Attachment Style and Conflict Resolution Strategies among Married Couples in the Light of Some Demographic Variables

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Abstract

This study aims to specify relations between Conflict Resolution Strategies, adult attachment style in a sample of married couples. It also aims to find out the role of attachment styles in predicting conflict resolution strategies the sample consists of (203) males, and females, the researcher used attachment scale, conflict resolution strategies questionnaire-) Kurdek1994. The findings of the study reveal that there is a statistically significant relationship between conflict resolution strategies and all attachment styles. The results also show that there is predictive ability of the attachment styles to Conflict Resolution Strategies.

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Keywords: *Adult Attachment, Conflict Resolution, Demographic Variables.*

Introduction

Conflict is an "inevitable" behavior that occurs between individuals in the context of enduring relationships, including the relationship between spouses, which does not proceed at a constant pace and is occasionally marred by disagreements and disputes due to a number of factors represented in role conflict, responsibility determination, and economic status(Al-Hawaeny,2018).

Researchers' opinions have varied regarding the inevitability of conflict between spouses, with some viewing the absence of conflict as an indicator of psychological imbalance, while others see conflict between them as a negative matter that should be avoided or distanced from, as it leads to many negative outcomes. Some researchers assert that only positive relationships between spouses involve individuals who employ positive strategies to resolve any conflict between them (Bonache, et al., 2016).

Family development theories indicate the emergence of conflict between spouses and   strategies for its resolution during the early years of marriage, which represents a transitional phase in which spouses are likely to become involved in disputes due to the significant changes from singlehood to marriage. Therefore, effective handling of conflicts is among the most essential tasks practiced by married individuals. Additionally, the interactive methods of couples during the first few years of marriage are open to many influences and changes, and it is also likely that in the early years of marriage, the foundations for long-term conflict resolution strategies between spouses are established (Xiaomin, et al., 2018).

Due to the importance of conflict resolution Strategys between spouses, researchers have given special attention to studying this topic, which primarily determines the success of the marital relationship. Among these studies are (Al-Hamd 2003, Gharib 2017, Al-Hawarny 2018, , Byadgi et al. 2014,, Scheeren et al. 2014, Papp 2017, Taggart et al. 2019). These studies indicate the existence of different strategies followed by couples to resolve conflicts, such as: forgiveness, compromise, concession, avoidance, participation, and dominance. These strategies are based on two dimensions: the self and the other. Studies by Byadgi et al.

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(2014) and Bonache et al. (2016) classify these strategies into two categories: destructive and constructive strategies.

Additionally, Bonache et al. (2016) mentioned that an individual's practice of constructive strategies in conflict resolution can enhance positive relationships, which occur through open and conciliatory discussions during conflicts. In contrast, the practice of participation in conflict and withdrawal predicted dissatisfaction and marital distress. It is noteworthy that there is variation among individuals in practicing conflict resolution strategies, as some engage in constructive strategies while others engage in destructive strategies. This variation may be attributed to differences in several psychological, social, and demographic variables. Among the variables proposed by researchers in this context are emotional attachment styles. Xiaomin et al. (2018) assert that conflict resolution strategies between spouses depend on the attachment styles of the spouses. Through attachment styles, conflicts may be resolved or not resolved, meaning that attachment styles contribute to determining the conflict resolution Strategy.

Feeney & Fitzgerald (2018) confirm that attachment styles are closely related to conflict behaviors and resolution among couples. All couples experience tensions between them, but they vary in their approaches to conflict resolution. For example, individuals with secure attachment tend to have happy relationships characterized by good communication and trust, and they employ constructive strategies to resolve their conflicts. In contrast, individuals with insecure attachment are characterized by a lack of self-confidence, avoidance of relationships, conflicting motives, and hesitation. They view others as untrustworthy and tend to be conflicted and confused in resolving their disputes.

Researchers interested in the relationship between attachment styles and marital conflict have reached several conclusions, including that secure and insecure attachment styles have effective impacts on the occurrence of conflict between spouses. In fact, they influence the formation of cognitive, physiological, and behavioral responses to conflict. For example, insecure attachment is associated with undermining the quality of the marital relationship, while secure attachment limits the escalation of conflict and strengthens emotional communication between spouses (see studies: Ezzat, 2013; Gharib, 2017; Feeney & Fitzgerald,2018,Prager,et al.,2019;Bonache,et al.,2017).   .   Based on the above, it is likely that there is a relationship between attachment styles and conflict resolution strategies, thus the current study starts from the importance of marriage in general and conflict resolution strategies between spouses in particular.

There is considerable interest in the category of couples from marriage counseling specialists, as Adler and his followers have made significant contributions in the field of marital and family counseling. For example, studies related to the Adlerian approach have addressed skills in conflict management, problem-solving, and communication between spouses (Al-Khaza'ileh and Bani Younis, 2017).

In fact, those familiar with modern psychological studies that have addressed conflict resolution strategies between spouses would notice that most of them were conducted on samples of couples who frequented family counseling centers or cases that had been subjected to psychological or physical abuse by their partner.

Therefore, these studies focused on destructive conflict resolution strategies in marital relationships. For example, the study (Goodman et al., 2004; Martínez-Pampliega,et al.,2019) concluded that the couples were unaware of constructive strategies for resolving conflict between them, which were among the main causes of marital discord and divorce. Additionally, (Goodman et al., 2004) added that 10% to 25% of divorce cases were a result of couples practicing destructive strategies for resolving conflicts between them.

As noted by Papp (2018), there is evidence of a doubling of divorce rates due to couples engaging in destructive conflict resolution strategies. Similarly, conflict participation and withdrawal strategies predicted marital distress (Siffert & Schwarz, 2011). Additionally, destructive conflict resolution strategies were associated with psychological and physical abuse (Honeycutt et al., 2015).

In summary, previous studies have focused on destructive conflict resolution strategies among couples, and the researcher has observed, to the best of their knowledge, an unintentional neglect by researchers to study conflict resolution strategies among couples who do not frequent family counseling centers. Therefore, there is a need for a proactive study to uncover conflict resolution strategies among couples whose marital lives are functioning normally.

