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ABSTRACT

Conflict is inevitable in intimate relationships, and conflict resolution is an important predictor of relationship satisfaction. Despite thorough understanding of the cognitive-behavioral factors in conflict resolution, very little is known about characteristics individuals bring into their relationships that influence their conflict resolution patterns. The purpose of the study was to explore the individual differences in conflict resolution behaviors using attachment theory as a framework.

A total of 448 undergraduate students at a large Southwestern university were assessed on adult attachment style, conflict resolution behavior, relationship satisfaction, and early attachment experience. These constructs were measured by Multiple-Item Measure of Adult Romantic Attachment (MIMARA, Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998), Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI-II, Rahim, 1983), Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS, Hendrick, 1988), and Inventory of Parent-Peer Attachment (IPPA, Armsden & Greenberg, 1987). The results confirmed that the two attachment dimensions, Anxiety and Avoidance, were predictive of conflict resolution behaviors and relationship satisfaction, with participants who scored lower on the two attachment dimensions displaying more positive behaviors and reporting higher relationship satisfaction. Gender had much less influence on these variables than the attachment dimensions. The influence of early attachment experiences with parental figures was limited. Closeness with father figure was moderately related to a lower level of Anxiety and less of the conflict resolution behavior of Dominating. Early separation from a parental figure was associated with greater anxiety in adulthood. The distribution of
adult attachment styles varied with relationship status (married, currently in serious relationship, previously in serious relationship), with more participants who were married or currently in relationship falling into the Secure category. This result suggests that relationship and attachment styles influence each other, and that adult attachment style is not static.

The study was a first attempt to understand the association between attachment style and conflict resolution behavior using a more comprehensive four-category attachment measure. In general, the results of this study provide support for the association between the two. Future research should examine the influence of child-father relationship on the formation of attachment style and the distribution of the four-category attachment style in various populations.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Conflict is inevitable in intimate relationships (Cahn, 1992). Partners enter into the relationship with different family backgrounds, communication styles, cultural values, and expectations. When they are unable to reconcile these differences, conflicts may be created (Cahn, 1992). Major areas of conflict in intimate relationships are communication difficulties, sexual values and relationship, personality, division of domestic chores, relations with relatives and friends, and substance abuse (Madden & Janoff-Bulman, 1981; Schaap, Buunk, & Kerkstra, 1988). The behaviors involved in attempting to reduce or resolve conflict will be referred to as "conflict resolution." In some studies, the terms conflict resolution, problem solving communication, and marital interaction are used interchangeably.

In the past decades, many researchers have been drawn to study conflict resolution. Two factors may explain why conflict resolution research has been prominent. First, poor conflict resolution is the most common presenting problem in marital therapy (Hahlweg, Revenstorf, & Schindler, 1984). Second, unsuccessful attempts at resolving disagreements eventually result in relationship deterioration. Successful conflict resolution is closely related to relationship satisfaction. Partners who engage in positive behaviors (e.g., listening, compromising, engaging) report their relationships more positively; those who engage in negative behaviors (e.g., attacking, withdrawing, arguing) report their relationships more negatively (see Bradbury & Karney,
Conflict resolution provides an opportunity for exchange and explore alternatives and decision-making based on negotiations (Strong, 1975). A positive resolution promotes understanding between couples (Gottman, 1991) and leads to personal growth (Hooley, 1986). Negative conflict resolution, including the attempts to avoid conflict (Jacobson & Addis, 1993), however, may cause relationship deterioration and emotional distress.

The goal of conflict resolution research has been to understand the different conflict resolution behaviors adopted by partners in distressed and nondistressed relationships (Noller & Fitzpatrick, 1991). Researchers take the perspectives of insiders (what participants say about their relationships) and outsiders (what researchers say about their relationships) (Olson, 1977). Important insights have been gained from self-report studies, self-monitoring and diary studies, and from observational studies using frequency data or sequential analysis (Noller & Fitzpatrick, 1991). Two conclusions have been drawn from these studies. First, nondistressed partners adopt more positive behaviors; distressed partners adopt more negative behaviors, and the negativity lasts longer through reciprocal negative exchanges. Second, nondistressed partners are more engaged in conflict resolution, whereas distressed partners are more likely to avoid negative issues in their relationships (Sher & Baucom, 1993). Important gender differences such as the female-demanding/male-withdrawing pattern (Christensen, 1987, 1988; Christensen & Shenk, 1991; Heavey, Layne, & Christensen, 1993) also have been revealed.

Some researchers investigate why some partners engage in positive conflict resolution behaviors while others engage in negative behaviors. Researchers typically
assume that poor conflict resolution results from lack of communication skills (Bradbury & Karney, 1993; Denton, Burleson, & Sprenkle, 1994); thus, behavioral interventions were designed to teach partners more positive communication skills (Christensen & Pasch, 1993; Epstein, Baucom, & Rankin, 1993; Fowers, 1998). Other researchers focus on internal factors such as cognition and affect (e.g., Baucom, Epstein, Sayers, & Sher, 1989), interpersonal perception (Kundson, Sommers, & Golding, 1980), and intentions (Denton et al., 1994) and argue that such factors play key roles in the conflict resolution process.

The understanding of cognitive-behavioral factors in romantic conflict resolution has been advanced to the extent that an experienced researcher could predict whether a couple would divorce or stay married in the coming years simply by analyzing their videotaped conflict resolution process (Gottman, 1994). It is still uncertain, however, how partners fall into negative conflict resolution patterns. In other words, are there characteristics that individuals bring into their relationships that influence the conflict resolution patterns being adopted?

Attachment theory provides one possible explanation for the use of different styles of conflict resolution. According to attachment theory, an infant forms an internal working model, a mental representation of the relationship between the self and others, in the process of interacting with its attachment figures (Bowlby, 1969, 1973, 1980). The internal working model could be a secure attachment relationship model where the faith and trust in the self and others are deeply rooted, or it could be an insecure attachment relationship model where uncertainty and a lack of trust are planted. The internal
working model is reinforced through repeated interactions with attachment figures and other important people, and thus has a good chance to remain unchanged through the individual’s life unless challenged by a new interpersonal environment. These relationship models are most likely to be activated in stressful situations, e.g., during conflict with a partner. In other words, during conflict resolution, partners may bring their early childhood relationship models to the present and slip into certain attachment behavior patterns without full awareness.

Attachment theory has been used as a framework to research adult romantic relationships. Hazan and Shaver (1987) published their pioneering study in which they conceptualize romantic relationships as attachment relationships. Their results demonstrated that attachment was related to various aspects of romantic relationship attitudes and functioning. Following them, numerous researchers have replicated and extended their findings in several countries (e.g., Collins & Read, 1990; Feeney & Noller, 1990; Kobak & Hazan, 1991; Mikulincer & Erev, 1991; Simpson, 1990). Even though much research on adult attachment has been completed, one of the most important aspects, conflict resolution, has yet to be explored fully.

