Impact of Attachment Styles on Loneliness and Social Connectedness

Vasudha Kundra

Amity Institute of Psychology and Allied Sciences
Noida, India

Abstract: The current study investigates the connection between adult attachment styles and how they affect social connectedness and loneliness. Drawing on attachment theory, it examines how secure, anxious, and avoidant attachment patterns affect individuals' social experiences and emotional isolation. The Adult Attachment Scale (AAS), UCLA Loneliness Scale, and Social Connectedness Scale were used to evaluate a sample of 124 adult participants. According to the findings, people with secure attachment styles felt less alone and more connected to others, whereas people with insecure attachment styles—especially those who are anxious and avoidant—felt more alone and less connected. Results showed that individuals with secure attachments reported stronger social connections and lower loneliness, while those with insecure styles, particularly anxious and avoidant, experienced heightened loneliness and reduced social connectedness. These findings underscore the lasting impact of early relational patterns on emotional well-being and highlight the importance of developing secure attachment styles to buffer against loneliness.

Keywords: Social Connectedness, Loneliness, Attachment Styles, Social Support, Mental Health, Emotional Well-Being.

How to Cite: Vasudha Kundra (2025) Impact of Attachment Styles on Loneliness and Social Connectedness. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 10(5), 453-461. https://doi.org/10.38124/IJISRT/25may061

I. INTRODUCTION

➤ *Attachment Styles*

Attachment styles are a major topic of interest for those seeking to understand interpersonal behaviors and emotional patterns. Different attachment styles significantly shape the way individuals form and maintain relationships.

Theory of Attachment styles , conceptualized by John Bowlby in 1969, posits that the affiliative bonds forged with caregivers during infancy exert a profound influence on an individual's emotional and social development throughout the lifespan. As proposed by Bowlby, humans possess an innate predisposition to establish proximal emotional connections, particularly during the formative stages of childhood, thereby cultivating a sense of existential security and receptivity to support. The qualitative parameters of these early interactions are purported to exert a lasting impact upon an individual's capacity to establish and maintain affiliative relationships within adulthood.

Attachment theory explains how social and emotional bonds are formed, often beginning in childhood (Bowlby, 1969; Ainsworth & Bell, 1970). Bowlby (1973) emphasized humans' innate need to form close bonds for a sense of security and identity. These early relationships, especially with caregivers, influence attachment styles that persist into adulthood (Ainsworth, 1989).

Mary Ainsworth and colleagues (1970, 1978) identified three primary attachment styles: secure, anxious-ambivalent, and avoidant. Secure individuals tend to enjoy social relationships, while those with insecure attachment (anxious or avoidant) often experience distress or avoidance in social settings. Avoidant attachment may develop when caregivers are unresponsive to a child's needs, leading to emotional detachment (Ainsworth, 1979). Anxious attachment arises from inconsistent caregiving, making children uncertain and overly dependent in relationships, often displaying clinginess and rejection simultaneously (Ainsworth, 1979; Ainsworth & Bell, 1970).

➢ *Loneliness*

Loneliness has become a growing concern in modern society, particularly among individuals with insecure attachment styles. Research indicates that individuals with avoidant or anxious attachment often struggle with social connectedness, leading to emotional distress and mental health challenges (Smith et al., 2020).

One of the most pressing issues facing the modern world is loneliness, which occurs when individuals are uninterested in one another and relationships do not grow. There is no love, friendship, or animosity. When a person realizes how inadequate his interactions with other people are and when he suffers from a severe communication deficit, he becomes lonely.

A person who encounters loneliness may also have depressed moods and unpleasant emotional experiences. People who are really lonely are sad, have few social interactions, and communicate with others seldom. Isolation is not always the same as loneliness. Even if you are surrounded by people and interact with them, you may still experience psychological loneliness. True subjective feelings of loneliness are typically accompanied with symptoms of mental illnesses.

