



IMPACT OF ATTACHMENT STYLE AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON LIFE SATISFACTION AMONG YOUNG ADULTS

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Abstract: This research paper explores the relationship between attachment style, emotional intelligence, and life satisfaction among young adults. The aim of the study is to investigate how different attachment styles and emotional intelligence levels contribute to overall life satisfaction in this demographic. The research design employed a quantitative approach, utilizing standardized questionnaires to measure attachment style, emotional intelligence, and life satisfaction. A sample of 200 young adults aged between 18 and 25 years was recruited from various educational institutions and community settings. Statistical analyses, including correlation and regression analyses, were conducted to examine the associations between the variables. The findings revealed significant correlations between attachment style, emotional intelligence, and life satisfaction. Secure attachment style was positively associated with higher levels of emotional intelligence and life satisfaction. In contrast, insecure attachment styles, such as anxious and avoidant, showed negative associations with emotional intelligence and life satisfaction. Emotional intelligence was identified as a mediator in the relationship between attachment style and life satisfaction. Individuals with higher emotional intelligence were found to have greater life satisfaction, regardless of their attachment style. Moreover, emotional intelligence played a compensatory role, attenuating the negative impact of insecure attachment styles on life satisfaction. Overall, this thesis contributes to the growing body of literature on attachment theory and emotional intelligence, providing valuable insights into their impact on life satisfaction among young adults. The findings offer implications for interventions and support systems aimed at enhancing the psychological well-being and overall satisfaction of this population.

Keywords: Attachment style, emotional intelligence, life satisfaction, young adults, mental health

I. INTRODUCTION

Attachment style, life satisfaction, and emotional intelligence are interconnected constructs that can significantly impact an individual's well-being and relationships. Research suggests that individuals with secure attachment styles tend to exhibit higher levels of life satisfaction and emotional intelligence. They are more likely to experience fulfilling relationships, have positive self-perceptions, and possess effective emotional regulation skills. In contrast, individuals with insecure attachment styles, such as anxious or avoidant styles, may face challenges in maintaining satisfying relationships and achieving high life satisfaction. They may struggle with emotional regulation, have difficulties understanding and expressing emotions, and experience lower overall well-being.

Attachment Style involves identifying consistent and observable patterns of emotional and behavioural reactions within close relationships, especially in the interactions between caregivers and infants. These styles are determined by assessing behaviours like seeking closeness, engaging in exploration, and responding to separation and reunion situations. Attachment style refers to the patterns of emotional and behavioural responses individuals develop in their close relationships, particularly during early childhood with primary caregivers. It is influenced by the quality of care and responsiveness received during infancy and shapes one's expectations and behaviours in future relationships. Attachment is a profound emotional bond that forms between individuals, typically starting from birth, where the caregiver provides protection, love, and care to the child. This attachment involves a mutual exchange of comfort, support, and pleasure, enabling the child to satisfy their primary needs. It also creates a mental representation in the child's mind, viewing the caregiver as a source of relief during challenging times, while also allowing the child to separate from the caregiver without distress and explore their surroundings. In adults, attachment behaviour towards children involves responding sensitively and appropriately to their needs, and this behaviour appears to be consistent across different cultures. Attachment theory elucidates how the parent-child relationship develops and influences subsequent development. At its core, the theory emphasizes that when primary

caregivers attend to and respond to an infant's needs, it fosters a sense of security within the child. This sense of security enables the child to trust that they can rely on their caregiver while they navigate and explore the world around them. In 1952, John Bowlby, along with James Robertson, conducted an observation where they noted that children exhibited significant distress when separated from their mothers. Interestingly, even when the children were cared for by different individuals, their anxiety did not diminish. These findings challenged the prevailing behavioural theory of attachment proposed by Dollard and Miller in 1950, which minimized the importance of the mother-child bond and suggested that attachment developed primarily due to the mother's role as a source of nourishment. John Bowlby extensively researched attachment theory and characterized it as a "lasting psychological connectedness between human beings." He rejected the earlier psychoanalytic view that childhood experiences merely influenced later development and behaviour. Instead, he argued that attachment had an evolutionary component, serving as a means of survival. Bowlby emphasized, "the propensity to form strong emotional bonds with specific individuals is an inherent aspect of human nature." Attachment styles are typically categorized into four types: secure, anxious-preoccupied, dismissive-avoidant, and fearful-avoidant. Secure individuals tend to have positive views of themselves and others, while those with anxious, dismissive, or fearful styles may exhibit varying degrees of insecurity, avoidance, or ambivalence in relationships.

