

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTACHMENT PARENTING PRACTICE AND ATTACHMENT STYLES AMONG EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PUPILS IN KADUNA METROPOLIS, NIGERIA**Jummai Garba (Ph. D)****Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, Nigeria****OPEN ACCESS****The American Journal of Social Science And Education Innovations**

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ABSTRACT:- The study investigated the relationship between attachment parenting practice and attachment styles of pupils in early childhood education in Kaduna metropolis, Nigeria. The study had three objectives; three hypotheses were formulated and tested. The population for the study was 451 early childhood education pupils out of which 83 pupils were studied; 39 males (47%) while 44 females (53 %). Correlation type of survey was employed in the conduct of the research. The instruments used in collecting data were parenting practices and child attachment style checklists. The attachment style checklist was administered by the research assistants on the sampled pupils while the parenting practices checklist was administered to the parents of the sampled pupils. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was the statistical tool used in analyzing the data collected. Results of the analyses indicated significant correlation existed between attachment parenting practice and secure attachment style ($p = .003$), but there was no significant correlation between attachment parenting practice and ambivalent attachment style ($p = .212$) as well as between attachment parenting practice and ambivalent attachment style ($p = .081$). Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that parents and caregivers should employ best parenting practices like attachment parenting so that the child grows up in secure environment and develop secure attachment style among others.

Introduction

A parenting practice is a specific behavior that a parent uses in raising a child.^[20] Parenting practices refer to specific things that parents do while raising their children. These can refer to the imposition and use of schedules, rules, expectations, punishments, rewards, etc^[19]. Basically, parenting practices can refer to any type of regular interaction that a parent has with their children^[20]. But Nicholas,^[20] argued that parenting practices reflect the cultural understanding of children. Supporting theory of communal cultures, Lynette, et al^[39] argued that in most societies, the family is the primary unit given the responsibility for raising children. There is considerable individual variation in practice from family to family, depending on the psychological make-up of the parents, including their own personality, the experiences they had as children, and the

conditions under which they are living. The roles other members of the society play in raising up children differ depending on the specific cultural group. In some settings, community members play a significant role and in others they take on a more distant role. What may be right for one family or one child may not be suitable for another,^[20] thus, the model or practice that parent employs depends partly on how the parent was reared, what he/she considers as good parenting. Scientific evidence especially behavioral genetics showed that all different forms of parenting do not have significant effects on children's development, short of cases of severe abuse or neglect. The purported effects of different forms of parenting are all illusions caused by heredity, the culture at large, and children's own influence on how their parents treat them.^[21] But many parents create their own ways from a combination of factors, and these may evolve over time as the children develop their own personalities and move through life stages.^[24] While parenting practices may be different across cultures, scientific knowledge suggests that there are basic needs that all children have and pattern of development during the early years that are universal. Studies from different parts of the world revealed that all young children need adequate nutrition, health and emotional care from birth onwards. Lack of these supports during the early years have permanent effects on later development not only for the child's physical well-being but also for his social, cognitive and psychological development. While these factors are influenced by the economic and political context within which the child lives, they are mediated through the family's parenting practices. Lynette, et al^[39]

Thus, until a few decades ago, parents and even educators thought that the only thing children need from the day they are born through their development processes is to be provided with the proper physical needs i.e. food, shelter, fresh air, clean and hygienic environment. It is thought that if all these are available, then the best has been done for the child to attain normal development. However, we now know through modern psychology that to provide only physical needs is not enough. Mind fiesta,^[34] argued that the emotional attachments of young children to their parents (and other caregivers) remain a cornerstone of psychological well-being in early childhood and in later adulthood.

Statement of the Problem

A lot of children are left without the most important foundation for healthy development^[23] i.e the emotional bonding to a caregiver. Some are flooding our child welfare centers while a sizable number are left on streets as hawkers, almajris or drug addicts. UNICEF's 2010-2012 report showed over 10 million children in Nigeria are out of school. The gap created by this neglect and abandonment of children by their own parents is perpetuated by the type of parenting practices adopted by their parents. These children portray serious overwhelming array of behavioral problems; emotional, social, cognitive, physical and moral, they grow up to perpetuate the cycle through their own children^[23].