There is a need for further analysis to investigate the factors contributing to the variation among individuals in their application of conflict resolution strategies. Consequently, the current study introduces two variables: attachment styles, which are likely related to how spouses engage in conflict resolution strategies with each other. From another angle, the researchers observe that Arab studies on conflict resolution strategies between couples are quite limited compared to foreign studies.

Furthermore, there is no existing Arab or foreign study designed in the same way as this one, despite foreign research confirming the existence of correlations between attachment styles and conflict resolution strategies.

The hypotheses of present study This study explores the relationships among conflict resolution strategies and adult attachment style, in a sample from Saudi society. The research design explores (6) hypotheses:
H1. There is a positive, statistically significant correlation between the secure attachment style and positive strategies for resolving conflicts between couples.

H2. there is a statistically significant negative correlation between the secure attachment style and negative strategies for resolving conflicts between couples

H3. There is a positive, statistically significant correlation between insecure attachment styles and negative strategies for resolving conflicts between couples.

H4. There is statistically significant negative correlation between insecure attachment styles and positive strategies for resolving conflicts between couples.

H5. Attachment styles predict conflict resolution strategies among married participants. H6. There are statistically significant differences in conflict resolution strategies between couples based on differences in gender and educational level.

Theoretical Background of the Study Conflict Resolution Style.

The concept of conflict resolution strategy has primarily emerged within the framework of understanding conflict among individuals. Researchers who have studied conflict from a psychological perspective, such as Hammer in 2002 and Merchant in 1996, agree that conflict is a state of disagreement among the conflicting parties expressed through dissatisfaction and disharmony in the interaction process (Jang & Kim, 2018).

Rahim,et al (1992) indicates that conflict is an interactive process characterized by incompatibility, discord, and differences within social entities (Park & Antonioni, 2007). The concept of conflict resolution Strategies was formulated by Blake & Mouton in 1964 in the field of work (Jang & Kim, 2018). This concept soon extended to include family conflicts. Laursen and Collins (1994) viewed the concept of conflict resolution Strategies as the behaviors of individuals in resolving conflict, and they emphasized the need to distinguish between conflict resolution behaviors and conflict outcomes Although they are related, the former refers to the behaviors that occur during conflicts, while the latter refers to the impact of the conflict on the conflicting individuals (Missotten et al., 2016).

Rahim (2001) defines conflict resolution Strategies as means to learn creative thinking in problem-solving, resulting in transforming conflict situations from a source of destruction to a source of construction and identifying the goals that the conflicting parties seek to achieve. Mustafa (2012) also defines conflict resolution Strategies as a set of behavioral procedures undertaken by one party in the conflict to address

the disagreement arising between them, using some behavioral methods employed in that confrontation, in order to prevent the escalation of this disagreement to the level of violence. These Strategies include avoidance, control, cooperation, altruism, and compromise.

According to the above, the researchers propose a definition for the concept of conflict resolution Strategies between spouses as the actions that spouses take to resolve any disputes that arise between them.

It is worth noting that these behaviors vary from one individual to another. Some engage in constructive conflict resolution approaches with their partner, which include participating in problem solving and reaching an agreement between both parties. But others resort to negative or destructive methods to resolve conflicts with a partner, such as coercion and withdrawal. These approaches will be measured by participants' score on the Kordic test from 1994, which assesses the conflict resolution Strategy's used in the current study. In 1983, Rahim developed a model consisting of five categories from which conflict resolution Strategy's are derived. This model includes dominance (high self-interest vs. low concern for others), compromise (moderate concern for self and others), satisfaction (low self-interest), avoidance (minimal concern for self and others), and integration (cooperation among the parties in conflict) (Missotten, et al., 2016).

Additionally, Kurdek (1994) proposed five conflict resolution strategies used by individuals, namely:

- Positive problem-solving that involves an attempt to understand others' perspectives,

- Effectively negotiating the conflict to find a compromise,

- Engaging in the conflict, which includes destructive behaviors,

- Withdrawal, which involves avoidance, and

- Compliance, which involves yielding to the other party without expressing one's personal views and interests (Missotten, et al., 2016).

Loon (2014) proposed four Strategy's for resolving conflicts: withdrawal, compliance, participation in the conflict, and positive problem-solving. The withdrawal Strategy, which involves avoiding the conflict, is a passive response characterized by behaviors such as refusing to discuss the issue, ignoring the other party, and distancing oneself from them. In contrast, the compliance Strategy entails not defending one's position and yielding to the other party.

The dominance Strategy involves impulsivity or losing self-control, resulting in a verbal attack on the other party. Finally, the positive conflict resolution Strategy focuses on viewing the problem from the other person's perspective, engaging in negotiation, reaching an agreement, and reconciling between the parties involved.

From the above presentation, we can conclude that conflict resolution Strategies are constructive processes when they achieve understanding between the parties and lead to positive interactions among individuals. However, they can also be a destructive process for human relationships. The summary of the above emphasizes the importance of conflict resolution Strategy's at the level of human relationships in general and family relationships in particular. Therefore, the current study focuses on conflict resolution Strategy's between spouses, which we will address in the remaining part of this research.

In addition to what has been mentioned, marital life may sometimes be affected by conflict. Wagner & Delatorre (2018) define conflict between spouses as the open disagreement between them that leads to disputes and difficulties in compatibility and harmony. On the other hand, Wagner & Delatorre (2018) mentioned several factors that provoke conflict between spouses, including child-rearing practices, leisure

time for the couple, economic factors, household chores, disruption of intimacy, divergence of ideas, personality traits, and cultural differences between the spouses.

However, what is important for the couple is not just acknowledging the existence of conflict or merely how to avoid it, but more importantly, how to resolve this conflict. On the other hand, Wagner & Delatorre (2018) mentioned a number of factors that trigger conflict between spouses: parenting practices, leisure time for the couple, economic factors, housework, intimacy disruption, divergence of ideas, personality traits, and cultural differences between spouses, but what matters more for the couple is not to recognize the existence of conflict or simply how to avoid it, but how to resolve it.