Emotional intelligence can be defined as the capacity of a person to identify and comprehend their own emotions, regulate and control their emotional responses, and effectively communicate and empathize with the emotions of others within different social situations. Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions, as well as to effectively perceive and respond to the emotions of others. It involves being aware of and in tune with one's own feelings, as well as being empathetic and sensitive to the emotions of those around you. Emotional intelligence encompasses skills such as emotional awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and effective communication, which enable individuals to navigate social interactions, build positive relationships, and make sound decisions based on emotional cues. It is a crucial aspect of interpersonal and intrapersonal competence, contributing to overall well-being and success in various areas of life. Although the term "emotional intelligence" emerged in 1964, it gained widespread recognition with the publication of Daniel Goleman's best-selling book on the subject in 1995. Goleman defined emotional intelligence as a set of skills and characteristics that contribute to effective leadership. It involves the ability to perceive, control, and evaluate emotions. Some researchers believe that emotional intelligence can be developed and enhanced through learning, while others argue that it is an inherent trait. Several models have been developed to measure emotional intelligence, including the trait model and the ability model. Recent research has also focused on emotion recognition and the neurological basis of emotional intelligence. Studies have indicated that individuals with high emotional intelligence tend to have better mental health, job performance, and leadership abilities, although causation has not been firmly established. Emotional intelligence is often associated with empathy, as it involves connecting personal experiences with the emotions of others. The concept of emotional intelligence has received criticism regarding its status as a genuine intelligence and its incremental validity compared to IQ and personality traits. However, meta-analyses have shown that certain measures of emotional intelligence have validity even when controlling for IQ and personality. Emotional intelligence (EI) has been found to have a significant impact on mental health. Individuals with higher levels of emotional intelligence tend to exhibit better mental health outcomes compared to those with lower levels.

Life Satisfaction refers to how people personally assess and feel about their overall happiness, contentment, and well-being in different areas of their lives, such as their relationships, work, health, and personal accomplishments. Life satisfaction refers to an individual's perception and evaluation of their overall well-being and contentment with their life. It is a subjective assessment that takes into account various aspects such as personal achievements, relationships, health, financial stability, and overall happiness. Life satisfaction goes beyond temporary feelings of pleasure or happiness and encompasses a more enduring sense of fulfilment and meaning. Understanding life satisfaction involves recognizing that it is a multifaceted concept that can vary from person to person. Factors such as cultural background, personal values, and life circumstances can influence an individual's perception of what contributes to their satisfaction. Some individuals may prioritize career success, while others may place more importance on relationships or personal growth. Life satisfaction is not solely dependent on external factors but also encompasses one's internal mindset and attitude towards life. It involves having a positive outlook, a sense of purpose, and the ability to adapt and cope with challenges. It is important to note that life satisfaction is not a constant state but can fluctuate over time due to changing circumstances and personal experiences. Understanding and enhancing life satisfaction can have significant implications for individuals' overall well-being and quality of life. It can influence mental and physical health, motivation, productivity, and the ability to navigate and enjoy life's ups and downs. Strategies for enhancing life satisfaction may involve setting and pursuing meaningful goals, cultivating positive relationships, practicing gratitude and mindfulness, engaging in activities that bring joy and fulfilment, and seeking support when needed.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Walker, Double, Kunst, Zhang, and MacCann (2021) conducted a meta-analysis to estimate the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and attachment styles in non-clinical adult samples. They included 26 studies with a total of 6,914 participants that used validated psychometric assessments for EI and attachment styles. The authors examined the type of EI (ability versus rating scales) as a moderator by conducting subgroup analyses and metaregression. The results showed that lower levels of anxious and avoidant attachment were significantly associated with both ability EI and EI rating scales, whereas secure attachment was only significantly associated with EI rating scales. The authors found that the type of EI moderated the relationship between avoidant attachment and EI, but not for other attachment styles. The authors discussed possible mechanisms by which EI and attachment styles might influence each other during early development, but acknowledged that the causal direction underlying their associations is still unclear.