Infants raised without loving-touch and security have abnormally high levels of stress hormones which can impair the growth and development of their brains and bodies. The consequences of emotional neglect can lead to insecure attachment.^[23] Insecure attachment styles (ambivalent and avoidant) may result from poor parenting; abuse, neglect, interrupted, poor foster placements or multiple caregiving. It is against this background that the study investigated the relationships between attachment parenting practice and attachment styles (secure, ambivalent and avoidant attachment styles) among early childhood education pupils in Kaduna metropolis.

NOU,^[25] revealed that several other terms used to describe early childhood education include nursery school, pre-primary and pre-school. Encyclopedia America defines early childhood education as "a form of education for children three to five years of age prior to their entry into

the first elementary grade” It is the education given in an educational institution to children aged three to five plus prior to entering the primary education.

It is against this background that the study investigated the relationships between attachment parenting practice and attachment styles (secure, ambivalent and avoidant attachment styles) among early childhood education pupils in Kaduna metropolis.

Objectives of the Study

The main rationale for undertaking this study was to find out whether attachment parenting practice was related to attachment styles of pupils. Specifically the study therefore, sought to:

1. find out the relationship between attachment parenting practice and secure attachment style among early childhood education pupils in Kaduna metropolis;
2. determine the relationship between attachment parenting practice and ambivalent attachment style among early childhood education pupils in Kaduna metropolis; and
3. examine the relationship between attachment parenting practice and avoidant attachment style among early childhood education pupils in Kaduna metropolis.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were analyzed to establish the relationships or otherwise among the variables.

- H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between attachment parenting practice and secure attachment style among early childhood education pupils in Kaduna metropolis.
- H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between attachment parenting practice and ambivalent attachment style among early childhood education pupils in Kaduna metropolis.
- H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between attachment parenting practice and avoidant attachment style among early childhood education pupils in Kaduna metropolis.

Literature Review

Attachment Parenting

Attachment Parenting International (API),^[29] asserts that Attachment Parenting is an approach to childrearing that promotes a secure attachment bond between parents and their children. Attachment is a scientific term for the emotional bond in a relationship. The attachment quality that forms between parents and children, learned from the relational patterns with caregivers from birth on, correlates with how a child perceives – and ultimately is able to experience – relationships. Attachment quality is correlated with lifelong effects and often much more profound an impact than people understand. A person with a secure attachment is generally able to respond to stress in healthy ways and establish more meaningful and close relationships more often; a person with an insecure attachment style may be more susceptible to stress and less healthy relationships. A greater number of insecurely attached individuals are at risk for more serious mental health concerns such as depression and anxiety.

Attachment parenting, a phrase coined by [pediatrician William Sears](#),^[21] is a [parenting](#) philosophy based on the principles of [attachment theory](#) in [developmental psychology](#). According to attachment theory, the child forms a strong emotional bond with caregivers during childhood with lifelong consequences. Sensitive and emotionally available parenting helps the child to form a secure attachment style which fosters a child's socio-emotional development and well-being. Less sensitive and emotionally unavailable parenting or neglect of the child's needs may result in insecure forms of attachment style, which is a risk factor for many mental health problems (e.g.

depression, anxiety and eating disorders). In extreme and rare conditions, the child may not form an attachment at all and may suffer from [reactive attachment disorder](#). Principles of attachment parenting aim to increase development of a child's secure attachment and decrease insecure attachment.

To Sears,^[22] this type of parenting seeks to create strong emotional [bonds](#), avoiding physical punishment and accomplishing discipline through [interactions](#) recognizing a child's emotional needs all while focusing on [holistic understanding](#) of the child. Utah,^[18] Many attachment parents also choose to live a natural family living lifestyle; such as [natural childbirth](#), [home birth](#), stay-at-home parenting, [co-sleeping](#), [breastfeeding](#), [baby wearing](#), [home-schooling](#), [un-schooling](#), the [anti-circumcision](#) movement, [natural health](#), [cooperative](#) movements, [naturism](#) and support of [organic](#) and [local foods](#).

