. Furthermore, it was concluded that inter-parental conflict is a predictor of self-esteem of adolescents.

Keywords: inter-parental conflict, self-esteem, attachment styles, adolescent

I. INTRODUCTION

Inter-parental Conflict

In the field of psychology, the quality of the parental relationship is frequently studied in relation to its influence on child development and well-being. Parental relationships are shown to have a significant impact on children's well-being, both in the short and long term. The impact of parental relationships on child development is thought to be mediated by a variety of factors, including the quality of parent-child interactions, the level of emotional support provided by parents, and the degree to which parents model healthy relationship behaviors.

Inter-parental conflict is the term used to describe arguments, fights, or aggressive encounters between parents, usually over parenting or relationship issues. Grych (1998) defines it as "any type of disagreement, discord, or antagonism between parents or between parents and their extended family members, regardless of whether the disagreement pertains to the child" (p. 559). This term covers both overt and covert types of conflict, such as silent treatment, withdrawal, and emotional abuse. Overt forms of conflict include arguing, shouting, and physical assault. These conflicts can result because of a wide array of reasons including communication problems, financial stress, history of trauma or abuse, different parenting styles, infidelity, differences in cultural or religious practices, differences in personality traits and substance abuse.

Parental conflict, as defined by Grych, can encompass a wide range of attitudes and actions, and it need not directly involve the child in order to have an effect on their wellbeing. Even when they are not directly participating in the dispute or when it does not concern them, children can nevertheless be impacted by parental disagreement. Parental disagreement may have substantial and lasting negative effects on children including sadness, anxiety, behavior issues, and poor academic achievement.

The most important details in this text are the types of parental conflict that can occur within a family and the potential impact on children. It is crucial to understand children's perception of parental conflict because it can have long-lasting effects on their emotional and psychological well-being. Additionally, the causes of parental conflict should not be overlooked, as they can shed light on underlying societal issues that may contribute to family stress. By studying children's perspectives on parental conflict, researchers and practitioners can develop interventions and support systems that address the root causes of family stressors and promote healthy family dynamics. Seeking the help of a therapist or mediator can also be beneficial in resolving family conflicts. It is important to remember that conflicts are a natural part of any relationship, but it is how we handle them that can make all the difference in maintaining healthy relationships with significant people in our life. In order to create a more stable and supportive environment for families to flourish, it is essential for parents to model healthy communication and conflict resolution skills.

While research has consistently demonstrated the importance of parental relationships for child well-being, there is still much to learn about the specific mechanisms through which these relationships influence

development. Future research in this area will be critical for developing effective interventions aimed at promoting positive parent-child relationships and supporting healthy child development.

Self-esteem

Self-esteem is a psychological notion that has been well studied and is regarded as a fundamental component of mental health and well-being. According to Rosenberg (1965a), self-esteem is one's subjective assessment of their overall worth or value. Self-esteem is often viewed as a trait or characteristic that develops early in life and is relatively stable over time. It can have a significant influence on the cognition, affect, and behaviors of an individual. Psychologists assess self-esteem using a variety of tools, including self-report questionnaires and interviews.

Psychology categorizes self-esteem into two types: high self-esteem and low self-esteem. High self-esteem refers to an individual's positive perception of self and is associated with a more optimistic outlook on life and greater resilience in the face of impediments. Low self-esteem is characterized by a negative and pessimistic view of oneself, deep-seated insecurities, feelings of inadequacy, and possible worthlessness or self-doubt. Factors that can affect self-esteem include life experiences, body image, social comparisons, cultural norms and values, and personality traits. Positive experiences can help foster self-confidence and self-worth, while negative experiences can contribute to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem. Individuals struggling with low self-esteem are counseled to increase their self-awareness, challenge their negative thoughts and beliefs, and develop healthy coping strategies.

Adolescence is a period of profound change and transition, and self-esteem can have significant effects on emotional and social wellbeing. Low self-esteem can lead to melancholy, anxiety, and social isolation, while high self-esteem can protect against these negative outcomes and contribute to positive emotional and social outcomes. Parents, educators, and other adults must support the development of healthy self-esteem in adolescents. This can be achieved by providing positive feedback and encouragement, fostering a sense of accomplishment through achievable goals, and creating a safe and supportive environment for self-expression. Additionally, teaching adolescents to recognize and challenge negative self-talk can help them develop a more positive self-image. It is important to recognize that self-esteem is not fixed and can fluctuate throughout adolescence. Therefore, ongoing support and guidance from trusted adults can help adolescents navigate the challenges of this developmental stage with confidence and resilience. Ultimately, fostering healthy self-esteem in adolescents is crucial for their emotional and social wellbeing, setting them up for success in all areas of life.