Romina Golchin Samadi, Fatemeh Kasaei, and Ebrahim Mohammad Pour (2013) conducted a study to investigate whether attachment styles can predict emotional intelligence. The study included 300 undergraduate students (150 males and 150 females) who were randomly selected from Tabriz Azad University. The researchers utilized regression and correlation analyses to analyse the data. The results revealed that there was a significant positive correlation between secure attachment style and all subscales of emotional intelligence abilities. Moreover, the study found that attachment styles significantly explained emotional intelligence, and secure

attachment style predicted all sub-dimensions of emotional intelligence. In other words, individuals who had a secure attachment style tended to perform better in emotional intelligence abilities than those who had insecure attachment styles. These 76 studies highlight the potential role of attachment styles in shaping emotional intelligence in young adults, which can have important implications for personal and social development.

M. Engin Deniz and Erkan Işık (2010) published a study aimed to investigate the relationship between attachment styles and positive and negative affect, life satisfaction, and coping with stress in Turkish undergraduate students. The participants, consisting of 421 students, 83 completed the Relationship Scales Questionnaire, the Positive and Negative Affect Scale, the Satisfaction With Life Scale, and the Coping with Stress Scale. The results indicated that the secure attachment style was a unique predictor of positive affect, while fearful and preoccupied attachment styles significantly predicted negative affect. With respect to life satisfaction, a positive correlation with secure attachment style and a negative correlation with fearful and preoccupied styles were observed. However, the unique predictor of life satisfaction was found to be preoccupied attachment style. In terms of coping with stress, there was no significant association between attachment variables and avoidance coping style, but significant links were observed between problem-focused coping and dismissing, and fearful and preoccupied attachment styles. The findings suggest that attachment styles play an important role in shaping emotional experiences, life satisfaction, and coping strategies among Turkish undergraduate students.

Patricia Luciana Runcan and Mihai-Bogdan Iovu (2013) undertook a study titled "Emotional Intelligence and Life Satisfaction in Romanian University Students: The Mediating Role of Self-Esteem and Social Support," in Social Sciences which explores the relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction among Romanian undergraduate students. The study uses self-esteem and social support as mediators in a mediation model. The sample of 93 comprises 131 participants, and data were collected through the Wong Law Emotional Intelligence Scale, the Multi-Dimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support, the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale, and the Satisfaction with Life Scale. The results indicate that both self-esteem and social support partially mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction. A bootstrap analysis was conducted to confirm these findings. The study's implications for future research and the limitations of the present findings are also discussed.

Power, Orlaith (2019) conducted a study to investigate the association between adult attachment styles, emotional intelligence, and marital satisfaction. The aim of the study was to explore the role of adult attachment styles (secure, avoidant, and anxious) and emotional intelligence in predicting marital satisfaction. The study utilized a cross-sectional design, and a survey was administered online, which included measures of emotional intelligence, attachment, and marital adjustment. The sample consisted of 151 married individuals from Ireland, including 119 females and 32 males. The results of the study indicated a negative correlation between anxious attachment and marital satisfaction, whereas a positive correlation was found between avoidant attachment and marital satisfaction. The study also revealed that emotional intelligence and secure attachment style significantly predicted marital satisfaction, with emotional intelligence being the strongest predictor. The findings of the study have important implications for family and couples counselling, as they suggest that interventions aimed at improving emotional intelligence and attachment security may enhance marital satisfaction. However, the study also highlighted the need for a more updated large-scale longitudinal study to examine these variables and how they interact over time.

III. METHODOLOGY

Data for this study comes from a survey administered to a convenience sample of 200 young adults across India. The survey conducted during the months of March and April, 2023, consisted of self-administered questionnaire on topics that included attachment style, emotional intelligence and life satisfaction. The survey was administered to young adults, from middle socio-economic background.