It should be noted that the previously mentioned strategies in conflict resolution are the same as those practiced by spouses to reach viable solutions to the various conflicts that arise between them. Tosun & Dilmac (2015) believe that the nature of marital relationship depends largely on the conflict resolution Strategy's between the spouses, as both parties may practice positive Strategy's that lead to construction, innovation, creativity and positive change. On the other hand, we find that negative Strategy's in conflict resolution negatively affect marital relationship and may cause its destruction.

Attachment Styles

Attachment is a biobehavioral concept that aims to make the individual adapt by matching the search for security with his need to explore the world with its risks and pressures, and the term 'attachment' refers to the strong relationship between two people, each of whom is willing to do a set of things to continue this relationship between them(Alexis,et al.,2019).While Green (2018) believes that attachment is a willingness and tendency to make efforts to obtain psychological security, researchers agree that the concept of attachment in adulthood is different from the concept of attachment in childhood, for example (Gormley, 2005, Bonache, et al., 2016, Unrau & Morry 2019). They agree that attachment in adulthood refers to the reciprocal ties between individuals to fulfill psychological needs, such as the need for safety, protection, and primary needs such as eating and drinking, and these ties are represented in romantic relationships, friends and parents.

Based on the above, the researchers offer a definition of attachment in adulthood as the reciprocal bonds between others that are determined by a set of knowledge and expectations that people hold about themselves and their close relationships with others. It is defined procedurally as the score obtained by the examinee on the Collines and Road test (1990) and localized by researchers in the current study.

Fraley & Roysman (2019) view the concept of "adult attachment styles" as a set of knowledge and expectations that people hold about themselves and their close relationships with others Bowlby and Tee noted that there are two attachment styles: Secure attachment, which is the result of positive interactions between parents and children and is characterized by love, affection and familiarity, and this style in which the individual shows comfort in the presence of the attachment symbol and feels assured of its presence, and feels happy, confident and secure, while the second style is insecure attachment and refers to the lack of familiarity and affection between children and parents, so this style represents insecurity, feelings of anxiety and loss of trust (Brewer, et al., 2018).

Internal models serve to perceive the self (e.g., as worthy of love) and the other (e.g., as supportive) based on this positive self-view, which sees the self as effective and worthwhile, while a negative self-perception is shaped by a lack or deprivation of parental care. This is characterized by a negative perception of others and the future.

The individual sees himself as rejected and unreliable, with increased dependence and hypersensitivity to criticism from others(Otani,et.,2016). Mary Ainsowrth has presented a theory called "post-infant attachment" in which she addresses attachment as a behavior that extends across the life cycle and influences various aspects of activity later in life. This theory is based on behavioral systems through which attachment takes place, such as: marital bonds and consequent procreation that set the stage for successful attachment, the nurturing system provided by parents to their children, and forms of friendships across the

life cycle (in Hamza and Hamza, 2018). Previous studies have revealed the relationship between attachment styles and conflict resolution Strategy's Scheeren, et al., 2014, Roebuck, 2015, Bonache, et al., 2016, 2017, Gharib, 2017, Nadiri & Khalatbari, 2018, Rouleau, et al., 2018, Parson & Aiam, 2019).

Method

Participants. 50.7% (N 103) of the total sample of the study were male, and 49.2% (N = 100) were female; the mean age of the entire sample was 37. years (SD = 4.29). The sample included educational levels starting from the level of education below the average until the university education level, and among the criteria for selecting the sample are that its members live a normal marital life and have not previously resorted to the judiciary or family counseling centers to settle any dispute between them. The sample was selected from employees of AL-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University in the city of Riyadh in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Measures

Social and demographic variables. Participants were asked to provide information on their gender, age, years of marriage, occupation, and studies

Conflict Resolution Style Inventory (CRSI). Kurdek (1994) has been translated and adapted to Arabic by the researchers in the current study, an instrument that contains 16 items which are scored on a five- point scale (1 = never; 5= always). CRSI investigates the conflict resolution strategies employed by each couple, classifying them into four categories: positive problem-solving, conflict engagement, withdrawal, and compliance. The scores on each subscale are added up to provide four scores ranging from four to 25, depending on the number of items in each domain. A mean value can then be calculated for each subscale Reliabilities for the present sample were adequate (α = .68, α = .80, α = .66, and α = .76, respectively withdrawal and compliance dimensions had alpha values of0. 80 and .078, respectively.

Adult Attachment Scale: The AAS (Collins and Read 1990) translated and adapted to Arabic by the researchers in the current study, an instrument that contains a 18 item-questionnaire consisting of three factors: Depend, Close, and Anxiety. The Depend factor measures a person's belief that another person can be available or depended upon when needed. The Close factor taps into an individual's comfort with closeness and intimacy. The Anxiety factor measures the extent to which an individual feels anxious about elements such as abandonment or not being loved. On a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (not at all characteristic of me) to 5 (very characteristic of me), respondents decide how closely each item resembles how they feel about questions regarding relationships. Collins and Read reported internal consistencies (coefficient alpha) of .75, .69, and .72 respectively for the depend, close, and anxiety subscales, and test-retest reliabilities after a 2-month interval were .71, .68, and .52, respectively. Validity for the AAS was determined by using a cluster analysis and suggested concurrent validity with Hazan and Shaver's (1987) attachment style measure (Collins and Read 1990). Reliabilities for the present sample were adequate (α = .88, α = .87, α = .68, and α = .86, respectively withdrawal and compliance dimensions had alpha 0.80 and 0.88 respectively.

Procedure

Participants were assessed individually at Al-Imam University in male and female conditions, respectively. Data was collected from individual face-to-face sessions lasting approximately 30 minutes. At each session, participants completed questionnaires in the following order: (1) sociodemographic survey, (2) Adult Attachment Scale, and (3) conflict Resolution Style Inventory. The researchers then coded participants' responses to each questionnaire according to the authors' instructions.