Attachment

Psychologist John Bowlby (1969) defined attachment as a “lasting psychological connectedness between human beings.”

The term "attachment" describes a profound and indissoluble emotional bond felt towards another person. It links people together through time and distance. This connection fosters feelings of safety and intimacy. Attachment in parent-infant relationships is a mutually reinforcing emotional connection. An infant and parent's bond is strengthened via reciprocal exchanges.

Attachment Styles

Attachment styles refer to the characteristic way people relate to others in the context of intimate relationships, which is heavily influenced by self-worth and interpersonal trust (APA).

As a result of their interactions with attachment figures in early life—usually their primary caregiver—individuals have a variety of approaches to emotional and social connections. These approaches are known as attachment styles. This idea entails one's trust in the attachment figure's readiness to serve as a safe base from which one may freely explore the world when not in distress and a refuge from which one can seek support, protection, and comfort while experiencing difficulty.

Mary D. Salter Ainsworth and her associates distinguished two basic forms of attachment: secure and insecure. John Bowlby's 'Attachment Theory' in 1958 defined four different forms of attachment style: dismissive, fearful, preoccupied, and secure attachment. These styles are based on research on how young children and their caregivers interacted throughout the first few years of life. Each attachment type has unique traits that might affect a person's relationships and emotional well-being. People with a secure attachment type feel confident in their relationships and are able to build strong, enduring relationships based on mutual respect, trust, and clear communication. People with a preoccupied attachment style may be needy or clingy and may show traits of jealousy and possessiveness. People with a dismissive attachment style may value independence and self-reliance more than intimacy and may find it difficult to communicate their emotions. People with a fearful attachment style may have unfavourable opinions of themselves and other people, as well as ambivalence or anxiety when it comes to personal connections.

II. METHODOLOGY

AIM

To study inter-parental conflict as a predictor of self-esteem and attachment styles of adolescents.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the gender differences in perception of inter-parental conflict, self-esteem and attachment style among adolescents.
2. To study the relationship between inter-parental conflict and self-esteem among adolescents.
3. To study the relationship between inter-parental conflict and attachment styles among adolescents.
4. To study the relationship between self-esteem and attachment style among adolescents.
5. To study inter-parental conflict as a predictor of self-esteem of adolescents.
6. To study inter-parental conflict as a predictor of attachment styles of adolescents.

HYPOTHESES

1. There will be a significant gender differences in perception of inter-parental conflict, self-esteem and attachment style among adolescents.
2. There will be a significant negative relationship between inter-parental conflict and self-esteem among adolescents.
3. There will be significant relationship between inter-parental conflict and attachment style among adolescents.
 - 3.1 There will be significant negative relationship between inter-parental conflict and secure attachment style among adolescents.
 - 3.2 There will be significant relationship between inter-parental conflict and preoccupied attachment style among adolescents.
 - 3.3 There will be significant relationship between inter-parental conflict and dismissive attachment style among adolescents.
 - 3.4 There will be significant positive relationship between inter-parental conflict and fearful attachment style among adolescents.
4. There will be significant positive relationship between self-esteem and attachment style among adolescents.
 - 4.1 There will be significant positive relationship between self-esteem and secure attachment style among adolescents.
 - 4.2 There will be significant relationship between self-esteem and preoccupied attachment style among adolescents.
 - 4.3 There will be significant relationship between self-esteem and dismissive attachment style among adolescents.
 - 4.4 There will be significant negative relationship between self-esteem and fearful attachment style among adolescents.
5. Inter-parental conflict will predict self-esteem among adolescents.
6. Inter-parental conflict will predict attachment styles among adolescents

VARIABLES

Independent Variable: Inter-parental Conflict

Dependent Variable: Self-esteem and Attachment Style

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study employed a correlational research design. The current study aimed to investigate inter-parental conflict as a predictor of self-esteem and attachment styles of adolescents. For this purpose, the study examined the relationships between inter-parental conflict, adolescents' self-esteem and attachment style.

The study made use of both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data comes from self-report surveys, while secondary data came from academic literature and research databases. The variables of interest were assessed using the Attachment Style Questionnaire (ASQ) developed by Van Oudenhoven, Hofstra, and Bakker, Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), and Grych and Fincham's Children's Perception of Inter-Parental Conflict (CPIC). The data collected was analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Independent sample t-test, correlation analysis, and regression analysis were the statistical methods utilized to evaluate the gender differences and to ascertain the correlations between the variables.