3.1 VARIABLES

Predictor Variable – Attachment Style and Emotional Intelligence

Criterion Variable – Life Satisfaction

3.2 HYPOTHESES

H1 – There would be a positive relationship between attachment style and emotional intelligence.

H2 – There would be a positive relationship between attachment style and life satisfaction.

H3 - There would be a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction.

3.3 PROCEDURE

The topic is chosen by the researcher and the variables are decided. The research is started by reviewing books and researches on Google. The tools are decided, three tools are taken i.e., Attachment Style Questionnaire by Diane Poole Heller, Emotional Intelligence Scale by Schutte and Satisfaction with Life Scale by Ed Diener. The sample is decided of 200 young adults in India. The data collection is conducted through online and offline survey method. Before the collection of data, consent is taken from the participants and are informed about the confidentiality and the use of data. Participants are selected by random sampling throughout India. The data collected is systematically scored using the scoring procedures and the master sheet is prepared on Microsoft Excel. The aim of the research is to find out the plausible 106 relationships between the variables under study. The result is formulated through Product Moment Correlation.

3.4 TOOLS

Attachment Style Questionnaire by Diane Poole Heller

Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test

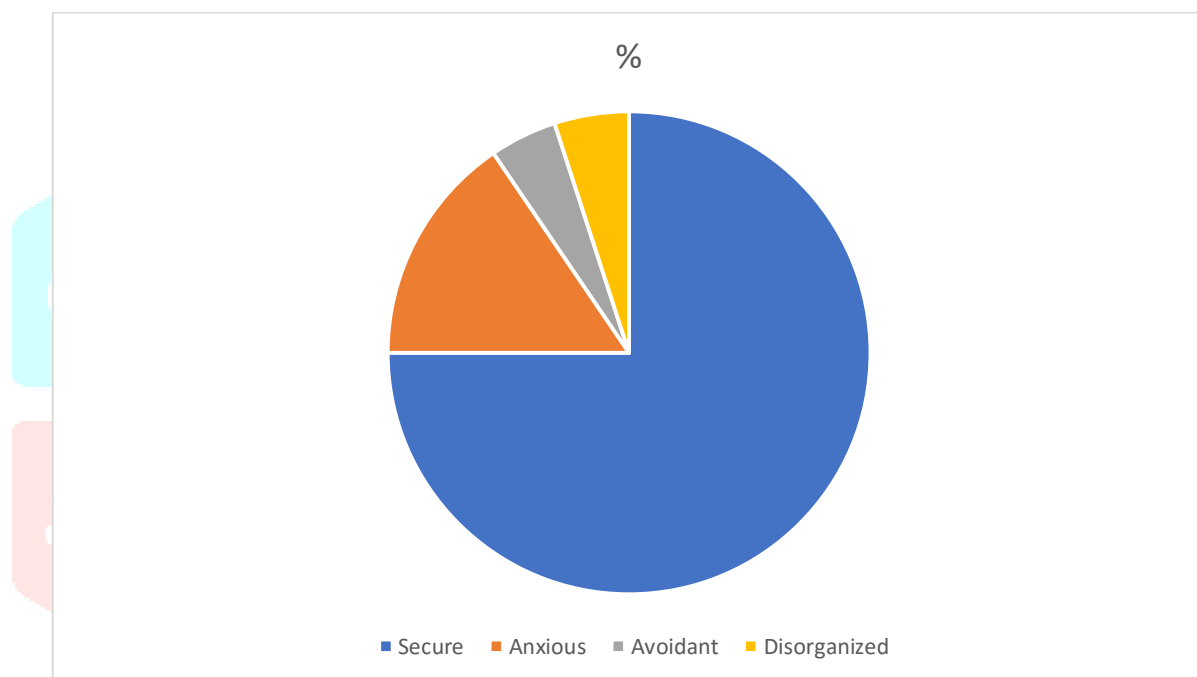
Satisfaction With Life Scale

IV. RESULTS

A sample of 200 adults between the age group of 18 – 25 years was collected from various different sources across India, from adults belonging to middle class income group and who were absolutely physically, mentally and psychologically able and had minimum education of upto 12th standard. Probability sampling method is used to collect data, where, this method of data collection is a structured approach that utilizes probability theory and statistical techniques to acquire data from a population or sample.