Data analysis: The data was processed statistically using Pearson's correlation coefficient, stepwise regression analysis, t-score, and one-way analysis of variance. The distribution of the sample scores on the tests of the current study was verified for moderation and the normality of the distribution of sample scores

on the tests of the current study has been verified. Table (2) provides a statistical description of the study sample data.

Table (2). Statistical Description of the Scores of the Study Groups of Married Men and Women on the Scales Used (N=203)

Sample	Married Women N=100					Married Men N=103				
Conflict Resolution Strategy Scale	M	SD	SK	Min	Max	M	SD	SK	Min	Max
Collaborative Problem-Solving Strategy	13.6	2.6	0.6	7	18	13.3	2.3	0.2	7	19
Withdrawal	11,5	2.3	0.02	6	17	10.5	2.5	0.18	4	16
Coercive Strategy	9.2	2.8	0.1	4	15	10.3	2.9	0.8	4	15
Compromise and Compliance Strategy	8.8	3.2	0.4	4	17	9		0.5	4	17
Attachment	M	SD	SK	Min	Max	M	SD	SK	Min	Max
Secure Attachment	19.1	4.1	0.07	12	26	19.9	2.6	0.5	11	25
Anxious Attachment	16	4	0.3	9	26	13.7	4.3	0.13	6	28
Avoidant Attachment	14.7	3	0.3	9	22	14,7	3.7	0.14	6	25

Results

We present the results of the current study in a manner that sequentially reflects the answers to the questions posed, as follows. The results from the first hypothesis to the fourth hypothesis use Pearson's simple correlation coefficients between the scores of the study sample individuals on the couple conflict resolution strategies test and their scores on the attachment styles test. The data presented in Table (3) reflect these results.

Table (3). Pearson Correlation Coefficients Between Conflict Resolution Strategies Among Couples and Each of the Attachment Styles

Looking at Table (3), we conclude the following:

Adult Attachment styles	Married Women N=100				Married Men N=103			
	conflict Resolution Style				conflict Resolution Style			
	positive problem-solving	conflict engagement	withdrawal	compliance.	positive problem-solving	conflict engagement	withdrawal	compliance.
Secure Attachment	**0.07**	**0.05**	**0.25-****	**0.19-***	**0.11**	**0.21-***	**0.21-***	**0.07**

There is a statistically significant negative correlation between secure attachment and the withdrawal strategy among both married men and women. Additionally, there is a statistically significant negative correlation between the secure attachment style and the compromise and compliance strategy among

Avoidant Attachment	0.15-	0.22*	0.30**	0.07	0.04	0.18	0.30**	0.38**
Anxious Attachment	0.20-*	0.33**	0.13	0.15	0.17-*	0.30**	0.21*	0.30**

married women. However, there are no significant correlations between secure attachment and the other conflict resolution strategies between spouses, namely the coercive strategy and the problem-solving participation strategy.

There are statistically significant positive correlations between avoidant attachment and withdrawal strategy in both the married men and married women. There is a statistically significant positive correlation between avoidant attachment and compromise and compliance strategy in the married men only, and a statistically significant positive correlation between avoidant attachment and coercion strategy in the married women. However, there is no statistically significant correlation between avoidant attachment and coercion strategy in the married men. Additionally, there are no statistically significant correlations between avoidant attachment and participation in conflict resolution strategy among both married men and married women.

There are statistically significant positive correlations between anxious attachment and the coercive strategy in both the married men and married women, while there is a statistically significant negative correlation between anxious attachment and the problem-solving participation strategy in both the married women and married men.

There are statistically significant positive correlations between anxious attachment and both the accommodation and compliance strategies, as well as withdrawal, in the married while these correlations did not reach statistical significance in the married women.

To clarify the relationship between attachment style in adults and conflict resolution style in couples, the fifth hypothesis was proposed and to verify its validity, a multiple regression analysis was conducted. with Secure Attachment, Avoidant attachment and anxious Attachment dimensions as independent variables. The dependent variables included the subscales of the Conflict Resolution Scale for positive problem-solving, conflict engagement, withdrawal and compliance. For both males and females separately, only significant prediction results are presented. The findings of this analysis are detailed in table (4), (5).

Table 4. Relative Contribution of the Independent Variables to the Prediction (females N=100)

Independent variables	Dependent variables	constants	R	R square	B	Beta	F Value	sig	valu T e	sig
(compromise	Secure attachment	15.2	0.37-	0.14	0.22-	0.23-	3.6	0.01	2.4	0.01
Withdrawal	anxious attachment	1.5	0.33	0.11	0.14	0.20	3.1		2	0.04
conflict engagement	avoidant attachment	9	0.30	0.9	0.26	0.34	3.2	0.01	3	0.003

Looking at Table (4), we conclude the following: Secure attachment was able to negatively predict compliance, as the regression coefficient reached (0.14), which means that it contributes (14%) of the variance of the dependent variable (compromise), while the rest of the independent variables (predictors) were absent from their predictive effect on the compromise and compliance Strategy among married women. (3) anxious attachment was able to positively predict the coercive Strategy among married women, as the regression coefficient reached (0.11), which means that it contributes (11%) of the variance of the dependent variable (conflict engagement), and the regression coefficient of the avoidant attachment style variable reached (0.9), which means that it contributes (9%) of the variance of the dependent variable

(withdrawal), while the rest of the independent variables (predictors) were absent from their predictive effect on the withdrawal among married women.