Statement of the Problem

A few studies have been conducted to examine conflict resolution in romantic relationships from an attachment perspective. These studies, however, have several limitations that hinder the understanding of the topic. First, various attachment measures (categorical vs. continuous scores, three-category vs. four-category) were used and some
measures were not as sensitive or well-established as others. This could seriously affect our knowledge of how attachment predicts conflict resolution behaviors. Second, to enhance our understanding, studies focusing on specific conflict resolution behaviors need to be conducted. Some of the studies did examine specific behaviors; however, attachment was measured by less sensitive measures. Third, theoretically, experiences with attachment figures in childhood should have a significant impact on current conflict resolution behaviors. Yet our knowledge of the association is extremely limited. Finally, gender differences in conflict resolution have been an important consideration, but no study has tapped into gender as an issue in understanding conflict resolution from an attachment perspective. In summary, research in conflict resolution, using a combination of more sensitive measures of adult attachment and examining gender differences, is lacking.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to explore individual differences in positive and negative conflict resolution behaviors, relying on attachment theory as a framework. Two attachment variables were under primary investigation, the current attachment style and experiences with attachment figures during childhood. Their associations with conflict resolution behavior and relationship satisfaction were examined. The study also will examine gender differences in conflict resolution from an attachment perspective. The goal of the proposed study is to gain more accurate knowledge of what influences partners to use certain conflict resolution behaviors.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

Attachment Theory

Overview of the Theory

Attachment theory was originally developed by Bowlby to understand the bonds of affection between infants and their primary caregivers. His work on attachment (1969), separation (1973), and loss (1980) illustrated how and why infants become emotionally attached to their caregivers and become distressed when separated from their caregivers. Attachment theory was greatly enriched by Ainsworth’s empirical studies of the mother-infant attachment (West & Sheldon-Keller, 1994), especially her research on mother-child interaction and the function of the attachment figure as a secure base (Bretherton, 1992). Despite its original focus on young children, the impact of attachment theory upon developmental psychology, social psychology, and clinical practice has gone far beyond the early stages of human life. Research has tied infant attachment experiences to the emotional and social development of preschoolers, adolescents, and adults.

Bowlby’s Attachment Theory

Bowlby’s attachment theory, based on observations of children, is deeply influenced by control theory (Bowlby, 1969). According to Bowlby, attachment is a behavioral control system, which organizes and directs behaviors to achieve set goals. In
the attachment context, the care-giving and care-seeking systems are complementary with
the infant engaging in care-seeking behaviors and parents in care-giving behaviors. The
infant's care-seeking behaviors induce the care-giving behaviors of the parent, and the
parent's care-giving behaviors reduce the infants' stress.

The set goal of infant attachment is proximity to a specific attachment figure
(West & Sheldon-Keller, 1994), achieved through attachment behaviors such as reaching
and crying. The function of the attachment behavioral system is protection from danger,
ensuring the survival of the species (Bowlby, 1969).

The attachment behavioral system is a homeostatic control system. The system is
activated when the young child is in need of a primary caregiver. Causes of the activation
include, but are not limited to, increased distance from the primary caregiver, the physical
condition of the child, environmental stressors, and the behavior of the caregiver (West &
Sheldon-Keller, 1994). The system shuts off when the need is met, often through the
presence of the caregiver or physical contact with the caregiver. The system remains
deactivated until a new threat is perceived.

Through this repeated homeostatic process, the child establishes and maintains an
attachment relationship with the caregiver. This relationship influences human beings to
a great extent (Bowlby, 1969). Whether the influence is good or bad depends upon the
quality of the relationship, which is affected by the feedback mechanism of the control
system. The feedback information, in this case, the response of the attachment figure,
modifies the infant's behaviors utilized in reaching the set goal, proximity to a caregiver.
Specifically, if the caregiver is sensitive to the infant's signals (reaching, clinging,
following, crying or calling) and responds quickly, the infant establishes a sense of security and thus attaches value to the relationship. If the caregiver is insensitive or gives inconsistent responses to the infant’s signals, the infant engages in negative behaviors such as withdrawing or displaying anger, in order to protect itself from the painful feelings of the insecurity of the attachment relationship.

In other words, the attachment relationship experienced by the infant is a unique one. It includes more sensitive elements such as emotions and expectations (West & Sheldon-Keller, 1994) that involve both the child and the attachment figure. Furthermore, the attachment relationship is long-lasting, affecting both current and future close relationships (Bowlby, 1969, 1980). Consequently, attachment figures are confined to a very few, those who serve as a secure base for exploration and provide a safe haven in times of need (Bowlby, 1973). If a child shows no discrimination toward those from whom it seeks proximity, the attachment relationship is severely disturbed (Bretherton, 1992). In extreme rare cases, children may never attach to anybody due to severe abuse and/or neglect (James, 1994).

Mother-infant Interaction and Attachment Styles

Bowlby’s theory revolutionized the way of viewing the parent-infant relationship. The attachment behavioral system has its own internal motivation distinct from feeding and sex (Bowlby, 1969). The infant is biologically built to seek and maintain proximity from the primary caregiver, usually the mother, in order to survive physically and thrive emotionally. Children who have trust in their attachment figures will actively seek
proximity when in need and be soothed by attachment reassurance rather quickly. The behaviors they engage in can be considered "positive attachment behaviors" because they give attachment figures unmistakable comfort-seeking signals. The behaviors also indicate that the infants view themselves as worthy of, and competent to obtain, care (Bowlby, 1973). Not every child adopts positive attachment behaviors. The type of behaviors in which children engage when under stress is determined by the nature of the daily interactions with their attachment figures.

Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, and Wall (1978) created a laboratory situation to observe young children’s attachment styles. Attachment styles were defined based on the children’s reactions in the presence of or separation from their mothers along with the presence or absence of a non-threatening stranger. This laboratory procedure, named the “Strange Situation,” includes seven episodes in a sequence (Ainsworth et al., 1978). It was designed to create a progressively more stressful environment for young children so that their attachment behaviors could be observed.

Ainsworth et al. (1978) identified three basic patterns of attachment based on infant behaviors in the Strange Situation, one secure and two insecure. They also found that infant attachment behaviors are closely related to the mother’s caregiving behaviors at home. Infants classified as Secure (Group B) actively explore the strange room during the first episode, indicating they are able to use their mothers as a secure base. These infants are usually distressed by the separation; however, they respond positively to the mother’s comfort on her return and can be soothed relatively quickly. In home
observation, mothers of infants classified as “Secure” are found to be available and responsive when their children need them.

Infants classified as Insecure are generally found to engage in fewer exploratory behaviors during the first episode, indicating a poorer ability to use their mothers as a secure base. In addition, infants classified as Avoidant (Group A) display little distress upon separation and do not seek comfort when reunited with their mothers. Instead they direct their attention to toys. However, their distress is often displayed through unpredictable anger and frustration (Ainsworth, 1978). In home observation, mothers of this group of infants are found to be rejecting and hostile when their infants need comfort. Mothers are often rigid during the mother-infant interaction and are frequently averse to physical contact (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Main, 1991).

Infants classified as Anxious/Ambivalent (Group C) show the most distress during separation. They seek contact very quickly but are difficult to comfort. Mothers of this group are seen to give inconsistent responses to the signals of their children. They are sometimes insensitive, but at other times they are intrusive and overly affectionate (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Main, 1991).

In summary, from the ways the caregiver responds, the child receives two messages, the availability of the caregiver when in need, and the worthiness of the self (Bowlby, 1969). If the primary caregiver is sensitive to the child’s signals, the child not only is confident about the relationship and his/her worthiness, but is more likely to explore with the relationship serving as the secure base. If the primary caregiver is insensitive or inconsistent in response to the infant’s signals for connection, or is
intrusive with the child, the child gradually develops a relationship model that the 
attachment figure is not appropriately accessible when in need and therefore is reluctant 
to depend emotionally on the attachment figure. As a result, the infant is less active in 
exploration and is often stressed (Ainsworth et al., 1978). The relationship model the 
infant develops is thus shaped by the interaction pattern with the attachment figure.