STATISTICAL DESIGN

The study is quantitative in nature and employs both descriptive and inferential statistics. The study incorporates the following statistical tools:

- *Descriptive Statistics:* Descriptive statistics were used to summarize and explain the sample's demographic characteristics, as well as the scores on measures of inter-parental conflict, self-esteem, and attachment types.
- *Correlation:* A correlational research design was utilised to examine the relationship between the variables. For this study, Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated to quantify the strength and direction of the association between two variables.
- *Independent Sample T-test:* The Independent Sample T-test was used on the data to determine gender differences in the perception of inter-parental relationships.
- *Regression:* Regression was used to ascertain whether inter-parental conflict predicted self-esteem and attachment style of an individual.

SAMPLE

For this study, a sample of 100 adolescents lying in the age range of 12-17 years were selected using snowball sampling technique (define it). The sample consisted of 47 males and 53 females.

Inclusion Criteria

- i. Children aged between 12-17 years

Exclusion Criteria

- i. Children below the age of 12 years
- ii. Children older than 17 years of age
- iii. Subjects with one or both parents deceased
- iv. Subjects living with one parent while the other parent is posted in another city
- v. History of divorce, separation or remarriage of parents

DESCRIPTION OF TOOLS

- a. *Children's Perception of Inter-Parental Conflict*: The Children's Perception of Inter-Parental Conflict Scale (CPIC) is a self-report tool used to gauge children's views of inter-parental conflict. It evaluates how children experience and handle parental conflict. It was created by Grych and Fincham in 1992 and is one of the most often used indicators of how children perceive inter-parental conflict. The 48 questions that make up the CPIC Scale assess children's views of many elements of inter-parental conflict, including its frequency, severity, and resolution, as well as children's own emotional reactions to conflict. A 3-point Likert scale is used to score the things (true, sort of true, and false). High inter-parental conflict is indicated by higher scores on the scale. The CPIC is a useful instrument for determining how children perceive inter-parental conflict. It is a quick, valid, and reliable measurement that is also simple to use.
- b. *Rosenberg's Self-esteem Scale (RSES)*: Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is a popular tool for assessing self-esteem. It was created in 1965 by social psychologist Morris Rosenberg and consists of 10 statements that are meant to assess an individual's general self-perception, or how favourably or negatively they see themselves. The RSES is a Likert-type scale, with each item receiving a score between strongly agree and strongly disagree on a four-point scale. Items 2, 5, 6, 8, and 9 are scored in reverse. The total of all the replies to the items yields the final score. Higher scores correspond to greater self-esteem. It has been established that the RSES is a valid and reliable self-esteem measure. It has been discovered to be connected with a number of different indicators of psychological health, such as loneliness, sadness, and anxiety. The RSES is an appealing choice for research investigations since it is also a very brief and simple to administer measure.

- c. Attachment Styles Questionnaire (ASQ): The Attachment Styles Questionnaire (ASQ) is a 24-item self-report questionnaire designed to measure four attachment styles: secure, preoccupied, fearful, and dismissive. It was developed by Van Oudenhoven, Hofstra, and Bakker in 2003 based on the two theoretical model of attachment proposed by (i) Bowlby (1980) and (ii) Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991). The ASQ is a Likert-scale questionnaire, with each item scored on a five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The ASQ finds out the predominant Attachment style of a participant by assessing all four Attachment styles through scores obtained on each dimension separately. The scores on each sub-scale are calculated by taking out the average of the scores obtained on all the items of the sub-scale. The higher the score a person acquires in any one of the sub-scales indicates their Attachment style. One of the main advantages of the ASQ is that unlike other measures of attachment styles, it refers to close relationships, rather than only intimate relationships. This makes it more appropriate for younger individuals, who might not have much experience with romantic and intimate relationships yet.

The ASQ has been proven to be a reliable and valid measure of attachment style even in different cultural contexts. It has been used in research to investigate the relationship between attachment styles and various outcomes, such as mental health, relationship satisfaction, and academic achievement.

PROCEDURE

The data collection procedure for this psychology dissertation will involve several steps. First, potential participants were identified and approached personally. A rapport was built with them. Participants who expressed interest in participating and met the inclusion criteria were provided with detailed information about the study, including its purpose, the tools used and the administration of those tools. Participants were ensured about the confidentiality of their data and that their data would be used for research purpose only. They were also told that if they felt uncomfortable, they could leave the study at any point. After getting their informed consent, participants were asked to fill the questionnaires.