Table 1: Distribution of various attachment styles across data collected

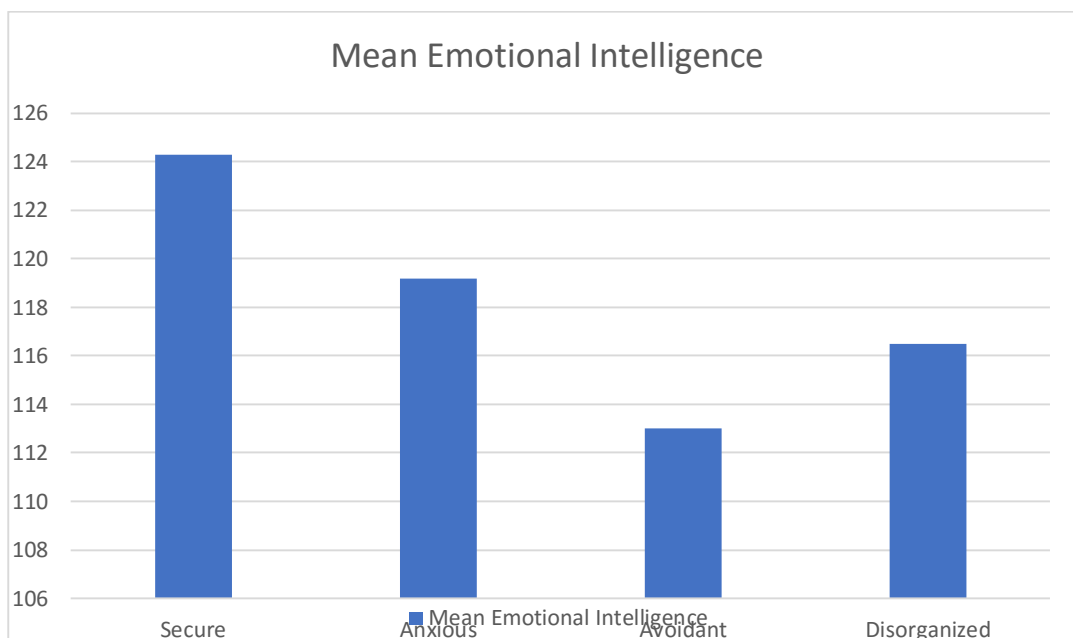
	SECURE	ANXIOUS	AVOIDANT	DISORGANIZED
ATTACHMENT STYLE	75%	15.5%	4.5%	5%



The above table and graph show the distribution of various attachment styles across the entire data. Secure attachment style contributed to 75% of the total population, which means about two-third of the population has secure attachment style, while 15.5% of the population has anxious attachment style, 4.5% of the population has avoidant attachment style and 5% of the population has disorganized attachment style.