Extension of the Theory to Adults

Attachment is the affectional bond between the infant and the attachment figure 
(Ainsworth, 1989). Through repeated interactions with the attachment figure, an internal 
working model is formed. It consists of information about the self, the attachment figure, 
and the self and attachment figure in a dynamic relationship. It reflects the history of the 
caregiver's response to the infant's signals (Main, Kaplan, & Cassidy, 1985). It is not the 
same as a simple schema because it contains affective, defensive, and descriptive 
components (Bretherton, 1985). Individuals understand current relationships through 
internal working models (Bowlby, 1969).

Bowlby (1980) argued that the internal working model tends to be stable because 
it is developed and operates in the context of the relatively stable family environment. In 
addition, the internal working model becomes habitual and automatic over time and 
operates unconsciously. Most importantly, since the internal working model is applied to 
interpersonal relationships, it tends to be self-fulfilling and creates consequences that 
reinforce the current relationship model. Therefore, the internal working model has a
strong potential for affecting the individual across the life cycle, especially the way in which close relationships are maintained.

Bowlby (1977) concluded “attachment behavior is held to characterize human beings from the cradle to the grave” (p.201), and that attachment behaviors continue to be “manifested throughout life, especially when distressed, ill, or afraid” (p.201). Yet whether the emotional bond in adulthood is similar to that in childhood is a critical question. Attachment theorists tend to think that there are no significant differences between the two (e.g., Ainsworth, 1985, 1989; Weiss, 1982). As pointed out by Weiss (1982), the emotional bond between the infant and the attachment figure bears the following characteristics. First, when the infant is not within the protective range of the attachment figure, it will try to reduce distress by moving toward the attachment figure or by trying to cause the attachment figure to move toward it. Second, attachment behaviors diminish when the attachment figure is present and no threat is perceived. Instead, the infant engages in exploratory behaviors. Third, the infant perceives inaccessibility of the attachment figure, or the actual separation, as a threat and will protest to regain the attachment figure’s presence. However, if the separation is prolonged, the infant goes into the stages of despair and detachment.

Weiss points out that emotional bonds that meet these three criteria are most often found in marriage, whether well-functioning or ill-functioning, and in committed non-marital relationships. They also can be found in other types of relationships (e.g., friendship, adult-child with adult-parent). Ainsworth (1985, 1989) made a similar argument that emotional bonds are observed across the entire life span: mother-infant,
father-infant, sexual pair, friends, companions and intimates, and siblings and other kin.
Attachment is a phenomenon across all life stages and is not limited to the infant-mother dyad. This theoretical argument offers a new perspective when viewing adult human relationships.

Although adult attachment shares the components of child attachment, it is different from infant attachment in several important ways (Weiss, 1982). First, the infant-parent attachment is a complementary relationship where the infant receives care and the parent provides it. Adult attachment is usually formed with peers and involves a two-way interaction between two equals (West & Sheldon-Keller, 1994). Both partners can be anxious, security-seeking, and providers of care, and both contribute to the relationship functioning.

Second, the attachment behavioral system in infancy is not yet well integrated with other behavioral systems (West & Sheldon-Keller, 1994). Any threat to the accessibility of the attachment figure will overwhelm the ability of the infant to concentrate on other matters. In contrast, adults are able to survive and function to a certain extent even if the attachment relationship is under threat. Third, adult attachment relationships are usually formed by or develop into, but are not limited to, sexual relationships.

Adult attachment can be defined as “the stable tendency of an individual to make substantial efforts to seek and maintain proximity to and contact with one or a few specific individuals who provide the subjective potential for physical and/or psychological safety and security” (Berman & Sperling, 1994, p. 8). The clearest
example of the adult attachment relationship is the marital or/and romantic relationship dyad. Each partner views the other as stronger and more competent at some time or in some way. At any particular time, the stronger and/or wiser person provides care, comfort, and reassurance, which bring a sense of security to the other. Thus, each partner may serve as an attachment figure for the other, just like a primary caregiver for the infant. This important conceptualization, along with Weiss’s work, lays the foundation for empirical studies of adult attachment in romantic relationships (Feeney & Noller, 1996).

About a decade ago, Hazan and Shaver’s (1987) pioneering study on romantic love and attachment led research on adult attachment to a new level. They concluded that romantic love is an attachment process. Enduring attachment is formed between lovers in established relationships, just as infants with their attachment figures. Parallel to infant attachment, romantic love is characterized by complex emotional dynamics, which determine the quality of the relationship. Moreover, various forms of romantic love are greatly affected by individuals’ attachment history. The differences are mainly found in cognition, emotion, and behavior (Shaver, Hazan, & Bradshaw, 1988).

**Attachment and Romantic Love**

Hazan and Shaver’s greatest contribution to the study of adult attachment is to empirically support the attachment perspective of adult romantic relationships (Feeney & Noller, 1996). Most studies examining romantic love and attachment are conducted from this perspective. Numerous researchers have replicated and extended Hazan and Shaver’s
findings in the United States, Australia, and Israel (e.g., Collins & Read, 1990; Feeney &
methods.

Studies in attachment and romantic love generally have focused on the following
issues: characteristics of adult attachment styles, general attitudes toward romantic
relationships held by individuals with different attachment styles, attachment style and
romantic relationship functioning, gender differences in adult attachment, and attachment
history (with parents) and current well-being. Another interest of these researchers has
been to develop and improve the self-report measures of adult attachment. Some
theorists and researchers have started exploring the association between attachment styles
and marital communication, including conflict resolution behaviors. The literature on
communication and conflict resolution will be reviewed separately.

Measurement of Adult Attachment

The most common conceptualization of adult attachment involves the
identification of attachment styles (Berman & Sperling, 1994). Attachment style refers to
the behavioral reactions based on a particular internal working model to the actual or
imagined inaccessibility of or separation from the attachment figure (Berman & Sperling,
1994). Two approaches have been used to assess adult attachment styles. One is an
observational method based on the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) (George, Kaplan,
& Main, 1996). The AAI views attachment from a developmental psychology
perspective, seeing attachment as a life-span concept (Berman & Sperling, 1994). The
other approach uses self-report measures pioneered by Hazan and Shaver (1987), developed from a social and personality psychology perspective (Berman & Sperling, 1994). Each approach provides a unique way to understand adult attachment. The current study will explore romantic relationship satisfaction and conflict resolution using self-report attachment measures. Thus, the literature review in this section will focus on studies using self-report measures of adult attachment style.

Hazan and Shaver (1987) designed a single-item measure of attachment style based on Bowlby’s theory and Ainsworth’s description of infants. Individuals indicate which of the following three descriptions best characterizes their feelings and behaviors in romantic relationships:

Secure: I find it relatively easy to get close to others and am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don’t often worry about being abandoned or about someone getting too close to me.

Avoidant: I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others; I find it difficult to trust them completely, difficult to allow myself to depend on them. I am nervous when anyone gets too close, and often, love partners want to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being.

Anxious/Ambivalent: I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I often worry than my partner doesn’t really love me or won’t want to stay with me. I want to merge completely with another person, and this desire sometimes scares people away. (p. 515)
Hazan and Shaver's single item questionnaire has been widely used in adult attachment studies (e.g., Fuller & Fincham, 1995; Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994; Levy & Davis, 1988; Pietromonaco & Carnelley, 1994); yet, there has been criticism of its conceptualization and methodology (Collins & Read, 1990; 1987; Simpson, 1990). First, each paragraph contains more than one aspect of a relationship. For example, the description of secure attachment includes both being comfortable with closeness and being able to depend on others. Therefore, participants may be forced to choose aspects that do not reflect their feelings when selecting one of the three descriptions. Second, it is impossible to assess the degree the attachment style characterizes a certain participant. Third, an important assumption behind the 1987 scale is that there are three mutually exclusive attachment styles. This assumption has been challenged by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) who suggested a two-dimension, four-category adult attachment classification based on attachment theory and recent empirical work. Finally, the categorical attachment scale limits the statistical analyses that can be utilized.