Table 5. Relative Contribution of the Independent Variables to the Prediction males (N=103)

Independent variables	Dependent variables	constants	R	R square	B	Beta	F Value	sig	valu T e	sig
conflict engagement	Secure attachment	2.3	0.20-	0.04	0.20-	0.18-	3.2	0.01	1.9	0.05
	anxious attachment		0.33	0.11	0.17	0.25	4.2	0.01	2.4	0.017
(compromise	avoidant attachment	3.6	0.43	0.18	0.28	0.32	3.6	0.01	3.2	0.002
positive problem-solving	anxious attachment	9.2	0.28	0.17	0.10-	0.19-	3.2	0.01	1.7	0.05

Looking at Table (5), we conclude the following: (1) Secure attachment was able to negatively predict conflict engagement among married couples, as the regression coefficient reached (0.4), which means that it contributes (4%) to the variance of the dependent variable conflict engagement. (2) Avoidant attachment was able to positively predict compromise as the regression coefficient reached (0.18). This means that it contributes 18% of the variance of the dependent variable (compliance), while the rest of the independent variables (predictors) were absent from their predictive effect on the compliance. In married people. (3) Anxious attachment was able to negatively predict positive problem-solving as the regression coefficient reached (0.17), which means that it contributes (17%) of the variance of the dependent variable (positive problem-solving while the rest of the independent variables (predictors) were absent) on its predictive effect on positive problem-solving among married couples.

To verify the sixth hypothesis, the one-way variance was calculated for knowledge of differences in conflict resolution Strategy's between spouses according to educational level, which included three categories (university, average, and below average) for both married man and married women separately. The data in Tables (6) and (7) indicate what resulted from this step.

Table (6). Results of Analysis of Variance for Differences in Conflict Resolution Between Spouses According to Educational Level Among Females (N=100)

conflict resolution	Source of variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
conflict engagement	Between groups	16.3	2	8.2	0.98	**0.37**
	Within groups	804.3	97	8.2		
	Total	820.7	99			
compromise	Between groups	**25.3**	2	**12.6**	**1.1**	**0.31**
	Within groups	**1037.3**	97	10.6		
	Total	**1062.7**	**99**			
withdrawal	Between groups	**26.4**	2	13.2	2.4	**0.09**
	Within groups	**524,5**	97	5.4		
	Total	550.9	**99**			

positive problem-solving	Between groups	5.49	**2**	2.7	0.38	**0.68**
	Within groups	692.9	97	7.1		
	Total	698.4	**99**			

It is clear from Table (6) that the F values are not statistically significant. Hence, there are no significant differences between wives in resolving conflicts according to educational level.

Table (7). Results of Analysis of Variance for Differences in Conflict Resolution Between Spouses According to Educational Level Among Males (N=103)

conflict resolution	Source of variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
conflict engagement	Between groups	**31.07**	**2**	**15.5**	**1.7**	**0.17**
	Within groups	**874.5**	**100**	**8.7**		
	Total	**905.6**	**102**			
compromise	Between groups	**39.08**	**2**	**19.5**	**1.9**	**0.15**
	Within groups	**1026.9**	**100**	**10.2**		
	Total	**1066.0**	**102**			
withdrawal	Between groups	**13.16**	**2**	6.5	0.98	**0.37**
	Within groups	**667.6**	**100**	6.6		
	Total	681.04	**102**			
positive problem-solving	Between groups	**7.7**	**2**	3.8	0.66	**0.51**
	Within groups	**577.3**	**100**	5.7		
	Total	**585.1**	**102**			

It is clear from Table (7) that the F values are not statistically significant. Hence, there are no significant differences between husbands in resolving conflicts according to educational level.

Discussion

The current study departed from the notion that there is a relationship between Conflict Resolution Strategies among married couples and attachment styles. So, the main objective of the current study is to verify whether Conflict Resolution Strategies among married couples were directly related to attachment styles in married couples and whether conflict resolution Strategies among married couples vary according to gender and educational level.

In this part, we try to discuss and explain the results of the current study, and the extent to which they agree or contradict with its hypotheses, the results of previous studies, theoretical perceptions, and models. We conclude this part by putting forward the research proposals and recommendations raised by the results of the study, and this can be presented as follows:

The results of the study in the first, second and third hypothesis indicate the existence of statistically significant correlations between Conflict Resolution Strategies among married and Attachment styles, and then we discuss the results as follows:

The current study concluded in its first hypothesis that there is a statistically significant negative correlation between the Secure attachment and the withdrawal of married men and women, and this is a logical result. We attribute this result to the psychological characteristics of the secure attachment that are inconsistent with withdrawal, which is characterized by lack of interest in self and others, evasion of responsibility and neglect in the hope that the conflict situation will automatically improve over time. While Secure attachment depends entirely on caring for oneself and others and gaining their love, it is also characterized by a number of psychological characteristics, including the sense of acceptance and tendency to take the others into account and good evaluation of their relationships and are characterized by social skills and have confidence in others.

This result is consistent with the findings of multiple studies, including a study by Gharib (2017), which revealed a statistically significant negative correlation between the Secure attachment and withdrawal among married women, and the results of a study by Roebuck (2015), which revealed a negative and statistically significant correlation between Secure attachment and withdrawal, as a Conflict Resolution Strategies among married couples, and the results of a study by Prager, et, al., (2019) which found that Secure attachment rarely uses withdrawal to resolve marital conflict. On the other hand, theoretical perceptions supported this result. For example, Hazan Shaver's theory in 1987 and Bartholomew & Horowrtz's theory in 1991 believe that Secure Attachment facilitates approaching others, trusting them, relying on them, achieving satisfaction in communicating with them, as well as their continuous evaluation of their social relationships.

Those who have secure attachment also have emotional and social adequacy towards others (Alexis et al., 2019). Abu-Ghazal and Jaradat (2009) also stated that people with Secure Attachment are characterized by a self-system that is relatively open to new information or feedback coming from the external environment, as the internal working models of these individuals reflect a relative balance between the representation process and the adaptation process, and thus the secure self-system is relatively flexible and open to new experiences.

Moreover, this finding is supported by the theoretical framework developed by Kobak and Sceery in 1988, whereby individuals with Secure attachment are expected to deal with any stress by knowing it and engaging in constructive work to reduce it and can modify negative emotions in a constructive way that reduces any negative outcomes of these types of stress (Abdel Ghani, 2016).