➢ *Social Connectedness*

Social connectedness refers to a sense of belonging within relationships or networks (Lee & Robbins, 1995). It shows how people interact with larger social structures such as their families, communities, or schools, which have a big impact on their resilience and general well-being (Sippel et al., 2015). Growing urbanization in China is eroding established support systems and decreasing the perception of social support (Dijst, 2014). Resilience is strongly associated with strong social ties for college students in collectivist cultures (Mello, 2016; Ye et al., 2020). Thus, encouraging social connections is essential to assisting people in overcoming stress and hardship.

The Belongingness theory, first proposed by Baumeister and Leary in 1995, posits that individuals cultivate and sustain fulfilling interpersonal relationships to experience communal affinity. Fulfillment of these intra-personal needs is achieved via affiliations with individuals within one's social network. Conventionally, social connectedness has been quantified by the frequency and density of said social ties or the regularity of interactions with one's social network. However, mere presence within a social network is insufficient; meaningful interpersonal engagement, as identified by Baumeister and Leary, is essential to procure the sensation of communal affinity. Such engagement has been empirically linked to salubrious psychological outcomes.

➢ *Attachment Styles and Social Outcomes:*

Securely attached individuals typically experience positive social interactions, trusting others and feeling comfortable forming lasting bonds. As a result, they tend to report greater social connectedness.

Anxiously attached individuals often crave closeness but fear abandonment, resulting in heightened sensitivity to rejection. This emotional volatility can strain relationships, inadvertently increasing loneliness.

Individuals with avoidant attachment styles often prioritize independence over closeness, finding it difficult to depend on others. Their tendency to emotionally withdraw limits the depth of their relationships, leading to feelings of disconnection.

Disorganized attachment reflects a combination of anxious and avoidant behaviors, resulting in inconsistent and unstable relationships. Individuals with this style often struggle with emotional regulation in social settings.

Attachment patterns significantly influence how people form social bonds. Secure attachment supports healthier and more stable relationships, whereas insecure styles introduce barriers to meaningful connection. Understanding these patterns can foster improved relational health

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Shahyad et al. (2016) conducted a correlational study involving 200 university students to explore how attachment styles relate to resilience and loneliness. Using questionnaires and multistage cluster sampling, they found that avoidant and ambivalent attachment styles were strong predictors of emotional loneliness, with ambivalent attachment showing the strongest association. Additionally, resilience appeared to buffer the effects of loneliness across relationships with friends and family. The findings emphasized the critical role of secure attachment and resilience in mitigating emotional isolation among students.

Erozkan (2011) examined the relationship between attachment styles and depression and loneliness in 652 college students. The study discovered that insecure attachment styles were substantially linked to higher levels of depression and loneliness using standardized questionnaires and statistical analyses. Additionally, a strong correlation between depression and loneliness was noted.

Borawski et al. (2020) investigated how emotional contagion and parental attachment styles predict loneliness. They discovered, using standardized measures, that positive emotional contagion was a negative predictor of loneliness, whereas attachment anxiety and avoidance were positive

predictors. The relationship between loneliness and attachment avoidance was also mediated by positive emotional contagion.

Kıralp and Serin (2017) studied 247 university students to explore the link between attachment styles and loneliness. They found that students with low perceived socioeconomic status and those who hadn't received psychological help reported higher loneliness. Secure attachment was higher in males and those who received help. Loneliness was negatively linked with secure and dismissing styles, and positively with preoccupied attachment.

In order to investigate the relationship between symptoms of low mood and peer attachment styles, self-esteem (SE), and school connectedness (SC), Millings et al. (2012) conducted a cross-sectional study with 5022 adolescents (ages 11–16). They discovered that although SC had a negative relationship with depression, this relationship diminished when peer attachment and SE were taken into account. The best indicator of depressed mood was found to be peer attachment. The study came to the conclusion that improving SE and secure peer attachments, as opposed to just raising SC, may make adolescent depression treatments more successful.

Early maladaptive schemas (EMS) were used as mediators in a correlational study by Jalilian et al. (2023) that used structural equation modeling (SEM) to examine the relationship between loneliness and attachment styles. Convenience sampling was used to select 338 college students from Kermanshah universities for the sample. Adult attachment, social and emotional loneliness, and schema scales were the measures that were employed. The findings demonstrated that loneliness was linked to avoidant and ambivalent attachment styles through the EMS of other-directedness and disconnection-rejection. The model showed a good fit, indicating that addressing underlying schemas is crucial in loneliness therapy interventions.