In response to these limitations, Collins and Read (1990) developed a dimensional measure of adult attachment based on Hazan and Shaver's (1987) categorical measure. Factor analyses revealed three factors, the extent to which a person is comfortable with closeness, feels he/she can rely on others, and is anxious or fearful about being abandoned or unloved. Each factor contains items from the different attachment style descriptions of Hazan and Shaver's discrete measure; thus, the factors do not directly correspond to the three attachment styles, but rather reveal three dimensions that underlie the styles.
Other researchers have also developed dimensional measures of adult attachment following Hazan and Shaver's line of thinking (e.g., Feeney, Noller, & Callan, 1994). Hazan & Shaver (1988) themselves divided the three paragraphs into 13 items. Both categorical and dimensional measures are widely used in research based on the assumption that they yield similar, if not the same, results. However, Fuller and Fincham (1995) argue that, conceptually, these methods reflect different approaches. Rather than assigning each participant to one attachment style, the dimensional measure allows each participant to have a continuum or a mix of attachment styles. Interestingly, at least two studies have yielded contradictory results. Shaver and Brennan (1992) found that both the categorical (1987) and the dimensional version (1988) of Hazan and Shaver's attachment style measures are significant predictors of at least three major personality traits. However, in the Fuller and Fincham study (1995), the same two measures yielded different results in relation to a measure of relationship satisfaction on the trust scale (predictability, dependability, and faith). It is not yet clear, therefore, whether the categorical and dimensional measures measure exactly the same constructs.

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) noted yet another weakness in the current attachment measures. When classifying avoidant individuals, the Hazan and Shaver (1987) measure and other dimensional adult attachment measures derived from the Hazan and Shaver measure, tend to identify those who report feeling subjective distress and discomfort when they become close to others. In contrast, interview methods such as the AAI tend to identify those who deny experiencing subjective distress and downplay the importance of attachment needs (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). In other words, these
two methods measure two different types of "avoidant" attachment styles and one of them is ignored by either approach.

Thus, Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) suggested a two-dimensional, four-category adult attachment measure, following Bowlby's (1973) proposal of images of the self and others. A person's image of the self is dichotomized as positive and negative (the self as worthy of love and support vs. not). The image of others is also dichotomized (other people are seen as trustworthy and available vs. unreliable and rejecting). Therefore, four attachment patterns are derived from a combination of the two dimensions: secure (comfortable with intimacy and autonomy), preoccupied (preoccupied with relationships; equivalent to anxious/ambivalent), dismissing (dismissing of intimacy, counter-dependent), and fearful (fearful of intimacy, socially avoidant) (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991). Their subsequent studies (e.g., Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994; Scharfe & Bartholomew, 1994) demonstrated that the two-dimension, four-type measure is suitable for both the adult and adolescent populations.

Recently, Brennan, Clark, and Shaver (1998) made a successful attempt to create a more sensitive and comprehensive adult attachment measure that incorporates more psychological constructs. Brennan et al. collected 482 attachment items from previous studies, reduced the number to 323 by leaving out redundant items, and factor-analyzed the 60 subscales derived from the pool of 323 attachment items. The factor analysis produced two independent factors they labeled Avoidance and Anxiety, corresponding to the models of Ainsworth et al. (1978) and Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991). Furthermore, when Brennan et al. (1998) clustered the data from their 1086
undergraduate student subjects into four groups, these groups corresponded to
Bartholomew and Horowitz’s (1991) four attachment patterns. Moreover, the
relationships between the clusters and other theoretically appropriate target variables
proved to be stronger those seen with other measures. Because of the evident strengths
displayed by this measure, this latest dimensional measure was used as the measure of
adult attachment style in the present study.

General Characteristics of Adult Attachment Styles

This section of the literature review focuses mainly on the distribution of
attachment styles and the general attitudes toward themselves and others in non-romantic
relationships held by individuals classified into three attachment styles.

Distribution of attachment styles. In the Hazan and Shaver (1987) study, the
distribution of the three attachment styles is consistent between two samples, the non-
student sample and the undergraduate student sample, with both samples consisting of
significantly more females than males. The frequencies are Secure, 56% and 56% (non-
student, student, respectively), Avoidant, 25% and 23%, and Anxious/Ambivalent, 19% and 20%. This proportion is similar to that reported in American studies of infant-mother
attachment (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). A strikingly similar proportion is obtained in other
countries using undergraduate student samples with more females than males. Feeney and
Noller (1990) in Australia obtained proportions of Secure, 55%, Avoidant, 30%, and
Anxious/Ambivalent, 15%, measured by Hazan and Shaver’s single-item attachment
questionnaire. Mikulincer and Nachshon (1991) in Israel obtained a similar proportion of
Secure, 63%, Avoidant, 22%, and Anxious/Ambivalent, 15%, measured by Hazan & Shaver's (1988) continuous measure. Recent studies conducted in the US using samples from undergraduate populations yield similar results. For example, Keelan, Dion, and Dion (1994) using Hazan and Shaver's (1987) single-item questionnaire found the proportion of the three attachment styles to be Secure, 58%, Avoidant, 29%, and Anxious/Ambivalent, 14%.

The population being studied, however, does seem to influence the proportion of attachment styles. Kirkpatrick and Davis (1994) recruited undergraduate students who were in serious dating relationships and found that the two insecure styles were underrepresented (Avoidant, 14.6% for men and 14.2% for women, Anxious/Ambivalent, 8.8% for men and 11.7% for women), when measured by Hazan and Shaver's single-item questionnaire. They believe that the discrepancy with previous studies was due to sample selection—only students in serious dating relationships were selected.

An interesting trend was noted in samples of married couples when the Hazan and Shaver single-item questionnaire is used. The proportions vary by different age groups when other demographic characteristics such as education are similar. For example, in Senchak and Leonard's (1992) sample of 322 young couples (the mean age in the lower twenties), the proportion was Secure, 82%, Avoidant, 11%, and Anxious/Ambivalent, 6%. In Fuller and Fincham's (1995) sample of 53 couples with the mean age of early thirties, the proportion was distinctly different: Secure, 45% for husband and 47% for wife, Avoidant, 28% for husband and 21% for wife, and Anxious/Ambivalent, 26% for husband and 32% for wife.
Attitudes toward self. Because attachment is about the relationship between the self and others, it is expected that it affects the attitude toward the self. People classified as Secure hold more positive views about themselves (Collins & Read, 1990). They feel that they are easy to get to know and are liked by others (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). They report that they are comfortable being close to other people, depending on others, and do not particularly worry about being abandoned or unloved (Collins & Read, 1990). They also report having higher self-esteem, higher self-confidence, lower self-consciousness, and fewer regrets about relationships (Feneey & Noller, 1990).