The results of the first hypothesis also concluded that there is a negative correlation between the Secure attachment and conflict engagement in the group of married couples, and this result is logical. The study attributes the existence of a negative relationship between Secure attachment and conflict engagement among married couples to the fact that conflict engagement is incompatible with secure attachment, which characterizes those who have it by a positive attitude towards themselves and others, while Conflict engagement is a destructive activity that involves impulsivity, loss of self-control, and attacks on others. Looking for previous studies to support the current findings, the researchers found several studies that reached the conclusion that there is a statistically significant negative correlation between Secure attachment and conflict engagement (see Gharib, 2017, Nadiri& Khalatbari, 2018, Bonache, et al., 2017).

This finding is consistent with the theoretical perception cited by Scheeren, et al., (2014) that Secure Attachment is characterized by the ability to help those who have it to form and maintain successful relationships with others specifically, as internal business models perceive self-perceptions (e.g., worth love), others (e.g., potentially supportive) and relationships between self and others are positive.

The first hypothesis also concluded that there was a statistically significant negative correlation between secure attachment and compromise among married women, and the first hypothesis also concluded that there was no statistically significant correlation between secure attachment and the positive problem-solving strategy among married women and married women.

The researchers attribute the existence of a statistically significant negative correlation between Secure Attachment and compromise among married women to the fact that the owners of Secure attachment

behave more positively with others, which reduces the size and rate of conflicts between them and others and, therefore, they do not resort to using compromise to resolve their conflicts with others, and this result was consistent with the results of a study by Gharib (2017), which revealed a negative and statistically significant correlation between Secure attachment and compromise. This finding was inconsistent with the results of a study by Nadiri & Khalatbari (2018) which revealed statistically significant positive associations between the unsafe attachment style and the consent Strategy to resolve conflicts with husband or wife.

Regarding the lack of a statistically significant correlation between Secure Attachment and the positive problem-solving Strategy among married couples, this result is illogical as it is expected that the Secure Attachment will be positively correlated with the positive problem-solving Strategy according to what is characteristic of people who have Secure Attachment. The positive psychological characteristics include, among others, a sense of acceptance, a tendency to take into account others, a good evaluation of social relations, as well as openness, confidence in oneself and others, social skills and confidence in others, which pushes them in the event of any conflict to cooperate with the parties to the conflict to exchange information and examine differences to resolve conflicts with others by direct contact.

Therefore, this finding was inconsistent with the results of previous studies such as the results of a study by Shelley, et al., (2006) which indicated that those with Secure attachment practice positive problem-solving thinking skills with their partners to reach a solution.

The current study results also agree with the results of a study by Rachel & Hirshberg (2009) which revealed that people with Secure attachment have more positive attitudes towards others. So, they practice more cooperative Strategy's for conflict resolution, and this result agrees with the result of the study of Gharib (2017), which found a positive relationship statistically significant between the Secure attachment and the cooperative Strategy and positive problem-solving. The current result is also consistent with the results of the study of Bonache, Manda, and Electro (Bonache, et. al, (2017) which found statistically significant positive correlations between Secure Attachment and constructive Strategy's in the solution, including participation in the solution. The result is consistent with the results of a study by Nadiri, M & Khalatbari (2018), which revealed a statistically significant positive association between the Secure attachment and the Strategy of participation in resolving conflicts with husband or wife.

If we move to discuss the results of the second hypothesis, which we divide into three parts, the first of them: the existence of positive correlations statistically significant between the unsafe attachment style and negative conflict resolution Strategy's between spouses, and the second part was the absence of an association between the avoidant attachment style and compromise in married women, we can interpret the results of the second hypothesis as follows:

For the results of the first part of this hypothesis, which were the existence of statistically significant positive correlations between the avoidant attachment style and the withdrawal in the married and married groups, as well as the existence of statistically significant positive correlations between the anxious attachment style and conflict engagement in the married and married groups, and the existence of a statistically significant positive association between the avoidant attachment style and compromise in the married group.

It is worth noting that the results of the first part of the second hypothesis are consistent with the results of many studies, including the results of a study by Sierau & Herzberg (2012) which indicated a statistically significant positive correlation between demolition Strategy's in resolving the conflict with the husband or wife and the unsafe attachment style. The current result is also consistent with the results of a study by Bonache, Mendez & Krahe (2016) which revealed the existence of a statistically significant positive relationship between destructive conflict resolution Strategy's between spouses and anxious attachment style. It is consistent as well with a study by Bonache, Mendez & Krade (2017) which found that insecure attachment styles were positively and significantly associated with the use of destructive Strategy's to resolve conflict with the romantic partner. This result is consistent with a study by Nadiri, M & Khalatbari (2018), which revealed the existence of statistically significant positive correlations between insecure attachment style and Strategies of domination and hostility in resolving tendencies.

Just looking at the results of the first part of the second hypothesis in general, we can say that the attachment style is insecure (avoidant & anxious) is one of the psychological causes of the practice of the individual negative and destructive Strategy's to resolve the conflict between spouses, as people with an insecure attachment style are characterized by psychological characteristics that push them to practice destructive Strategy's to resolve the conflict with the husband or wife, as the attachment style is, as indicated by Brewer, et al., ,(2018), characterized by insecure reactions to perceived romantic rejection, exaggerated appreciation of relationship threats and underestimation of partner commitment, stress and excessive sensitivity when any criticism or conflict with husband or wife.

The perspective of Hazan and Shaver (1987) supports this result, as this perspective sees that people with anxious attachment style are characterized by refusal to approach others because of their negative view of self and others. This pattern is characterized by fear, mistrust and social avoidance and they have negative expectations of self and doubts about their dealings with others. This perspective sees that the style of avoidant attachment is characterized by discomfort when relying on others. Those who have high levels of avoidant style prefer emotional and psychological independence and hate intimacy (Hazan & Shaver, 1994). These characteristics of insecure attachment styles correspond to destructive Strategy's to resolve the conflict between spouses represented in strategies (forced and withdrawal) (Brewer, et al., 2018).