Sears,^[36] summarized attachment parenting as the practice of caring for your infant that brings out the best in the baby and the best in the parents. Attachment parenting implies opening your mind and heart to the individual needs of your baby, and eventually you will develop the wisdom on how to make on-the-spot decisions on what works best for both you and your baby. A close attachment after birth and beyond allows the natural, biological attachment-promoting behaviors of the infant and the intuitive, biological, caregiving qualities of the mother to come together.

Attachment Parenting International (API),^[3] is a worldwide educational association for this style of parenting. API (2012) identifies eight principles of attachment parenting. Parents have considerable leeway in how they interpret and put these principles into action. Hulen^[17] puts forward eight principles of attachment parenting:

1. Prepare for [pregnancy](#), birth, and parenting.
2. Feed with love and respect.
3. Respond with sensitivity.
4. Use nurturing touch.
5. Engage in nighttime parenting.
6. Provide constant, loving care.
7. Practice positive discipline.
8. Strive for balance in personal and family life.

One criticism of attachment parenting is that it can be very strenuous and demanding on parents. Without a support network of helpful friends or family, the work of parenting can be difficult. Scott,^[22] contended that a culture of total motherhood, which she blames in part on attachment parenting, has led to an age of anxiety for mothers in modern American society. Sociologist Hays,^[22] argued that the ideology of intensive mothering imposes unrealistic obligations and perpetuates a double shift life for working women. Another criticism is that there is no conclusive or convincing body of research that shows this labor-intensive approach to be in any way superior to what attachment parenting term mainstream parenting in the long run.

Attachment Styles

Marczyk,^[40] [Attachment as a concept](#) is primarily [evolutionary](#); for decades, researchers have wondered what encourages a baby's attachment to parents. Is it that a caregiver provides food and other necessities or is it the emotional comfort that a caregiver offers? Some psychologists set out to answer these questions in series of now classic studies. Immediately after the WWII, homeless and orphaned children presented many difficulties and a [psychiatrist](#) and [psychoanalyst](#) [John Bowlby](#) was asked by the UN to write a pamphlet on the matter.^[35] Bowlby (2011) wrote a [monograph](#) on maternal care and mental health in which he explained the nature of child's tie to the mother. In the monograph he put forward the hypothesis that "the infant and young child should experience a warm, intimate, and continuous relationship with his mother (or permanent mother substitute) in which both find satisfaction and enjoyment", the lack of which may have significant and irreversible mental health consequences. This was also published as 'Child Care and

the Growth of Love' for public consumption.^[35]

Karen et al,^[33] reported that Harlow, working with primates, provided experimental proof of the independence of attachment and the satisfaction of physiological needs. He and his colleagues demonstrated this by separating new born monkeys from their natural mothers, providing them instead with surrogate mothers. In one study Harlow raised each baby monkey in a cage with two surrogate mothers, one made of stiff, bare wire and the other covered with soft terry cloth. Harlow found that even though the wire mother was equipped with a milk dispenser, the babies still preferred the terry cloth mother. They spent a great deal of time clinging to its soft body, just as baby monkeys cling to their real mother's fur. When alarmed, the infant monkeys always ran to their terry cloth mothers. They concluded that the tactile sensations a mother monkey provides seem to encourage the formation of attachments.