People classified as Avoidant are characterized by discomfort with closeness and intimacy (Collins & Read, 1990; Feneey & Noller, 1990) and attempt to avoid getting close and intimate with others (Feeney & Noller, 1990). They do not report having worries of being abandoned or unloved (Brennan & Shaver, 1995; Collins & Read, 1990). People classified as Anxious/Ambivalent are fairly comfortable with closeness and intimacy (Collins & Read, 1990); however, they are preoccupied by self-doubt and report being misunderstood and unappreciated (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Moreover, they are extremely worried about being abandoned or unloved (Collins & Read, 1990). Those classified as Avoidant and Anxious/Ambivalent report higher depression than do those classified as Secure (Radecki-Bush, Farrell, & Bush, 1993).

Attitudes toward others. When it comes to the association between the three attachment styles and how others and relationships in general (non-romantic) are viewed, a similar trend can be found. People classified as Secure feel others are generally well-intentioned (Hazan & Shaver, 1987), and they hold positive views about society and
human nature (Collins & Read, 1990). They are able to trust others and are willing to take the risk of opening up to people. They also share news or ideas with their partners and others and turn to them for help when in need (Brennan & Shaver, 1995).

People classified as Avoidant report lower confidence in others' availability (Collins & Read, 1990). Therefore, they tend not to ask for help in times of need (Brennan & Shaver, 1995), but also often find themselves caught in the conflict between the need and love for partners, and the anger of not being loved and appreciated (Brennan & Shaver, 1995).

Like people who are classified as Avoidant, people displaying Anxious/Ambivalent characteristics are not confident about others' availability. They feel that they are not good enough for others to get close to and make a commitment (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). In relationships, they are often characterized by feelings of anger, being unappreciated, strong jealousy, and clinginess (Brennan & Shaver, 1995).

Only one study has examined the personality characteristics displayed by people in three attachment styles. Shaver and Brennan (1992) studied five personality characteristics, Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness (McCrae & Costa, 1990). Results show that participants classified as Secure are least prone to experience unpleasant and disturbing emotions. They are also more extraverted in social interactions and report more genuine trust and sympathy for others. Furthermore, they are less impulsive and more open to new experiences (Shaver & Brennan, 1992). Individuals classified as Avoidant are more anxious about social
interactions and are least open to new experiences. They report more self-reliance in times of need and a lack of trust and concern to others (Shaver & Brennan, 1992).

Summary. The characteristics of the three attachment styles have been confirmed by a relatively new, but extensive, body of literature. People classified as Secure not only have confidence in themselves, but also hold strong faith in others, including during difficult times. People classified as Anxious/Ambivalent seem to value closeness; however, they are preoccupied by self-doubt and fear of being abandoned and unloved. People classified as Avoidant have less faith in others’ availability and are least comfortable with closeness and intimacy. In times of difficulty, they tend to solely rely on themselves rather than asking for help. In view of these major differences, it is not unreasonable to expect major differences among the three groups in viewing romantic relationships.

Adult Attachment Style and Attitudes Toward Romantic Relationships

A great deal of research has been conducted on how adult attachment style is reflected in general attitudes toward romantic relationships. People classified as Secure attach great importance to intimacy (Mikulincer & Erev, 1991) and believe in the existence of true romantic love (Collins & Read, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Compared to people classified as insecure, they expect to experience more intimacy (Mikulincer & Erev, 1991) and they are more optimistic about their relationships (Pietromonaco & Carnelley, 1994). Furthermore, people displaying Secure characteristics desire their partners to experience intimacy and tend to have the
confidence that they will (Mikulincer & Erev, 1991). In addition, people classified as Secure are comfortable with self-disclosing to others, prefer people who are self-disclosive, and are also more responsive to others’ disclosure (Mikulincer & Nachshon, 1991).

People classified as Avoidant are less likely to believe in intimacy, passion and the existence of true romantic love (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Mikulincer & Erev, 1991). Generally they perceive themselves as less willing to self-disclose and yet they want their partners to feel more committed to relationships than do people classified as Anxious/Ambivalent (Mikulincer & Erev, 1991).

People classified as Anxious/Ambivalent want intimacy and passion to have an important place in their lives (Mikulincer & Erev, 1991) and are frequently attracted to romantic relationships, yet they feel that they rarely find real love (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). They do not dislike self-disclosure and are attracted to highly self-disclosive people; however, they perceive that their partners experience less intimacy than do Secure people (Mikulincer & Erev, 1991). In addition, they are somewhat pessimistic about their relationships and doubt that these relationships will lead to marriage (Carnelley & Janoff-Bulman, 1992).

In response to imagined jealousy-evoking situations such as romantic rivalry, people with Secure attachment style report less jealousy, distress, fear, shame and guilt (Radecki-Bush et al., 1993). On the contrary, they feel that they are less likely to lose control of themselves, and they are able to maintain a higher level of self-esteem (Radecki-Bush et al., 1993). Possibly the most important discriminator, in contrast to
people classified as Avoidant, is that people classified as Secure are more willing to depend on others when they feel threatened and are more realistic about the future of their relationships (Radecki-Bush et al., 1993). They do not engage in self-blame as much as people who are classified as Avoidant and Anxious/Ambivalent (Radecki-Bush et al., 1993).

**Attachment History and Current Attachment Style and Functioning**

According to attachment theory, early experiences with attachment figures should have considerable impact on later adult life. Only five studies have covered the association between attachment history and self-reported adult attachment style in romantic relationships. Various measures have been employed. Two studies (Feeney & Noller, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987) used the single-item adult attachment measure (Secure, Avoidant, and Preoccupied; Hazan & Shaver, 1987) and a 37-adjective checklist (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) for quality of relationship with parents. Collins and Read (1990) employed their own dimensional adult attachment measure (Close, Depend, and Anxiety) and the single-item Caregiving Style Measure (Warm, Cold, and Inconsistent; Hazan & Shaver, 1988). Carnelley and Janoff-Bulman (1992) used a dimensional adult attachment measure (Hazan & Shaver, 1988) and the Mother, Father, Peer Scale (MFP) developed by Epstein (overprotective vs encouraging of independence, accepting vs rejecting; see Ricks, 1985). Finally, Carnelley, Pietromonaco, and Jaffe (1994) measured female college students’ attachment style with the Hazan and Shaver (1987) single-item questionnaire and measured quality of parental relationships by constructing a composite measure.
(integrating MFP and several other measures). Despite the various measures and combinations of measures employed in these studies, the conclusions regarding the association are by and large consistent.

In the realm of attachment history, the best discriminator between secure and insecure attachment styles is individuals’ perceptions of parent-child relationships (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). One important perception is whether they had trusting/loving relationships with their parents. Across all five studies, the perception of both parents as warm (Collins & Read, 1990; Carnelley, Pietromonaco, & Jaffe, 1994), both parents or mothers as accepting (Feeney & Noller, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987, Carnelley & Janoff-Bulman, 1992; Carnelley et al., 1994), mothers being responsible (Feeney & Noller, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987), sensitive and reliable (Carnelley et al., 1994), fathers being caring, loving, humorous, and affectionate (Feeney & Noller, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987) are related to later adult attachment security. The perceptions of parents being cold (Collins & Read, 1990) and mothers being rejecting (Carnelley & Janoff-Bulman, 1992; Hazan & Shaver, 1987) are related to an Avoidant attachment style in adulthood. One special case of rejecting, early separation from mothers, is found to be related to later Avoidant attachment style as well (Feeney & Noller, 1990). The perception of fathers being unfair is related to Anxious/Ambivalent attachment style. In addition, when mothers are perceived as pulling attention to themselves, an Anxious/Ambivalent attachment style is more likely to be reported in adulthood (Hazan & Shaver, 1987).
The other important perception is whether parents grant children reasonable autonomy. The perception of mothers being controlling is related to both Avoidant and Anxious/Ambivalent attachment styles in adulthood (Carnelley et al., 1994), whereas the perception of mothers being overprotective is related to Anxious/Ambivalent attachment style later on (Carnelley & Janoff-Bulman, 1992). The perceived controlling father is related to Avoidant attachment style in adulthood (Carnelley et al., 1994). The perception of mothers being both rejecting and controlling is related to Anxious/Ambivalent attachment style in adulthood (Collins & Read, 1990).