Data collection involved the administration of three self-report questionnaires: the Children's Perception of Inter-Parental Conflict (CPIC) by Grych and Fincham, Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (SES), and the Attachment Styles Questionnaire (ASQ) by Van Oudenhoven, Hofstra and Bakker. These questionnaires were administered one-by-one and proper instructions about the completion of the questionnaires were given to the participants. Any doubts of the participants were cleared.

After collecting the data, scoring was done using Microsoft Excel. The scores were then entered into SPSS software, and descriptive statistics were calculated for each variable. Bivariate correlations and regression analysis were conducted to assess the relationships between inter-parental conflict, self-esteem and attachment styles of adolescents. The significance level for all statistical tests will be set at $p < .01$ & $p < .05$.

Finally, the findings will be discussed in the context of the research questions and relevant literature, and implications for future research and practice will be discussed.

III. RESULTS

Table 1

Results of Independent Sample t test on the Perceptions of Inter-Parental Conflict, Self-Esteem and Attachment Styles of Adolescents

	Males		Females		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig (2-tailed)
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
CPIC	82.66	19.139	80.15	18.282	.670	98	.504
RSES	26.17	5.053	26.94	4.928	-.774	98	.441
Secure Attachment Style	85.91	12.40	91.27	13.27	-1.862	98	.066
Preoccupied Attachment Style	23.43	5.948	23.30	6.826	0.96	98	.924
Dismissive Attachment Style	16.83	4.290	18.66	3.524	-2.341	98	.021
Fearful Attachment Style	15.53	4.159	18.08	4.501	-2.922	98	.004

Table 1 depicts the group statistics for gender on Children's Perception of Inter-parental Conflict Scale, Rosenberg's Self Esteem Scale, Attachment Styles (Secure, Preoccupied, Dismissive and Fearful), it includes the mean score, standard deviation, and the t-value.

Male adolescents scored higher on the CPIC Scale ($M=82.66$, $SD=19.139$) than female ($M=80.15$, $SD=18.282$), indicating that they are more prone to inter-parental conflict. The computed t-value is .670 ($df=98$, $p=.504$), showing that this difference is not significant.

On RSES, there was little difference between males ($M=26.17$, $SD=5.053$) and females ($M=26.94$, $SD=4.928$). The computed t-value is -.774 ($df=98$, $p=.441$), showing that this difference is not significant.

On Secure Attachment Style, female adolescents ($M=91.27$, $SD=13.27$) scored slightly higher than male adolescents ($M=85.91$, $SD=12.40$) showing that a greater proportion of female adolescents adopt secure attachment style than male adolescents. The computed t-value of -1.862 ($df=98$, $p=.066$), however, suggests that this difference is not significant.

There was little variation observed in Preoccupied Attachment Style between female ($M=23.30$, $SD=6.826$) and male adolescents ($M=23.43$, $SD=5.948$). The computed t-value of .924 ($df=98$, $p=.924$) suggests that this difference is not statistically significant.

Female adolescents ($M=18.66$, $SD=3.524$) scored higher on Dismissive Attachment Style than male adolescents ($M=16.83$, $SD=4.290$), showing that a greater proportion of female adolescents develop dismissive attachment style than male adolescents. Furthermore, the t-value of -2.341 ($df=98$, $p=.021$) found indicates that this difference is significant at the $p<.05$ level.

Concerning the Fearful Attachment Style, female adolescents ($M=18.08$, $SD=4.501$) again scored higher than male adolescents ($M=15.53$, $SD=4.159$) indicating. The t-value was calculated to be -2.922 ($df=98$, $p=.004$) which indicates that this difference is significant at $p<.01$ level.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Inter-Parental Conflict, Self-Esteem and Attachment Styles of Adolescents

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Inter-parental Conflict	100	81.33	18.637	—					
	100	26.58	4.977	-.345**	—				
2. Self-esteem	100	22.47	4.802	-.191	.152				
3. Secure Attachment Style						—			
	100	23.36	6.397	.172	-.513**	—	—		
4. Preoccupied Attachment Style							—		
	100	17.80	3.990	-.112	.132	—	—	—	
5. Dismissive Attachment Style								—	

6.	Fearful Attachment Style	100	16.88	4.507	.099	-.176	—	—	—	—
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*N=100, **p<0.01*

Table 2 shows the correlation between inter-parental conflict, self-esteem, and various attachment styles among adolescents (N=100). The findings show a negative correlation of -.345 between inter-parental conflict and self-esteem in adolescents. The correlation is weak but significant at $p<.01$ level.