Table 2: Relationship between Attachment Style and Emotional Intelligence

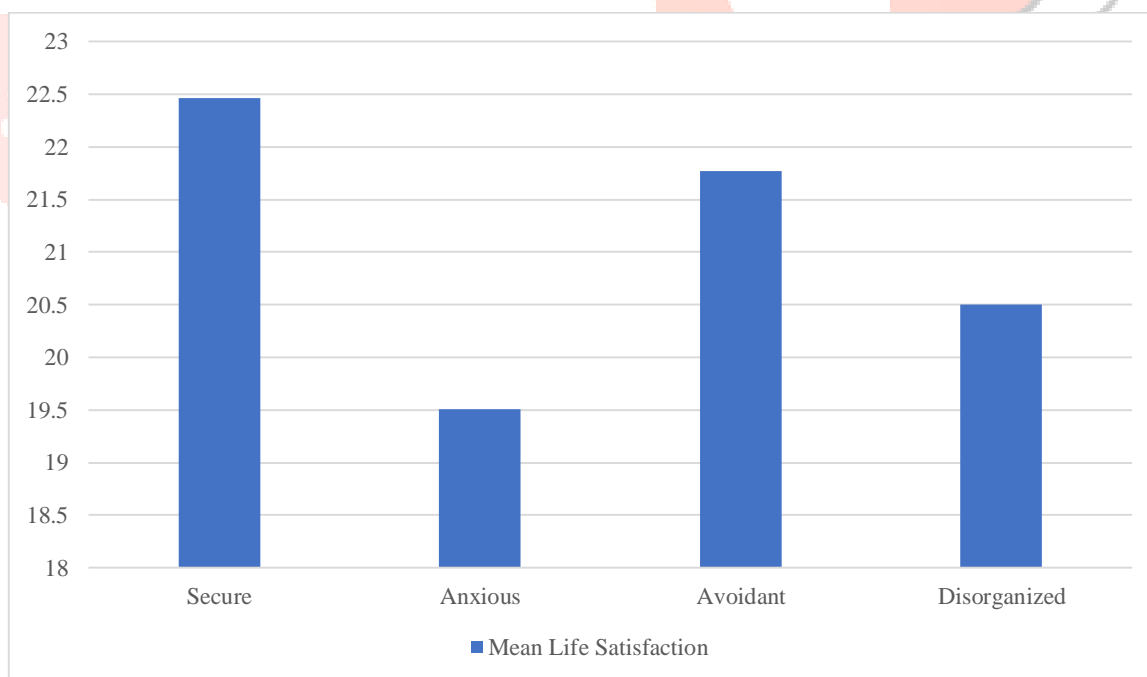
ATTACHMENT STYLE	SECURE	ANXIOUS	AVOIDANT	DISORGANIZED
MEAN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE	124.43	119.17	113.08	116.56



The above table and graph show the mean levels of emotional intelligence corresponding to different attachment styles. People with secure attachment have 124.43 mean emotional intelligence score, people with anxious attachment style have 119.17 mean score, people with avoidant attachment style have 113.08 mean score and people with disorganized attachment style have 116.56 mean score. It goes to show that people with secure attachment style have the highest emotional intelligence mean score and people with other attachment styles have lower emotional intelligence mean score.

Table 3: Relationship between Attachment Style and Life Satisfaction

ATTACHMENT STYLE	SECURE	ANXIOUS	AVOIDANT	DISORGANIZED
MEAN LIFE SATISFACTION	22.46	19.51	21.77	20.50



The above table and graph show the mean levels of life satisfaction corresponding to different attachment styles. People with secure attachment have 22.46 mean life satisfaction score, people with anxious attachment style have 19.51 mean score, people with avoidant attachment style have 21.77 mean score and people with disorganized attachment style have 20.50 mean score. It goes to show that people with secure attachment style have the highest life satisfaction mean score and people with other attachment styles have lower life satisfaction mean score.

V. HYPOTHESES TESTING

5.1 Hypotheses 1: There would be a positive relationship between attachment style and emotional intelligence

Table 4: Hypotheses 1: There would be a positive relationship between attachment style and emotional intelligence

VARIABLE	N	MEAN	SD	R
ATTACHMENT STYLE	200	20.7	4.75	+0.44
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE	200	123.19	15.04	

The above table show the correlation between attachment style and emotional intelligence. N (total sample) is 200, mean score of attachment style and emotional intelligence is 20.7 and 123.9, respectively. SD (standard deviation) of attachment style is 4.75 and of emotional intelligence is 15.04. The coefficient of correlation between attachment style and emotional intelligence is +0.44, which means that the two are positively correlated and a there is a moderate positive relationship between the two. Hence, Hypotheses 1 is proved.

5.2 Hypotheses 2: There would be a positive relationship between attachment style and life satisfaction

Table 5: Hypotheses 2: There would be a positive relationship between attachment style and life satisfaction

VARIABLE	N	MEAN	SD	R
ATTACHMENT STYLE	200	20.7	4.75	+0.20
LIFE SATISFACTION	200	21.98	6.1	

The above table show the correlation between attachment style and life satisfaction. N (total sample) is 200, mean score of attachment style and life satisfaction is 20.7 and 21.98, respectively. SD (standard deviation) of attachment style is 4.75 and of life satisfaction is 6.1. The coefficient of correlation between attachment style and life satisfaction is +0.20, which means that the two are positively correlated and there is a weak positive relationship between the two. Hence, Hypotheses 2 is proved.