Molander,^[41] believed that attachment is the bond resulting from the process of interaction that occurs between a child and a caregiver during the first few years of the child's life. When the infant has a need, she/he expresses the need through crying. Ideally, the caretaker is able to recognize and satisfy the need. Through this interaction, the child learns that the world is a safe place and trust develops. Attachment is therefore, a reciprocal process and an emotional connection that forms between the child and the caregiver. This connection allows the child to feel safe in his or her environment. This basic safety works as a secure base from which the child can confidently explore the world around. Attachment is essential for optimal brain development and emotional health, and its effects are felt physiologically, emotionally, cognitively and socially. That when initial attachment is lacking, such children do not develop the ability to form and maintain intimate relationships. They grow up with an impaired ability to trust that the world is a safe place and that others will take good care of them. Children with insecure attachments are hyper vigilant in order to look after their own safety. This means they don't allow others to take care of them, love or nurture them and they become extremely demanding and controlling in response to fear. Emotionally they believe that if they don't control their world they will die. Because these experiences happen so early in life the children have learned these lessons at a preverbal stage and at a biochemical level in the brain. They also have an unusually high level of stress hormones, which have effect on the way the brain and body develops.

There is remarkable convergence between the concept of attachment and psychoanalytic theory in the work of John Bowlby and Mary Main on the trans-generational transmission of styles of attachment through the consistency of parents' speech concerning their own infancy. Starting from the "secure base" represented by the analyst, the patient can explore the disturbances in his earliest relationships and eliminate their continuation in his interpersonal relations and their transmission to his own children through the expression in narrative form of his emotional experience which is re-expressed in the transference. They came up with four different styles of attachments; coherent, avoidant, involved, and disorganized Karen et al.^[33]

Types of Attachment Styles

1. Secure Attachment Style

Dicke,^[11] described the securely attached child as one who rests comfortably in mother's arms and makes good eye contact with child. Eye contact between mother and child is reciprocal and both of them feel at one. When mother leaves the child and separation occurs, the child feels distress. When mother returns, the child is delighted to see the mother and the mother is delighted to see the child. The child will quickly settle into mother's arms and refuel. The child will be ready for a nap or will be ready to venture into the world until he tires and is ready to refuel again. This

process will be repeated thousands of times until object constancy is attained. A child who seeks primary caregiver when distressed is easily comforted; can become absorbed in play; is curious and responsive to environment.

Antieassays,^[28] argued that secure attachment is the strongest type of attachment. A child in this category feels he can depend on his parent or caregiver, he knows that that person will be there when he needs support and knows what to expect. The secure child usually plays well with other children of his age. He may cry when his mother leaves but will settle down if a friendly adult is there to comfort him. When parents pick him up from childcare, he is usually very happy to see them but may have a hard time leaving childcare. This can be confusing if the child was upset when the parents left at the beginning of the day but it does not mean that the child is not happy to see the parents.

2. Ambivalent Attachment Style

Ambivalence (not being completely sure of something) is another way of showing that a child may be insecurely attached to his parents. Children who are ambivalent have learnt that sometimes their needs are met and sometimes they are not. They notice what behaviour got their parents' attention in the past and use it over and over. They are always looking for that feeling of security that they sometimes get. Ambivalent children are often clingy, they tend to act younger than they really are and may seem over-emotional. When older preschoolers or early-elementary children want an adult's attention, they might use baby talk or act like a baby. Ambivalent children often cry, get frustrated easily, and love to be the center of attention. They get upset if people aren't paying attention to them and have a hard time doing things on their own. They seem to latch onto everyone for short periods of time and have a very hard time letting parents go at the beginning of the day and the crying may last a long time (Antieassays).^[28]

Attachment China,^[30] described the anxious/ambivalent insecure attachment as being resistant that the child is clingy, sometimes rebuffing, or clingy and rebuffing, tense a lot (the physiology of stress = the physiology of separation), impulsive; the mother's presence modulates the child's physiological state which helps them control their behavior, passive, defeatist - not trying harder in face of adversity, volatile temper tantrums, difficulty making commitments and following through, difficulty in school and at work, irritable, reactive, more likely to engage in high risk activities (takes up more dangerous hobbies), more likely to depend on external modulation devices to control affect, more likely to develop a co-dependent way of giving and relating to others (I'll take care of you, if you'll take care of me), not fully self-responsible, at risk for more physical illness throughout life.