The current knowledge on the role of attachment history is far from adequate as reflected by the small number of studies conducted and the use of less well-established measures. Because of the measures used, the findings regarding the association between attachment history and attachment in adulthood may not be satisfactorily comprehensive and up to date. In addition, the father’s role in the formation of adult attachment style is unclear. Some studies found a few associations; others did not. This, too, may be due to the less sensitive measures employed.

**Adult Attachment Style and Romantic Relationships**

Whether mate selection is affected by attachment style has been an interesting topic to explore. Regardless of their own attachment style, people respond more positively when thinking about or interacting with people who display characteristics of secure attachment (Milulincer & Erev, 1991; Pirtromonaco & Carnelley, 1994; Senchak & Leonard, 1992). Many of them pair with people who also are classified as Secure
A greater proportion of people who are classified as insecure are paired with other people who are classified insecure (Brennan & Shaver, 1995). The trend is, for both men and women, that people who are classified as Avoidant tend to pair with people who are classified as Anxious/Ambivalent (Brennan & Shaver, 1995; Collins & Read, 1990; Pietromonaco & Carnelley, 1994; Simpson, 1990). An Avoidant-Avoidant or Anxious/Ambivalent-Anxious/Ambivalent pair is considered rare. In the Kirkpatrick and Davis (1994) study with 354 heterosexual couples, there were no such pairs.

A great deal of research has examined how adult attachment style affects specific, current romantic relationships. These studies focus on four general topics: relationship satisfaction, trust, commitment, and affect. Because of their general attitudes and perceptions about romantic relationships, partners with different attachment styles experience their most important romantic relationship differently.

Individuals classified as Secure are much more satisfied with their current relationships than those classified as Avoidant or Anxious/Ambivalent (Brennan & Shaver, 1995; Carnelley et al., 1994; Collins & Read, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994; Simpson, 1990). Females with insecure attachment styles report being less caring and close to their partners (Collins & Read, 1990). Overall, partners with secure attachment report more satisfaction as relationships progress (Keelan et al., 1994).

Individuals with Secure attachment style generally trust their partners more (Collins & Read, 1990; Keelan et al., 1994; Simpson, 1990;). Specifically, they feel that they can depend on their partners (Collins & Read, 1990; Simpson, 1990) and that their
partners are dependable in terms of being predictable (Simpson, 1990). One distinctive characteristic of lovers classified as Secure is that they report being willing and comfortable in accepting their partners as they are despite their shortcomings (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Individuals classified as insecure do not trust or depend on their partners as much as their secure counterparts (Carnelley et al., 1994; Simpson, 1990). Partners who display avoidant characteristics also report not being comfortable with intimacy (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Levy & Davis, 1988).

Closely related to the trust issue is the commitment to the relationship. Partners with Secure attachment report being more committed to their relationships than partners with insecure attachment styles (Collins & Read, 1990; Keelan et al., 1994; Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994; Simpson, 1990). As a result, their romantic relationships last longer than those classified as Avoidant and Anxious/Ambivalent (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Between the two insecure attachment styles, men and women who are classified as Anxious/Ambivalent reported the shortest relationship length (Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994).

Finally, great differences in affect have been detected among securely and insecurely attached individuals. In general, individuals classified as Secure display more positive affect (Fuller & Fincham, 1995). Individuals with an Avoidant attachment style report experiencing more emotional highs and lows and more jealousy (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). They also report experiencing more negative feelings such as anger and unhappiness (Levy & Davis, 1988). However, individuals classified as Avoidant report experiencing significantly less emotional distress following relationship dissolution.
At the same time, their inner struggles are partially reflected by higher consumption of alcohol by husbands classified Avoidant (Senchak & Leonard, 1992). Romantic relationships of individuals classified as Anxious/Ambivalent are characterized by obsession, extreme sexual attraction, and jealousy (Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

**Gender Differences in Adult Attachment**

When discussing gender differences in attachment, two independent issues need to be addressed. The first is gender differences in attachment styles, the other is gender differences in the implications of attachment style for relationship functioning (Feeney & Noller, 1996). In this section, the literature regarding the two issues will be reviewed separately.

**Gender differences in attachment styles.** As mentioned earlier, there tends to be a gender imbalance in the samples included in adult attachment research, with most samples including more women than men. Studies including both males and females and using the three-category measures consistently find no gender differences among attachment styles. Hazan and Shaver (1987) found in their first empirical studies of adult attachment that there were no gender differences in attachment styles. This result has been widely replicated by other researchers using the Hazan and Shaver categorical (e.g., Brennan & Shaver, 1995; Feeney & Noller, 1990, 1992) and continuous measures (Carnelley & Janoff-Bulman, 1992). This conclusion also is indirectly supported by Mikulincer and Erev (1991). In their studies, three independent undergraduate student samples were used with and without a gender balance (the first sample included 48 females and 42 males, the second included 54 females and 39 males, and the third
included 93 females and 62 males). The attachment distributions were, Secure, 51%, 61%, and 58%; Avoidant, 30%, 23%, and 30%; and Anxious/Ambivalent, 19%, 16%, and 12%, respectively.

The more sensitive four-category adult attachment measures do reveal some interesting gender differences. In response to the categorical four-group adult attachment measure (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991), males were more likely than females to endorse the Dismissing style (one of the two Avoidant styles), while females were more likely than males to endorse the Fearful style, the other Avoidant style (Brennan, Shaver, & Tobey, 1991). Studies using the continuous four-category attachment measure revealed that males reported higher mean ratings of dismissing attachment, whereas females reported higher mean ratings of Anxious/Ambivalent attachment (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Scharfe & Bartholomew, 1994).

Gender differences in the implications of attachment style. A few studies have examined gender as a moderator for the connection between relationship satisfaction and adult attachment style. In the Collins and Read (1990) study, men’s comfort with closeness was consistently predictive of their own as well as their partners’ evaluation of their romantic relationships. Women’s comfort with closeness also predicted their partner’s evaluation of relationships. It did not, however, predict how positively they viewed their relationships. It was women’s fear of being abandoned and unloved that predicted both their partner’s and their own evaluation of their relationship satisfaction. Kirkpatrick and Davis (1994) found that although both men and women’s attachment styles were related to their ratings of relationship satisfaction, the associations for men
and women were different. For men, those displaying Avoidant attachment characteristics gave the most negative ratings to their relationships. For women, it was those who displayed an Anxious/Ambivalent attachment style who gave the most negative ratings. Husband’s avoidance is related to his higher alcohol use; however, wives’ attachment is unrelated to alcohol use (Senchak & Leonard, 1992). In addition, men with an Avoidant attachment style reported the lowest social self-esteem whereas women with an Anxious/Ambivalent style reported the lowest social self-esteem (Pietromonaco & Carnelley, 1994). Since boys are socialized to be more avoidant and girls to be more relationship-oriented, Pietromonaco and Carnelley (1994) suggest that men and women who hold working models that confirm the traditional gender-role stereotypes would be least happy and least confident. These findings are promising and suggest the need to understand gender differences in the implications of attachment style, yet the quantity of the research conducted is not adequate to inform fully about the gender differences.