These characteristics that have been mentioned for those with insecure attachment styles (patterns) push them to withdraw (i.e. avoid conflict). This is a negative response that includes behaviors represented in refusing to discuss the problem, ignoring the other party and moving away, or pushing them to practice violence, attacks and aggression as a Strategy to resolve their conflicts with others. According to the previously mentioned inference, the insecure attachment style is associated with these negative Strategy's to resolve the conflict between spouses.

About the existence of a positive and statistically significant correlation between the avoidance pattern and conflict engagement among married women, and this result is logical because of the characteristics of those with avoidant attachment style of a negative view of others and lack of trust in them, making these negative characteristics to the practice of conflict engagement, which includes, as previously mentioned, all sources of verbal and physical aggression. This result is consistent with Bonache et al., (2017), Nadiri & Kalatbari (2018), Rouleau, et al., (2018).

This finding supports Hazan and Shaver's theory (1994), which suggested that avoidant attachment style people are uncomfortable when relying on others, prefer emotional and psychological independence, and hate emotional and physical intimacy (Alexis,et al.,2019).

In addition, the first part of the second hypothesis includes a positive and statistically significant correlation between the avoidant attachment style, compliance and consent in married couples. The researchers explain this result in light of attachment theory, which sees that individuals with high levels of avoidant attachment expect that others will not respond to them if they reveal feelings of stress they have, and as a result resort to consent and compliance is a negative method that involves not defending the situation and surrendering to the other party and compliance may be less effective in conflict resolution, but the future of the relationship is often not negatively affected by conflict resolution methods in general. This finding is supported by a study by Shelley, et al., (2006) which indicates that people with insecurities lack the thinking skills in resolving their conflicts and positive problem-solving with their partners to reach a solution, so they resort to destructive Strategy's in conflict resolution. This finding also supports the results of a study by Rachel & Hirshberg (2009) which revealed that people with insecure attachment have negative attitudes towards others, so they practice withdrawal, and conciliation Strategy's to resolve their conflicts.

Regarding the discussion of the sub-result, which proved that there is no statistically significant correlation between the avoidant attachment style, compliance and consent among married women within the results of the second part, we find that it was consistent with a previous result that indicated a positive and statistically significant correlation between the avoidance style and conflict engagement among married women. This means that most of the avoidant attachment women from the group of married women in

the current study practice conflict engagement to resolve the conflict with the husband more than their practice of compliance and consent.

If we consider the ability of attachment style in predicting strategies to resolve the conflict between spouses, we can say that the results of the regression analysis showed that attachment methods are one of the predictive variables of Conflict Resolution Strategies among married couples with different levels of significance. With reference to the results related to this hypothesis, it is noted that this hypothesis has been partially achieved and the results of this hypothesis were consistent with the overall results of the hypothesis. The discussion of this hypothesis will be divided into four paragraphs according to the Conflict Resolution Strategies among married couples identified in the current study:

Prediction of Conflict Engagement Strategy

As for the role of the anxious attachment style in the positive prediction of conflict engagement for married men and women, this result is logical and consistent, with the above and provided in part with the results of some previous studies (the second hypothesis). It can be said that people with anxious attachment practice conflict engagement, which has a threat to get rid of the constant sense of the problem, which pushes them in any way to resolve their conflicts, including conflict engagement. In search of previous results that support or oppose this finding in the fourth hypothesis, the researchers could not find previous studies that dealt with the role of anxious attachment in predicting Strategy's to resolve the conflict between spouses.

However, there are indications from previous studies to support this finding, including Besser & Priel (2009), which indicated that an anxious attachment style is associated with a stronger return to perceived romantic rejection, and Girme, et al., (2014), which found that anxious attachment people have an excessive sense of threat from rejection of relationships, any belittling from the husband or wife, and great stress when any criticism or conflict with the husband or wife.

The researchers can interpret the result that indicated the ability of Secure Attachment in the negative prediction of conflict engagement in married couples in the light of the interpretation of the results of the first hypothesis. We note that the current result is consistent with the results of the first hypothesis, and this result is confirmed by the results of a study by Roebuck (2015) which found that Secure attachment can predict constructive Strategy's to resolve the conflict between spouses, while Insecure attachment style can predict destructive Strategy's to resolve the conflict between spouses.

Prediction of Compromise Strategy

Regarding the existence of a positive predictive ability for the avoidant attachment style with compromise, the researchers believe that this result is expected because the nature of the avoidant attachment style is the fear of approaching others. This agrees with the attachment perspective of both Hazan & Shaver (1994) who hold that those with avoidant attachment style hate emotional and physical intimacy (Brewer et al., 2018).

Therefore, they compromise, waive their rights and practice caring for the wishes of others to resolve the conflict.

Regarding the existence of the ability of Secure attachment in the negative prediction of compromise among the group of married women, we can say that this result is consistent with the result of the first imposition and is interpreted in the light of its framework. In addition to that, compromise is inconsistent with Secure attachment, as this Strategy depends entirely on underestimating oneself in front of others and asking for help and continuous assistance. In return for that, people with Secure attachment, according to Nooler and Feeny (1994), are characterized by self-confidence and confidence in others and tend to rely on others.

Moreover, those with Secure attachment are more disciplined in their feelings and relationships with others and have a sense of self-confidence (Roebuck 2015).

In search for previous results that support or contradict this finding, the researchers could not find a previous study that dealt with the role of attachment styles in predicting Conflict Resolution Strategies among married couples, but there are still a few indicators confirming the role of Secure attachment in predicting compromise, including the results of Gharib's study (2017) which reveals a statistically negative and significant correlation between the Secure attachment and the consolation Strategy. There are also the results of a study by Nadiri & Khalatbari (2018), which revealed a statistically significant positive association between Secure Attachment and consensual and compliance Strategy's in resolving disputes between husband and wife.

Prediction of a Positive Problem-Solving Strategy

The results reveal the ability of the anxious attachment style to negatively predict a positive problem-solving Strategy among married couples.