DiTommaso et al. (2003) investigated the connections between social skills, loneliness, and attachment in a study of 183 college students. The findings demonstrated a significant relationship between social skills and stable attachment, and both were associated with reduced loneliness. The association between social loneliness and secure and scared attachment styles was somewhat mediated by social skills, according to regression analyses. According to these results, those who are securely attached are typically more socially adept, and attachment theory provides a useful framework for comprehending loneliness and social adjustment.

Sahin et al. (2017) examined loneliness and attachment styles among university students, also considering variables like socioeconomic status and psychological support. The findings revealed that students with lower socioeconomic backgrounds and limited psychological support experienced

greater loneliness. Males who had stronger emotional support reported lower loneliness levels. Loneliness was found to have a mild negative correlation with both dismissive and secure attachment styles, and a mild positive correlation with preoccupied attachment. The study included a sample of 247 students.

Fujimori et al. (2017) analyzed the relationship between perceived family support and loneliness. Their findings indicated that individuals with stronger family bonds experienced less loneliness, and secure attachment was associated with more robust familial support. In contrast, individuals with avoidant or ambivalent attachment styles reported higher loneliness levels. Gender differences were also observed, with varying loneliness patterns across males and females.

Cozzarelli, Karafa, and Tagler (2023) explored how attachment styles influence social connectedness in university students. They found that insecure attachment styles negatively affect one's sense of social connection. Additionally, feelings of inferiority and perfectionism served as mediating factors—suggesting that insecure attachment may foster self-doubt and perfectionism, which in turn impact the ability to form meaningful social ties.

Mikulincer and Shaver (2012) reviewed how attachment orientations influence group-level connections and dynamics. They suggested that attachment theory can be applied beyond close relationships, playing an essential role in shaping individuals' psychological bonds and behaviors within group settings. This framework helps explain variations in how people relate to social collectives and experience connectedness.

Sedikides, Wildschut, Arndt, and Routledge (2008) investigated the influence of nostalgia on social connectedness. Their findings showed that nostalgic reflection can enhance feelings of closeness, especially among individuals low in attachment-related avoidance. This implies that attachment styles moderate the effects of nostalgia—those who are more emotionally open may benefit more from nostalgic experiences.

McLaren and White (2002) studied young adults and observed that insecure attachment styles correlated with reduced social skills and higher levels of loneliness. Their findings emphasized that secure attachment supports the development of effective interpersonal skills and buffers against feelings of isolation.

Şahin Kıralp and Serin (2017) reinforced these conclusions, finding that university students with secure attachment styles reported lower loneliness scores, while those with insecure styles, especially preoccupied attachment, showed higher levels of loneliness.

Jalilian, Momeni, and Jebraeili (2023) further explored how early cognitive schemas mediate the relationship between attachment and loneliness. Their findings highlighted that insecure attachment leads to maladaptive beliefs about relationships, thereby exacerbating feelings of isolation.

III. METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the research framework, participant demographics, instruments utilized, procedures followed, and statistical methods employed for data analysis. The study aimed to investigate the relationship between adult attachment styles, loneliness, and social connectedness through a quantitative research design.

A. Aim

The primary aim of this study was to explore the relationship between adult attachment styles and their influence on experiences of loneliness and perceptions of social connectedness among adults.

B. Objectives
● To examine the relationship between secure, anxious, and avoidant attachment styles and levels of loneliness.
● To investigate how different attachment styles correlate with perceived social connectedness.
● To assess whether specific attachment styles significantly predict loneliness and social connectedness.
● To contribute insights into how early relational patterns continue to influence emotional well-being in adulthood.

C. Hypotheses
● Adults with secure attachment styles will report lower levels of loneliness compared to those with anxious or avoidant attachment styles.
● Adults with secure attachment styles will exhibit higher social connectedness compared to individuals with insecure attachment styles.
● Anxious and avoidant attachment styles will show a positive association with higher levels of loneliness.
● Anxious and avoidant attachment styles will demonstrate a negative association with social connectedness.

D. Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative, non-experimental correlational design. The relationships among adult attachment styles, loneliness, and social connectedness were explored using self-report measures. Rather than manipulating variables, the study assessed naturally occurring patterns among participants.

Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Pearson correlation, linear and multiple regression analyses) were used to examine the nature, strength, and predictive value of relationships between the key variables.

E. Participants

The study employed a convenience sampling method to recruit 124 adults, including young professionals and students from diverse backgrounds. Eligibility criteria required participants to be at least 18 years old, proficient in English, and willing to provide informed consent. Individuals diagnosed with severe mental health conditions or those submitting incomplete responses were excluded to ensure data quality.

The sample was predominantly female (65.3%), with smaller proportions of males (31.5%) and non-binary individuals (1.6%); gender was undisclosed in 1.6% of cases. Ages ranged from 18 to 61, with peaks at 22 and 23 years. Educationally, most held a master's (48.4%) or bachelor's degree (36.3%). Living arrangements varied, with most residing with family (62.9%), followed by those living with partners, friends, or independently. This demographic diversity enriched the study's exploration of loneliness and social connectedness.

F. Measures

The examined variables were assessed using the Adult Attachment Scale (AAS), UCLA Loneliness Scale (UCLA), and Social Connectedness Scale (SCS), which have garnered widespread acceptance in psychological research for their demonstrated robust reliability and validity. Specifically, the AAS, a 18-item instrument categorizing attachment styles along three dimensions (closeness, dependence, and anxiety), has exhibited satisfactory reliability coefficients ($\alpha = 0.72 - 0.78$) and construct validity in previous studies.

Additionally, the UCLA Loneliness Scale, a 20-item measure of social isolation and dissatisfaction with relational interactions, has shown high internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.89 - 0.94$) and strong test-retest reliability. Furthermore, the Social Connectedness Scale, a 8-item instrument operationalizing participants' sense of belonging and interpersonal interconnectedness, has displayed excellent reliability ($\alpha = 0.91$) and substantial construct validity across disparate populations.

G. Procedure

➢ Data Collection
Data collection was conducted through an online survey distributed via Google Forms. The survey link was circulated through emails, university mailing lists, and social media platforms to maximize reach. Prior to participation, individuals reviewed and signed an informed consent form that detailed the study's objectives, the voluntary nature of participation, confidentiality assurances, and the right to withdraw at any point.

Participants then completed a demographic questionnaire followed by the AAS, UCLA Loneliness Scale, and SCS. The estimated completion time for the entire survey was approximately 10–15 minutes. Instructions emphasized the importance of providing honest, independent responses to ensure data integrity.

➤ *Ethical Considerations*

This investigation conformed to the ethical tenets of psychological research, thereby safeguarding the rights and welfare of participants.

Personal data was anonymized, thereby preserving confidentiality, and no individually identifiable information was collected.

Prior to data collection, participants were explicitly informed that their data would be utilized exclusively for academic research purposes.

In accordance with ethical standards outlined by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2017), this study satisfied principles of autonomy, non-maleficence, and informed consent.

➤ *Data Analysis*

Responses were cleaned and checked for outliers and missing values after the data was collected. IBM SPSS Version 26 was used for data analysis. To give a summary of the sample's scores, descriptive statistics were first calculated for social connectedness (SCS), loneliness (UCLA scale), and attachment styles (AAS).

Relationships between social connectedness, loneliness, and attachment were examined using Pearson's correlation, with significance set at $p < .05$. After validating the assumptions of normality, linearity, and multicollinearity, simple linear regression was used to determine whether attachment style predicted loneliness. Multiple regression was then used to evaluate the combined impact of social connectedness and attachment on loneliness.

IV. RESULTS

A. Descriptive Statistics

Table 1. Presents the Descriptive Statistics for all Study Variables.