In addition to this major gender difference in the impact of attachment style, men and women are found to be different in some minor areas. For example, husbands who are classified as Secure find that their partners are more predictable than do husbands who are classified as Anxious/Ambivalent. However, no differences are found among wives classified Secure, Avoidant, or Anxious/Ambivalent (Fuller & Fincham, 1995). Women who are classified as Secure are more optimistic about their relationships, yet husbands’ attachment style is unrelated to their levels of optimism (Pietromonaco & Carnelley, 1994). Women who are comfortable with closeness are less likely to engage in
jealous behaviors; however, men’s comfort with closeness has no relation to jealousy (Collins & Read, 1990).

Some of results are contradictory to one another. For example, Senchak and Leonard (1992) noted that husbands classified as Avoidant report shorter relationships but wives’ attachment style is not related to the length of their relationships. In contrast, Kirkpatrick and Davis (1994) found in their sample that men classified Anxious/Ambivalent displayed the lowest relationship stability, and yet women classified as Anxious/Ambivalent have significantly more stable relationships than women classified Avoidant or Secure.

Overall, the gender issue in the attachment context demands further exploration. With the emergence of more complex and sensitive self-report measures, the study of gender differences in attachment patterns has a better chance of being expanded. In addition, the current understanding of gender differences in implications of attachment style for relationship functioning is limited. The current study explored these two areas using the more sensitive measures. More specifics are discussed further in the section on conflict resolution.

Attachment Style and Conflict Resolution in Romantic Relationships

Conflict resolution is a key aspect of marital communication. It not only involves the exchange of messages through verbal and nonverbal communication, but more importantly the resolution of conflicts and disagreements which are inevitable between partners (Cahn, 1992). Conflict resolution is also one, if not the most important, form of
marital communication because of its close relation to marital satisfaction. Studies have consistently found that conflict resolution behavior is the strongest predictor of marital satisfaction (see Bradbury & Karney, 1993; Jacobson & Addis, 1993; Noller & Fitzpatrick, 1991, for recent reviews). One of the most common interventions applied by clinicians to improve marital satisfaction, therefore, is to change couples' conflict resolution behaviors (Epstein et al., 1993; Fowers, 1998; Sayers, Baucom, Sher, Weiss, & Heyman, 1991).

Conflict Resolution Behavior

Conflict resolution behavior has been the center of the effort to reduce marital distress (Fowers, 1998). In the past decade, studies employing various methodologies consistently demonstrated the differences between distressed and nondistressed couples (e.g., Christensen & Shenk, 1991; Gottman, 1993, 1994; Weiss & Heyman, 1990). Christensen and Pasch (1993) summarized four categories of conflict resolution behavior: Engagement versus Avoidance of Conflict, Demand/Withdraw, Mutual Negative Engagement, and Mutual Positive Engagement. All four categories are related to marital satisfaction (Christensen & Pasch, 1993).

Empirical studies indicate that engagement in conflict is associated with greater marital satisfaction whereas avoidance of conflict or stonewalling with partners is associated with marital dissatisfaction (Christensen & Pasch, 1993; Gottman, 1994, 1991). The attempt to resolve conflicts, including the seemingly negative argument between partners, contributes greatly to marital satisfaction (Jacobson & Addis, 1993).
The engagement gives couples the opportunity to communicate with each other and resolve the disagreement (Christensen & Pasch, 1993).

The demand/withdraw pattern in conflict resolution has been observed repeatedly among distressed couples (Christensen & Pasch, 1993; Heavey et al., 1993; Roberts & Krokoff, 1990; Weiss & Heyman, 1990). In this pattern, one partner tries to criticize the other for his/her behavior and demand change. The other partner tries to avoid discussion of the problem and withdraws from the interaction (Christensen & Pasch, 1993; Heavey et al., 1993; Weiss & Heyman, 1990). The frequency of demand/withdraw interaction is highly and negatively associated with marital satisfaction (Newton, Kiecolt-Glaser, Glaser, & Malarkey, 1995; Heavey et al., 1993).

In addition, interesting gender differences have been revealed across studies. Women are more emotional during conflict and are more likely to exercise confrontation and emotional pressure to demand change whereas men are more likely to withdraw (Griffin, 1993). This gender difference is intensified in distressed marriages (Christensen & Shenk, 1991), and the level of wife's hostility is linked to husbands’ level of withdrawal (Krokoff, 1991). However, Christensen and Heavey (1990) point out that both husbands and wives can be more demanding when discussing changes they want, although husbands tend to withdraw more and wives tend to demand more.

The third negative behavior pattern, Mutual Negative Engagement, involves destructive behaviors such as attack, criticize, blame, put down, and being sarcastic (Christensen & Pasch, 1993). These are also observed frequently among distressed couples. In this strategy, partners try to compete and find fault with each other and
dominate each other (Christensen & Pasch, 1993). This negative interaction is more likely to escalate and last longer in conflict resolution among distressed couples (Sher & Weiss, 1991).

In contrast to the above negative behaviors is the constructive conflict resolution during which partners take a cooperative stand (Christensen & Pasch, 1993). Partners disclose their feelings and positions. They compromise and negotiate by seeking areas of agreement, and integrate the other's opinions. In addition, it is not unusual for them to express their caring and empathy during conflict resolution (Christensen & Pasch, 1993). Fowers (1998) categorized constructive behaviors into four groups. Nondefensive Listening promotes mutual understanding by focusing on the other person's content and affect. Active Listening encourages the other to continue through eye contact, nodding and saying "um hmm." Self-disclosure enables partners to develop and deepen their relationships. It also helps maintain feelings toward partners (Fowers, 1998). Editing encourages couples to weigh and select a positive manner to convey messages (Fowers, 1998).

Attachment Style and Conflict Resolution

This section will focus on two major issues, the theoretical basis for conceptualizing conflict resolution from an attachment perspective, and a review of the research literature on attachment and conflict resolution.

Theoretical Basis. An infant organizes attachment behaviors around its attachment figures with the goal of felt security. To maintain proximity with an
attachment figure, the infant develops a relationship model, or an internal working model, regarding (1) expectations of attachment figures' responses to distress, and (2) forecasting attachment figures' behaviors (Kobak & Hazan, 1991). The infant's behaviors in stressful situations are strongly influenced by its attachment style, as evidenced by results using the Strange Situation (Ainsworth et al., 1978).

Conflictual interaction in romantic relationships is one of the situations that is assumed to activate the attachment system in adults (Kobak & Duemmler, 1994). It accentuates the importance of maintaining a cooperative partnership and the need for psychological support from partners (Kobak & Duemmler, 1994). Attachment behaviors should be most clearly observed in stressful situations. Based on their images of the self and others, adults should be expected to engage in different behaviors in conflict resolution that will lead to various conflict resolution outcomes.

An individual with a Secure attachment style should not feel threatened by the presence of conflict since he/she has greater confidence in the worthiness of self and the accessibility of the other. During conflict resolution he/she is less likely to avoid disagreement. Rather, he/she can be expected to communicate openly to his/her partner and seek emotional support when necessary. As a natural consequence, he/she should have a better chance to resolve conflict successfully.

An individual with an Avoidant attachment style does not have trust in his/her partner's availability in times of need; therefore, he/she is more likely to withdraw from the issue so as to avoid the pain of disappointment. Such individuals may engage in hostile behaviors such as attacking, complaining and confrontation in the fear they would
be rejected once their vulnerability is exposed. Therefore, they feel the urge to protect themselves either through avoiding the interaction or attacking the other partner.