3. Avoidant Attachment Style

These children are insufferable and cry constantly because their mothers drive them crazy. Their mothers miss many cues as to the needs of their children and consequently, the children are constantly frustrated. Frequently, these mothers are alternatively abandoning or intrusive. They may need to control their children for their own narcissistic gratification by intruding on them when the child does not want to be intruded upon. Or they alternatively ignore the child when he has a legitimate need to be met. These children are very angry, anxious and depressed. They frequently become personality disordered, borderline or narcissistically disordered delinquents (Dicke).^[11]

Course Hero,^[31] postulated that avoidant attachment style is characterized by anxiety and fright within the child because he does not feel safe when he attempts to secure attachment with mom. Mom may well be anxiously avoidantly attached herself and doesn't trust physical closeness. The child is aware of her discomfort and tends to keep the mother at a distance, thereby preventing the child from being injured should he attempt to attach and be rejected. He however, does not allow the mother to get too far away lest his abandonment anxiety become too great and he should panic. This attachment style keeps the child in tension all of the time but prevents him from having an acute anxiety attack should too much separation occur or narcissistic injury should he be rejected.

Avoidant children have learned that depending on parents will not get them that secure feeling they want, so they learn to take care of themselves as such they may seem to be too independent, they do not often ask for help, but they get frustrated easily. They may have difficulty playing with other children of their age and may be aggressive at times. Biting, hitting, pushing, and screaming are common for many children, but avoidant children do those things more than other children. Avoidant children usually do not build strong relationships with caregivers in their childcare setting they don't complain when the parents leave them, and they usually do not greet them when the parents return. They know that the parents have returned, but it is almost like they want to punish them by ignoring them. (Lynette, et al).^[39]

Methodology

Research Design

The design used in this study was survey. Marczyk et al,^[35] said that some survey studies attempt to find relationships between the characteristics of the respondents and their reported behaviours and opinions. Course Hero,^[31] argued that when surveys have this purpose, we refer to them as correlational studies. According to [Kosciejew](#),^[27] correlational studies are designed to find statistical connections or correlations between and among variables so that some factors can be used to predict others.

Population of the Study

The population for the study was made up of all children in first and second year in the eight selected government and private early childhood education centres in Kaduna metropolis (Kaduna North and South LGAs). This population was 451 as obtained from the pupils' class registers. Children in early childhood education centres in the selected eight schools were used as the population because it was assumed that this group of children shared similar characteristics age wise and behaviour and it was also assumed that attachment styles are mostly associated with children within the early childhood years. It was also assumed that some of these children in the early childhood education centres will display attachment styles behaviours listed in the research instruments.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting the eight Early Childhood Education (ECE) centres. Purposive sampling technique is a sampling technique which used a readily available sample for the purpose of a research. Thus, the sample was selected based on the characteristics of attachment styles anticipated among the ECE pupils. Other features included are proximity and location.

Instrumentation

The instruments used to gather data for the study included Parenting Practices Checklist and Child Attachment Style Checklist.

Child Attachment Style Checklist

This checklist was developed from the characteristics of the three types of attachment styles as discussed in the literature review. The rating and arrangement of the items were adapted from the International Adoption Articles Directory (IAAD) Buenning, (2011), Attachment-China (2000) and Evergreen Consultants in Human Behaviour (2000-2005).

Parenting Practices Checklist

The items in this instrument were adapted from the Child-rearing Practices Report (CRPR) by Block, (1965) and The New Scales for the Parenting Practices Q-sort by Robert (2008). CRPR consists of 91 socialization-relevant statements that are administered in a Q-sort format with a forced-choice, seven-step distribution. The items were appropriate for the description of both maternal and paternal child-rearing attitudes and values.^[5] 20 items were adapted, the language simplified and rated on 4-point scale instead of seven-step distribution.

Validation of Instruments

The research instruments after being modified were given to the supervisory team, six other lecturers in the Psychology and Counseling Department, for assessments, comments and suggestions in order to establish content and face validity of the instruments. The observations, suggestions and corrections like using simple language, avoiding lumping of symptoms in one item among others were effected before pilot testing.