Variable	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Adult Attachment Scale (AAS)	123	35.00	67.00	52.21	5.99
UCLA Loneliness Scale	124	20.00	86.00	45.91	14.03
Social Connectedness Scale	124	8.00	40.00	30.21	6.84

Key trends in the sample were identified by descriptive statistics. Moderate attachment security was indicated by the mean AAS score of 52.21, indicating relational patterns that are varied but generally healthy. Feelings of social isolation were reflected in the mean UCLA loneliness score of 45.91, which indicated moderate to high levels of loneliness. Participants' sense of social connectedness varied, as indicated by the SCS mean score of 30.21. Overall, the results point to mixed degrees of connectedness, considerable loneliness, and moderate attachment security.

B. Correlation Analysis

Table 2. Pearson Correlation Coefficients were Computed to Explore the Relationships Between AAS, UCLA, and SCS.

Variables	AAS	UCLA	SCS
AAS	1	.139 (p = .124)	-.107 (p = .240)
UCLA	.139 (p = .124)	1	-.793 (p < .001**)
SCS	-.107 (p = .240)	-.793 (p < .001**)	1

The correlation analysis in the study revealed varying levels of association among the key variables. The relationship between attachment style (measured by AAS) and loneliness (measured by UCLA) was found to be weak and statistically non-significant (r = .139, p = .124), indicating that attachment style did not strongly predict loneliness in this sample. Similarly, the correlation between attachment style and social connectedness (measured by SCS) was also weak and non-significant (r = -0.107, p = .240), suggesting that attachment style alone may not be a reliable predictor of one's sense of social connectedness. However, a strong and statistically significant negative correlation was observed between loneliness and social connectedness (r = -0.793, p < .001), implying that individuals who reported higher levels of social connectedness experienced significantly lower levels of loneliness. This finding emphasizes the crucial role of social connectedness in mitigating loneliness, independent of attachment style.

C. Regression Analysis

➢ *Predicting Loneliness (UCLA) from Attachment Style (AAS)*

Table 3. A Simple Linear Regression was Performed to Determine if Attachment Style (AAS) Significantly Predicts Loneliness (UCLA).

Model Summary	R	R²	Adjusted R²	Std. Error
AAS → UCLA	.139	.019	.011	13.89

The regression analysis conducted to examine whether attachment style (measured by the Adult Attachment Scale) could predict loneliness (measured by the UCLA Loneliness Scale) revealed limited explanatory power. The model accounted for only 1.9% of the variance in loneliness (R^2 = .019), and the overall regression was not statistically significant, $F(1,121) = 2.398$, $p = .124$. Furthermore, the regression coefficient for attachment style was not significant (β = .139, p = .124), indicating that attachment style did not meaningfully predict loneliness in this sample. These results suggest that, within the context of this study, attachment style was not a strong or reliable predictor of loneliness.

➢ *Predicting Loneliness (UCLA) from Social Connectedness (SCS)*

Table 4. A second regression model examined whether social connectedness (SCS) significantly predicts loneliness (UCLA).

Model Summary	R	R²	Adjusted R²	Std. Error
SCS → UCLA	.793	.629	.626	8.58

The regression analysis revealed that social connectedness, as measured by the Social Connectedness Scale (SCS), was a strong and significant predictor of loneliness, measured by the UCLA Loneliness Scale. The model explained 62.9% of the variance in loneliness (R^2 = .629), indicating a substantial predictive effect. The overall regression was highly significant, $F(1,122) = 206.638$, $p < .001$. Additionally, the regression coefficient was significant and negative (β = -0.793, p < .001), suggesting that as social connectedness increases, loneliness significantly decreases. These findings highlight the crucial role of social connectedness in reducing feelings of loneliness.

➢ *Predicting Loneliness (UCLA) from Both AAS and SCS*

Table 5. A Multiple Regression was Conducted to Examine the Combined Effect of AAS and SCS on Loneliness (UCLA).