The researchers reviewed previous studies that dealt with the role of attachment styles in predicting Conflict Resolution Strategies among married couples, and they could not find, within the limits of their knowledge, a study that dealt with this topic. However, there are still a few indicators confirming the role of attachment style anxiety in negatively predicting Strategy participation in resolving conflict between spouses. Some studies have found a negative correlation between attachment style and constructive Strategy's to resolve conflict between spouses (see Roebuck, 2015, Rouleau et al., 2018, Bonache, et al., ,2019).

Prediction of the Withdrawal Strategy

As for the ability of the avoidant attachment style to predict withdrawal, this result is expected and consistent with the results of the second hypothesis and can be interpreted in the light of its interpretation.

Regarding the existence of studies that support or contradict the result that indicated the existence of a predictive ability to avoidance style attachment withdrawal to resolve the conflict between spouses, we find that there are studies whose results revealed the role of the avoidant attachment style in predicting withdrawal to resolve the conflict between spouses. This includes the results of a study by Shi (2003), which revealed the patterns of attachment anxiety and avoidance predicted negative strategies in resolving conflict between spouses. There is also a study by Gouin, et al., (2009), which concluded that the anxious and avoidant attachment styles can predict destructive strategies to resolve conflict between spouses. This finding is also consistent with the results of a study by Gharib (2017) which revealed that Attachment style can predict Conflict Resolution Strategies among married couples except compromise.

This finding is also supported by the theory of adult attachment developed by

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991), which is that the avoidant attachment style, in which the self-model and others are passive with avoidant attachment style are generally afraid of establishing intimacy, which makes them resort to withdrawal in resolving their conflicts (Loon, 2014).

The researchers believe that the result that indicated the ability of the Secure attachment in the negative prediction withdrawal in married couples is consistent with the results of the first hypothesis and supported by the same results of the studies that agreed with the results of the first hypothesis. This result can also be interpreted within the framework of the same interpretation of the result of the first hypothesis, which revealed a statistically significant negative correlation between Secure attachment and withdrawal in married couples.

If we move on to explain the absence of significant differences between married people (females and males) in the Conflict Resolution Strategies among married couples, there are statistically significant differences in conflict engagement between them in the direction of married males, as well as the existence of statistically significant differences between married women and married women in withdrawal in the direction of married couples.

The researchers attribute the absence of statistically significant differences in the positive problem-solving and consensual and compliance strategies to the nature of Saudi society, whose members of married women and married women resort equally to constructive strategies in resolving the conflict between spouses despite what is under life pressures that impose on both sexes to engage in conflicts and the consequent strategies to resolve them without discrimination between males and females in these strategies. These findings are consistent with the findings of Bonache, et al., (2016) and with the results of Gharib (2017), which revealed that there were no statistically significant differences between males and females in conflict resolution strategies between spouses.

The researchers explain the existence of statistically significant differences between married men and women in the strategies of coercion and withdrawal and attribute this to the nature of upbringing in Saudi society, which promotes the resolution of disputes among males in all strategies, even if they are hostile in return for that, the results revealed that married women resort to withdrawal to resolve the conflict with their husbands.

The researchers attribute the resort of married women to withdrawal to resolve the conflict with their husbands to the fact that they cannot face the conflict with the husband alone, and this reinforces the nature of the socialization of the female in general in Saudi society on the culture of dependence, submission, a sense of weakness and helplessness, and the need to resort to men when facing difficult situations, which created for them escape strategies and avoid facing conflicts with the husband and that they are unable to face difficult situations and a sense of helplessness and surrender and stay away from initiative and insistence. The results of this hypothesis agree with the results of a study by Shelley, et al., (2006), which concluded that there were no statistically significant differences between males and females in the Conflict Resolution Strategies among married couples, except for statistically significant differences between married women and married men in the dominance Strategy in the direction of males.

In addition, Bonache, et al., (2017) stated that there is a contradiction between the results of studies that aimed to reveal the differences between males and females in Conflict Resolution Strategies among married couples. Bonache, et al., (2017) believe that the conflict resolution strategies practiced by married women and men depend on the subject of conflict regardless of the gender of the parties to the conflict, so the paradox between married women and men in Conflict Resolution Strategies among married couples needs further study.

If we move on, to the results of the sixth hypothesis, which revealed that there are no statistically significant differences in Conflict Resolution Strategies among married couples according to educational level, while there were significant differences between married women in withdrawal only in the direction of those with average education.

The researchers attribute the absence of statistically significant differences between married couples in Conflict Resolution Strategies among married couples to the fact that the level of education is not significantly influential in the practice of conflict resolution strategies among married couples. The researchers also attribute this result to the fact that conflict situations are what determine the solution Strategy and often individuals are equal in the solution strategies despite their different educational levels because these strategies are only a set of automatic methods issued by each individual to resolve the conflict

This result is consistent with the results of Gharib's study (2017), which indicated that there was no effect of education level on Conflict Resolution Strategies among married couples. However, this result contradicts with the results of Al-Hamad's study (2003), which revealed significant differences in constructive conflict resolution strategies between spouses towards a higher educational level.

On the other hand, the results show that there are statistically significant differences between married women in withdrawal towards those with an average level of education. This could mean that the higher the educational level of the married woman, the more effective and positive she is in using strategies to resolve the conflict with her husband.

In addition, the results of the current study can be considered exploratory results of a study conducted on a sample of Saudi society, which dealt with the relationship Conflict Resolution Strategies among married couples and Attachment style, which is the first study of its kind with this design in the Saudi and Arab society within the limits of the researchers' knowledge, and the matter is dependent on other studies in the Arab environment in the same field.

Conclusion

The study results confirm the existence of a strong association and influence of attachment styles on conflict resolution strategies between spouses, as secure attachment styles were associated with positive strategies for conflict resolution between spouses, while anxious and avoidant attachment styles were associated with negative strategies for conflict resolution between spouses. The study reveals the existence of an influence of the educational level variable in predicting conflict resolution strategies between spouses. Based on what we indicated, namely, that married life is never devoid of some disputes or problems, the current study recommends the need to conduct guidance programs to build up and raise awareness among married couples of constructive strategies to resolve their marital disputes to maintain family life stability.

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