5.3 Hypotheses 3: There would be a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction

Table 6: Hypotheses 3: There would be a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction

VARIABLE	N	MEAN	SD	R
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE	200	123.19	15.04	+0.23
LIFE SATISFACTION	200	21.98	6.1	

The above table show the correlation between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction. N (total sample) is 200, mean score of emotional intelligence and life satisfaction is 123.19 and 21.98, respectively. SD (standard deviation) of emotional intelligence is 15.04 and of life satisfaction is 6.1. The coefficient of correlation between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction is +0.23, which means that the two are positively correlated and there is a weak positive relationship between the two. Hence, Hypotheses 3 is proved.

VI. DISCUSSION

Attachment style, life satisfaction, and emotional intelligence are interconnected constructs that can significantly impact an individual's well-being and relationships. Research suggests that individuals with secure attachment styles tend to exhibit higher levels of life satisfaction and emotional intelligence. They are more likely to experience fulfilling relationships, have positive self-perceptions, and possess effective emotional regulation skills. In contrast, individuals with insecure attachment styles, such as anxious or avoidant styles, may face challenges in maintaining satisfying relationships and achieving high life satisfaction. They may struggle with emotional regulation, have difficulties understanding and expressing emotions, and experience lower overall well-being. Furthermore, emotional intelligence can act as a mediating factor between attachment style and life satisfaction. Individuals with higher emotional intelligence may be better equipped to navigate and overcome the challenges associated with insecure attachment styles. They may develop strategies to manage their emotions effectively, build and maintain healthy relationships, and enhance their overall life satisfaction. Overall, understanding attachment style, life satisfaction, and emotional intelligence can provide valuable insights into the dynamics of human relationships and well-being. By fostering secure attachment styles and nurturing emotional intelligence, individuals can improve their overall life satisfaction, cultivate healthier relationships, and enhance their emotional well-being. People with secure attachment have 124.43 mean emotional intelligence score, people with anxious attachment style have 119.17 mean score, people with avoidant attachment style have 113.08 mean score and people with disorganized attachment style have 116.56 mean score. It goes to show that people with secure attachment style have the highest emotional intelligence mean score and people with other attachment styles have lower emotional intelligence mean score. People with secure attachment have 22.46 mean life satisfaction score, people with anxious attachment style have 19.51 mean score, people with avoidant attachment style have 21.77 mean score and people with disorganized attachment style have 20.50 mean score. It goes to show that people with secure attachment style have the highest life satisfaction mean score and people with other attachment styles have lower life satisfaction mean score. Mean score of attachment

style and emotional is 20.7 and 123.9, respectively. SD (standard deviation) of attachment style is 4.75 and of emotional intelligence is 15.04. The coefficient of correlation between attachment style and emotional intelligence is +0.44, which means that the two are positively correlated and there is a moderate positive relationship between the two. Mean score of attachment style and life satisfaction is 20.7 and 21.98, respectively. SD (standard deviation) of attachment style is 4.75 and of life satisfaction is 6.1. The coefficient of correlation between attachment style and life satisfaction is +0.20, which means that the two are positively correlated and there is a weak positive relationship between the two. Mean score of emotional intelligence and life satisfaction is 123.19 and 21.98, respectively. SD (standard deviation) of emotional intelligence is 15.04 and of life satisfaction is 6.1. The coefficient of correlation between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction is +0.23, which means that the two are positively correlated and there is a weak positive relationship between the two. Overall, the results indicated that individuals with secure attachment styles reported higher levels of emotional intelligence and life satisfaction. In contrast, insecure attachment styles, such as anxious and avoidant, were associated with lower emotional intelligence and life satisfaction. These findings underscore the significance of attachment style as a fundamental factor influencing psychological well-being and life satisfaction.

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