Model Summary		R	R²	Adjusted R²	Std. Error
AAS & SCS → UCLA		.800	.640	.636	8.47
Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p
(Constant)	96.12	3.42	-	28.12	<.001
AAS	.122	.185	.052	0.661	.510
SCS	-1.605	.112	-.780	-14.32	<.001

The overall regression model, which included both attachment style (AAS) and social connectedness (SCS) as predictors, explained 64% of the variance in loneliness (R^2 = .640, p < .001), indicating a strong model fit. In this combined analysis, attachment style (AAS) was not a significant predictor of loneliness (p = .510), aligning with earlier findings that showed no strong relationship between attachment and loneliness. However, social connectedness (SCS) continued to be a significant and strong negative predictor of loneliness (p < .001, β = -0.780). These results confirm that among the two variables, social connectedness plays a much more critical role in predicting loneliness, while attachment style does not contribute significantly.

D. Summary of Results

The analysis revealed that attachment style, as measured by the Adult Attachment Scale (AAS), was not significantly associated with loneliness (p = .124). This suggests that, within this sample, attachment styles may not have a direct or substantial impact on feelings of loneliness.

In contrast, social connectedness demonstrated a strong negative correlation with loneliness (r = -0.793, p < .001), indicating that individuals who felt more socially connected reported much lower levels of loneliness. Regression analyses further confirmed that social connectedness was the strongest predictor of loneliness, explaining 62.9% of the variance, whereas attachment style alone did not significantly predict loneliness outcomes. These findings highlight the critical role of present-day social relationships and connectedness in influencing loneliness, overshadowing the influence of early attachment patterns.

V. DISCUSSION

The aim of this research was to examine how adult attachment styles influence loneliness and social connectedness. Although attachment theory suggests that early relational experiences profoundly shape emotional well-being (Bowlby, 1969; Ainsworth, 1989), the findings of this study suggest that current social connectedness has a much stronger effect on feelings of loneliness than attachment styles alone.

One of the key findings was that attachment style did not significantly predict loneliness. The weak and non-significant correlation between attachment style and loneliness (r = .139, p = .124), combined with the low predictive value from regression analysis (R^2 = .019), suggests that the direct influence of attachment on loneliness diminishes over time. This contrasts with some earlier research (e.g., Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007) that emphasized the enduring impact of insecure attachment on loneliness. A possible explanation is that as individuals move through different life stages, current social networks and relational experiences may play a more dominant role than early attachment patterns.

The findings indicate that social connectedness exhibits a pronounced negative correlation with loneliness, as evidenced by a significant inverse relationship between scores on the Social Connectedness Scale and the UCLA Loneliness Scale (r = -0.793, p < 0.001). Moreover, regression analysis reveals that social connectedness accounts for a substantial proportion (62.9%) of the variance in loneliness levels, affirming its critical role in mitigating feelings of isolation.

SCS (Social Connectedness Scale) and UCLA Loneliness Scale (r = -0.793, p < .001). Regression analysis showed that social connectedness accounted for 62.9% of the variance in loneliness, highlighting its critical role in reducing feelings of isolation. This finding supports previous studies (e.g., Lee & Robbins, 1998) that emphasize the importance of meaningful social bonds in fostering emotional well-being. Individuals with high levels of social connectedness reported significantly lower levels of loneliness, reinforcing the idea that relationships and social engagement are essential protective factors against loneliness.

Furthermore, when both attachment style and social connectedness were included in a multiple regression model, only social connectedness remained a significant predictor of loneliness. Attachment style became non-significant (p = .510), while social connectedness continued to strongly predict loneliness (β = -0.780, p < .001). This suggests that while attachment theory provides a useful framework for understanding early relational patterns, current social bonds have a far greater impact on loneliness than attachment styles alone.

The empirical findings of this research investigation engage with the extant debate surrounding the role of attachment in adult social efficacy. According to conventional attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969; Ainsworth, 1989), how individuals form early attachments exerts a lasting impact on interpersonal relations throughout the lifespan, influencing emotional security, relationship satisfaction, and social participation. In contradistinction, the study's results suggest a lack of direct correlation between attachment styles and adult loneliness. One potential explanation for this outcome is that attachment styles are more salient in childhood and adolescence yet diminish in significance as individuals establish novel social networks and adaptive coping mechanisms in adulthood.