The computed correlation between inter-parental conflict and secure attachment style is -.191, indicating a negative but non-significant association between the variables.

The computed correlation between inter-parental conflict and preoccupied attachment style was .172 which indicates that there is not a significant relationship between the variables.

The correlation between inter-parental conflict and dismissive attachment style was calculated to be -.112 which indicates a negative yet non-significant relationship between the variables.

The correlation between inter-parental conflict and fearful attachment style was calculated to be .099 which indicates that there is not a significant relationship between the variables.

The correlation between self-esteem and secure attachment style was calculated to be .152, indicating that the variables do not have a significant relationship.

The correlation between self-esteem and preoccupied attachment style was found to be -.513. According to these findings, there is a strong negative relationship between self-esteem and pre-occupied attachment style which is significant at $p<.01$ level.

The results also indicate a positive yet non-significant relationship between self-esteem and dismissive attachment style. The correlation coefficient was calculated to be .132.

The computed correlation between self-esteem and fearful attachment style is -.176 which indicates a negative but non-significant relationship between the variables.

Table 3*Regression analysis for the criterion variable Self-esteem as predicted by Inter-parental conflict*

Model	Beta		R square	F	Sig.
	Coefficient	R			
1	-.345	.345	.119	13.249	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Self-esteem

b. Predictor: (Constant), Inter-parental Conflict

Table 3 indicates the impact of inter-parental conflict (predictor variable) on self-esteem of adolescents. The results revealed that with an r-squared value of .119, inter-parental conflict contributed 11.9 per cent to the variability in the self-esteem of adolescents. The beta coefficient value of -.345 indicates that for each unit increase in inter-parental conflict, self-esteem is predicted to decrease by .345 units. Thus, it can be concluded that adolescents who are exposed to a high level of inter-parental conflict are more likely to have low self-esteem.

Table 4*Regression analysis for the criterion variable Preoccupied Attachment Style as predicted by Self-esteem*

Model	Beta		R square	F	Sig.
	Coefficient	R			
1	-.513	.513	.263	35.058	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Preoccupied Attachment Style

b. Predictor: (Constant), Self-esteem

Table 4 indicates the impact of self-esteem (predictor variable) on preoccupied attachment style. The results revealed that with an r-squared value of .263, self-esteem contributed 26.3 per cent to the variability in the preoccupied attachment style among adolescents. The beta coefficient value of -.513 indicates that for each unit increase in self-esteem, preoccupied attachment style is predicted to decrease by .513 units.

IV. DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to investigate inter-parental conflict as a predictor of self-esteem and attachment styles of adolescents. For this purpose, the data was collected from a sample of 100 adolescents (47 males, 53 females) aged between 12-17 years. The tests administered on the sample include Children's Perception of Inter-Parental Conflict by Grych and Fincham, Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale and Attachment Styles Questionnaire by Van Oudenhoven, Hofstra, and Bakker. The data obtained was analyzed using various statistical tools such as Independent Sample T-test, Pearson's correlation coefficient and Regression Analysis.

According to the study's first hypothesis, there will be significant gender differences in perception of inter-parental conflict, self-esteem and attachment style among adolescents. It was discovered that there was only a very slight difference between the male and female means on the aforementioned parameters. The results of the t-test analysis show that there were no gender differences in adolescents' perceptions of inter-parental conflict, self-esteem, or attachment style. However, dismissive and fearful attachment styles were found to be more prevalent in females than males, and these differences were significant at the $p < .05$ and $p < .01$ levels, respectively. Sociocultural factors (such as gender roles and social expectations) that might affect the expression and perception of inter-parental conflict, self-esteem, and attachment patterns may be among the most likely causes of such findings. These aspects, which have the potential to affect the findings, were not examined in the current investigation.

The second hypothesis states that there will be a significant negative relationship between inter-parental conflict and self-esteem among adolescents. After analysis, a significant negative correlation between inter-parental conflict and self-esteem was discovered, which was significant at $p < .01$. These results are consistent with a study by Nazir et al. (2012) that looked into how parental disagreement affected children's self-esteem. They discovered a strong and negative relationship between self-esteem and perceived inter-parental conflict. Another study by Jose et al. (2020) revealed that young people's emotional intelligence and self-esteem may suffer as a result of perceived inter-parental conflict.