Pilot Testing

For the purpose of establishing reliability of the instruments, a pilot test was carried out. The child attachment checklist was tested using 10 ECE pupils in N T I demonstration primary school and 15 ECE pupils in L.E.A. Rigachikun. Pupils in these ECE centres have similar characteristics in terms of age, behaviour and environment with the sample of the research. The parents of the 25 pupils from both schools were used to pilot test the parenting practices checklist.

Reliability

The data collected from the pilot testing were subjected to analysis using the statistical tool; Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) to determine the test re-test reliability co-efficient of the instruments. Cronbach's alpha indicated .808 for Child Attachment Style Checklist and .754 for Parenting Practices Checklist. These values are above the minimum acceptable reliability alpha value of .6. On this basis, the instruments were reliable and were used for the study.

Procedure for Data Collection

The instruments for data collection were administered by the researcher and research assistants (caregivers) in the ECE centres. At each of the selected centres, the researcher sought permission from the school authority to use the centre for the study. The help of caregivers who have stayed with children for not less than six (6) months in ECE centres to be used as research assistants was solicited. The instrument on child attachment style was given to the caregivers to observe the sampled children and tick appropriately the observed behaviours in the instrument while the checklist for parenting practices was administered to the parents of the sampled children through their caregivers. After a week the researcher went round the centres and collected the administered instruments.

Procedure for Data Analysis

The collected data was subjected to SPSS version 24 for analysis. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed for the analysis. Percentages, frequency tables and mean differences

were used to describe the data and answer the research questions. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was used in testing the 9 hypotheses to find out relationship between parenting practices and attachment styles of pupils. All the hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance.

Results

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between attachment parenting practice and secure attachment style in early childhood education.

Table 1.1: Relationship between Attachment Parenting Practice and Secure Attachment Style

Variables		N	Mean	S.D	Corr. Index r	Sig (p)
Attachment parenting practice		8	15.722	6.1484	.312**	.003
		3	9	9		
Secure Attachment Style		8	9.9639	2.0887		
		3		9		

**Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

The table 1.1 above showed that the calculated mean scores of attachment parenting practice and secure attachment style were 15.72 and 9.96 respectively while the calculated 'r' is .312 and the p value is .003. This revealed that significant positive correlation existed between attachment parenting practice and secure attachment style in early childhood education. This is because the calculated significant (p) value of .003 is lower than the .05 alpha level of significance at a correlation index r level of .312 at df of 81. Hence, the null hypothesis which stated that there was no significant relationship between attachment parenting practice and secure attachment style in early childhood education is rejected.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between attachment parenting practice and ambivalent attachment style among children in early childhood education.

Table 1.2: Relationship between Attachment Parenting Practice and Ambivalent Attachment Style

Variables		N	Mean	S.D	Corr. Index r	Sig (p)
Attachment Practice	Parenting	83	15.722	6.1484	.119**	.212
			9	9		
Ambivalent Style	Attachment	83	15.939	5.1794		
			8	9		

The table 1.2 above indicated that the calculated mean scores of attachment parenting practice is 15.72 while ambivalent attachment style has a mean of 15.93. The calculated 'r' index is .119 while the p value is .212. This showed that there was no significant correlation between attachment parenting practice and ambivalent attachment style among children in early childhood education. This is because the calculated significant (p) value of .212 is higher than the .05 alpha level of significance at a correlation index r level of .119 at df of 81. Hence, the null hypothesis which stated that there was no significant relationship between attachment parenting practice and ambivalent attachment style in early childhood education is retained.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between attachment parenting practice and avoidant attachment style in early childhood education.