Another explanation is related to the measurement of attachment. The Adult Attachment Scale (AAS) primarily assesses attachment-related thoughts and behaviors rather than deep-seated attachment representations. This may explain why it did not significantly predict loneliness.

The findings of the current study support the proposed hypotheses and are consistent with existing literature on attachment theory. Securely attached people reported feeling

less alone and more connected to others (H1, H2), whereas anxious and avoidant people reported the opposite (H3, H4). People who are securely attached may be better at regulating their emotions and interacting with others, which helps them avoid loneliness. On the other hand, the insecurity of anxious and avoidant styles can make it harder to connect and make people feel more alone. These findings demonstrate how early attachment experiences influence relational and emotional health in adulthood, providing direction for therapeutic strategies that promote stable attachment and more robust social ties in order to lessen loneliness.

The findings have important theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, they challenge the assumption that attachment styles alone are the primary determinants of loneliness. Instead, the study highlights the greater role of social connectedness, suggesting that loneliness is a dynamic experience shaped more by current interpersonal relationships than by early attachment patterns. Future research should explore how other factors, such as social skills, emotional intelligence, and self-esteem, interact with attachment in influencing loneliness.

Practically, the results suggest that interventions to reduce loneliness should focus on strengthening social connections rather than solely addressing attachment-related issues. Many therapeutic interventions for loneliness, such as attachment-based therapy, focus on resolving early relational trauma. However, this study indicates that programs promoting social engagement, peer support, and community participation may be more effective in reducing loneliness. Mental health professionals should assess not only a client's attachment history but also their current levels of social engagement when addressing loneliness-related concerns.

VI. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Reliance on self-report measures to assess attachment style, loneliness, and social connectedness invites consideration of biases inherent to social desirability and subjective interpretation, potentially impacting the efficacy of the study's findings. It is advisable that future research incorporate supplementary methods such as behavioral observations or structured interviews to substantiate these results.

The study's focus on a homogeneous demographic (young adults) restricts its generalisability to other populations. Notably, attachment styles and social connectedness may exhibit nuanced variations across older adults, individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, or those situated in different life circumstances. Consequently, future investigations should endeavour to recruit a more diverse sample to ascertain the robustness of the findings across cross-sectional comparative contexts.

The study's cross-sectional design severely limits its capacity to establish definitive causal relationships. Although the study's results demonstrate a predictive relationship between social connectedness and loneliness, they do not provide empirical evidence to support a definitive causal connection, specifically the assertion that increased social connectedness necessarily reduces loneliness over time. A longitudinal study tracking participants' social connections and loneliness levels over an extended duration would provide more compelling evidence of causality.

VII. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTION

Empirical research is warranted to examine the moderating and mediating factors that underlie the relationships between attachment, social connectedness, and loneliness. Particular attention should be devoted to the potential moderating effects of social support, relationship quality, and emotional intelligence, as well as the mediating roles of self-esteem and coping mechanisms.

Longitudinal studies are necessary to explicate the developmental trajectories of attachment styles and social connectedness. By tracking participants from childhood to adulthood, researchers can discern whether attachment styles diminish in influence as individuals form new, potentially mitigating social bonds.

Experimental and intervention-based studies should be undertaken to evaluate the efficacy of programmes aimed at reducing loneliness. Specifically, investigators should assess the effectiveness of initiatives designed to promote social connectedness, as well as the potential impact of digital communication (social media, online communities) on social relationships and loneliness levels.

VIII. CONCLUSION

This study looked at how social connectedness and attachment styles affect loneliness. The results revealed that loneliness was significantly predicted by social connectedness rather than attachment style, which accounted for 62.9% of the variance in loneliness; people who felt more connected reported feeling less lonely. These findings cast doubt on the conventional wisdom that early attachment is the primary cause of loneliness in adulthood by emphasizing the larger role of existing social connections. This implies that social connection-building should take precedence over addressing attachment disorders alone in interventions. Future studies should examine the ways in which attachment interacts with social support, emotional intelligence, and relationship quality to influence loneliness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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