The third hypothesis states that there will be significant relationship between inter-parental conflict and attachment style among adolescents. According to the results of this study, there is no significant relationship between inter-parental conflict and attachment styles. It can thus be inferred that our hypothesis is rejected. One of the potential explanations for the findings is that when a person is exposed to intense inter-parental conflict within a family, they may withdraw from their family system and, as a result, cease to view their parents as primary attachment figures (Enevold, 2020). Additionally, earlier studies have shown that during adolescence, attachment figures naturally change. Markiewicz et al. (2006) claim that friends can step in for parents, acting as a safe haven typically throughout adolescence, and Doherty and Freney (2004) assert that siblings can step in for parents, acting as a major attachment figure during maturity. The literature supports the idea that parents might lose their status as important attachment figures as their child gets older.

The fourth hypothesis states that there will be significant relationship between self-esteem and attachment style among adolescents. An analysis of the relationship between self-esteem and attachment style revealed a negative correlation (significant at $p < 0.01$) between self-esteem and preoccupied attachment style. However, there was no significant relationship between other attachment styles and self-esteem.

Hypothesis 5 states that inter-parental conflict will predict self-esteem among adolescents. According to the findings, inter-parental conflict is a significant predictor of self-esteem among adolescents. The results, as shown in Table 3, showed a significant correlation between the independent variable (inter-parental conflict) and the dependent variable (self-esteem), as apparent from the R-squared value of .119. Based on the F value of 13.249, beta coefficient value of -0.345, and p value of .000, it may be concluded that the former is a significant predictor of the latter. Additionally, the inter-parental conflict accounts for 11.9% of the variation in adolescents' self-esteem, as shown by the R-squared value of .119.

Hypothesis 6 states that inter-parental conflict will predict attachment styles among adolescents. The findings showed no connection between inter-parental conflict and adolescent attachment styles, further suggesting that the former is not a predictor of the latter. We can therefore infer that our hypothesis is rejected. The findings may be explained by the possibility that when exposed to extreme inter-parental conflict within a family, an individual would withdraw themselves from their family system and as a result no longer use their parents as the most prominent attachment figures (Enevold, 2020). In addition, siblings and peers can act as primary attachment figures during adolescence which can buffer the impact of inter-parental conflict on adolescents' attachment styles.

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS: With regard to Table 4, the results showed a significant relationship between the independent variable (self-esteem) and the dependent variable (preoccupied attachment style) as indicated by R-squared value of .263. It may be concluded that the former is a significant predictor of the latter with a F value of 35.058, beta coefficient value of -0.513, and p value of .000. Additionally, the R-squared value of .263 shows that self-esteem accounts for 26.3% of the variation in adolescents' preoccupied attachment styles. According to the beta coefficient value of -.513, preoccupied attachment style is expected to decline by .513 units for every unit increase in self-esteem.

V. CONCLUSION

This study intended to explore inter-parental conflict as a predictor of self-esteem and attachment styles among adolescents. The study examined the associations between inter-parental conflict, self-esteem, and the four styles of attachment (secure, preoccupied, dismissive, and fearful). Results showed a strong inverse relationship between parental conflict and self-esteem, indicating that greater conflict was linked to lower self-esteem. Furthermore, it was shown that there was a strong negative correlation between self-esteem and the preoccupied attachment style, which may mean that adolescents with lower self-esteem were more likely to display this attachment type.

Additionally, it was discovered that the inter-parental conflict significantly influenced the prediction of adolescents' self-esteem. Inter-parental conflict, however, was not shown to be a predictor of adolescents' attachment styles.

Overall, the study highlights the significance of fostering loving and supportive environment for optimal development of adolescents and offers insightful information about the convoluted dynamics between inter-parental conflict, self-esteem, and attachment styles.

VI. LIMITATIONS

- The findings of this study may not be generalized as the sample involved was limited in terms of cultural, socioeconomic, or geographic diversity.
- The various data collection methods incorporated in the study rely on self-report which makes them susceptible to response bias. Individuals may underreport or provide socially desirable responses, which can impact the accuracy and reliability of the findings.
- Recall bias can lead to potential inaccuracies in the data. Some individuals may have difficulty recalling specific events or may have biased recollections.
- Participants may have lost interest in the study because of the length of the questionnaires administered.
- The relationship between the variables might be influenced by some factors which were not explored in the present study.

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