Table 1.3: Relationship between Attachment Parenting Practice and Avoidant Attachment Style

Variables		N	Mean	S.D	Corr. Index r	Sig (p)
Attachment Parenting Practice	Avoidant Attachment Style	8	15.722	6.1484	.316**	.081
		3	9	9		
Attachment Parenting Practice	Secure Attachment Style	8	14.192	5.1609	.316**	.081
		3	8	7		

The table 1.3 above indicated that attachment parenting practice has mean of 15.72 while avoidant attachment style has mean of 14.19. The calculated 'r' is .316 index while p value is found to be .081. An understanding of the analysis revealed that there was no significant relationship between attachment parenting practice and avoidant attachment style among children in early childhood education. This is because the calculated significant (p) value of .081 is higher than the .05 alpha level of significance at a correlation index r level of .316 at df of 81. Hence, the null hypothesis which stated that there was no significant relationship between attachment parenting practice and avoidant attachment style in early childhood education is retained.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that significant positive correlation existed between attachment parenting practice and secure attachment style. This therefore suggested that parents who were available to respond to their children at the time of need help in developing sense of security in their children and this would consequently lead to secure attachment style in their children.

[Karavasilis](#), et.al ^[37] also found associations between parenting practices and quality of child mother attachment in middle childhood (n = 202; grades 4–6) and adolescence (n = 212; grades 7–11) and found positive association between authoritarian parenting (higher scores on all three dimensions) and secure attachment, whereas negligent parenting (lower scores on all three dimensions) predicted avoidant attachment. Moreover, a unique pattern of associations emerged between particular dimensions of parenting and each attachment style. Findings suggested that psychological autonomy may have important implications for children's views of self, whereas warm parental involvement may play a unique role in their views of the attachment figure.

Attachment parenting and ambivalent attachment style were not significantly correlated as found in this study. This meant that parents who were available to respond to their children at the time of need could not breed children who will develop anxious ambivalent attachment style. Corroborating with this finding, [Bar-Haim](#),^[4] in a longitudinal study assessed the associations between secure and ambivalent attachment styles with mothers, fathers and professional caregivers in infancy, and personal space regulation and perceived interpersonal competence in 64 early adolescents (31 boys, 33 girls). The study found that children classified as ambivalently attached to their mothers and/or professional caregivers in infancy displayed significantly larger permeability of personal space as compared with children classified as securely attached, but attachment classifications with fathers were not associated with personal space behavior at 12 years of age.

Similarly, Kirpatirck and Hazan^[38] found ambivalent respondents were just as likely as secure respondents to be in a relationship with the same partner they had identified 4 years earlier and attachment stability was moderated to some extent by the experience of breakup or initiation of new relationships during the interim.

The study found no significant correlation between attachment parenting practice and avoidant attachment style. This meant that parents who were available to respond to the needs (physical and emotional) of their children could not develop insecure (avoidant) or none attached children. In a similar finding [Brennan](#) et al,^[6] found more males than females were dismissing avoidants;

more females than males were fearful avoidants. Children of adult alcoholics scored high on both avoidant and anxious-ambivalent scales, and fell predominantly into fearful-avoidant category, suggesting that at least some fearful adults were grown-up versions of the 'disorganized, disoriented' children. [Calkins](#),^[8] also observed that mothers of later securely attached children were more sensitive than mothers of avoidant children. However, sensitivity decreased for all mothers at high levels of infant negative affect. Furthermore, for mothers of avoidant children, vagal withdrawal was associated with sensitivity to child distress. No association was found between vagal withdrawal and sensitivity for mothers of securely attached children. This suggests that mothers of avoidant children may be uniquely challenged by the affective demands of their infants.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of study, it is concluded that parents who practice attachment parenting practice bring up children who are securely attached, attachment parenting practice had no association with ambivalent attachment style and attachment parenting practice was related to avoidant attachment style.

Recommendations

In view of the findings and conclusions of this study the following recommendations were made:

1. Through sensitization and advocacy parents and caregivers should employ best parenting practices like attachment parenting so that the child grows up in secure environment and develop secure attachment style.
2. Parents and caregivers should pay attention and respond to the needs of children in their care because responding and sometimes not responding to the child's needs results in the child to develop insecure anxious ambivalent attachment style. Policy makers and educational planners should plan and formulate policies that will take care of not only physical needs of children but their emotional needs too.
3. Parents, guardians and caregivers (in ECE centres) should respond to all needs (physical and emotional) of the children in their care so as to establish good reciprocal relationship that will lead to the child to form secure-based attachment style that leads to better adjustment in future life.

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