Furthermore, with this defensive mechanism, they will tend to report less or no experienced emotional disturbance during and after the stressful interaction.

Individuals with an Anxious/Ambivalent attachment style are in constant fear that they will not gain enough love and attention from significant others. As a result, their behaviors in conflict resolution should revolve around the battle of sustaining the reassurance of availability and accessibility from the attachment figure. It is reasonable to expect that individuals in this group are more likely to be clinging, hostile, demanding, aggressive, and confrontational. Because of the destructive strategies applied by people with insecure attachment styles, their conflict resolution outcome is expected to be less satisfactory.

Research on attachment style and conflict resolution. The examination of conflict resolution from an attachment perspective is a new territory. To date, the exploration has not resulted in adequate knowledge on this topic. Among the studies that have been conducted, various methodologies have been employed. This provides information on conflict resolution from different angles, but it also makes it difficult to conduct an adequate literature review by focusing solely on studies using the self-report method to assess attachment. For this reason, this section of the literature review will not limit itself to self-report studies, but will extend to those that use observational methods such as the Adult Attachment Interview and objective coding of conflict resolution. Although research from both approaches has generally confirmed what attachment theory has
predicted about conflict resolution, it is believed that, by reviewing specific results from the two approaches, valuable insights can be gained to enrich the current study.

Studies relying solely on self-report measures of adult attachment styles and conflict resolution can be divided into two categories: one uses the Hazan and Shaver (1987) categorical measure; the other uses dimensional measures. These studies, by and large, produce similar findings, but the dimensional measures tend to offer more descriptive information.

Studies using the categorical measure indicate that partners who are classified as Secure self-disclose more to their partners and report a higher level of comfort with self-disclosure (Pistole, 1993). Compared to those with insecure attachment styles, they are more likely to use integrating and compromising strategies (Levy & Davis, 1988; Pistole, 1989), and are less likely to engage in withdrawal and verbal aggression during conflict resolution (Senchak & Leonard, 1992). Partners with an Anxious/Ambivalent attachment style have a strong tendency to exercise pressure on their partners (Pistole, 1989) and dominate conflict resolution processes (Levy & Davis, 1988). Partners with an Avoidant attachment style are least likely to engage in compromising and integrating behaviors (Levy & Davis, 1988).

Collins and Read (1990) were the first to research conflict resolution in romantic relationships using a dimensional adult attachment measure that generates scores on comfort with closeness and intimacy, the extent of trusting and depending on others, and the level of anxiety in relationships. Studies using their measure found that men and women who were comfortable being close perceived less conflict and reported higher
levels of communication. They also reported more self-disclosure than their insecure counterparts (Collins & Read, 1990; Mikulincer & Nachshon, 1994).

The other group of researchers used a dimensional attachment measure that generates two factors, Comfort with Closeness and Anxiety over Abandonment (Noller & Feeney, 1994). Feeney et al. (1994) found that husbands’ comfort with closeness was related to the use of mutual discussion and understanding. No significant result was found for wives’ comfort with closeness. Wives’ anxiety over abandonment was negatively related to conflict resolution engagement and outcome, and was positively related to conflict and domination in conflict resolution attempts. Furthermore, for both husbands and wives, anxiety over abandonment was related to their own reports of using blame, threats, physical and verbal aggression, patterns of demand-withdraw and pressure-resist, feelings of guilt and hurt after conflict, and lack of mutual discussion and understanding (Feeney et al., 1994).

Comfort with Closeness and Anxiety over Abandonment (Noller & Feeney, 1994) are related to the accuracy of nonverbal communication in early marriage (Noller & Feeney, 1994). Couples with the wife reporting discomfort with closeness were less accurate than other couples with respect to neutral and negative messages. Furthermore, the attachment dimensions predicted nonverbal accuracy in later marriage.

Three studies used observational methods to measure both attachment style and conflict resolution behavior. Husbands’ and wives’ attachment security classified on the AAI are each related to greater openness and conflict resolution engagement and less avoidance of conflict (Wampler, Shi, & Nelson, 1997). In addition, husbands’
attachment security classified on the AAI is related to less observed conflict and the 
couple’s increased positive behaviors in conflict resolution (Cohn, Silver, Cowan, 
Cowan, & Pearson, 1992). The wife’s attachment security (classified on the Marital Q-
Sort; Kobak, 1989) is related to less rejection by wives during conflict resolution. 
Husbands holding positive expectations for wives’ availability (secure) displayed less 
rejection and more support in conflict resolution, as rated by trained raters (Kobak & 

Two studies used a mixed approach, employing both observational and self-report 
methods within one study. Simpson, Rholes, and Phillips (1996) examined the 
association between self-report adult attachment styles and observed conflict resolution 
behaviors. A 17-item measure generated two dimensions, avoidance and ambivalence. 
Men and women who were classified as ambivalent displayed more stress and anxiety 
during conflict resolution. Men with high scores on avoidance were rated as less warm 
and supportive.

Scharfe and Bartholomew (1995), on the other hand, used a self-report measure to 
examine conflict resolution and an interview approach, The Peer Attachment Interview 
(Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991), to classify attachment styles. The interview classifies 
subjects into four categories: Secure, Preoccupied, Fearful, and Dismissing. Attachment 
security was related to self-reports of constructive strategies, e.g., discussing with 
partners about the on-going interaction and looking for a good timing for resolution. 
Partners in this category were less likely to avoid or withdraw from the conflict whereas 
partners with a Preoccupied attachment style were more likely to do so. Partners with a
Fearful attachment style were also more likely to withdraw from the conflict; however, men in this group did tend to communicate with their partners about the disagreement. No significant result was found for the Dismissing attachment style.

In summary, studies using both approaches to establishing relationship style generally agree that secure attachment is related to constructive conflict resolution behaviors and insecure attachment is related to negative behaviors. Various types of research designs also expand the current understanding of the topic.

Three weaknesses are evident. First, we do not know enough about specific conflict resolution behaviors applied by individuals with different attachment styles. This is partially due to the combination of conflict resolution and adult attachment measures employed. Second, we know even less about what the more sensitive adult attachment measures can predict about conflict resolution behavior. Finally, we know very little about gender differences in the implications of attachment style for conflict resolution.

Do men and women with the same attachment style engage in similar or different conflict resolution behaviors? An earlier observational study revealed that attachment style is a better predictor of conflict resolution behaviors than gender (Shi & Wampler, 1997). It would be important to examine whether the same result is found when using a self-report method.
Hypotheses

The primary hypotheses are:

1. Lower levels of avoidance and anxiety will be related to higher relationship satisfaction and more positive conflict resolution behaviors. Higher levels of avoidance and anxiety will be related to lower relationship satisfaction and more negative conflict resolution behaviors.

2. Attachment style is expected to be a better predictor of conflict resolution behavior than gender.

3. Early experiences with parents will be related to attachment style, relationship satisfaction, and conflict resolution behaviors in adulthood. Those who perceive their early relationships with parents as warm, open, and supportive will report lower levels of avoidance and anxiety, higher relationship satisfaction, and more positive conflict resolution behaviors. Those who perceive their early relationships with parents as cold, rejecting, intrusive, and demanding will report the opposite.

4. There will be gender differences in insecure attachment styles. Males will be expected to be more Dismissing and females more Fearful and Preoccupied.

5. Males and females with insecure attachment styles will be expected to engage in different conflict resolution behaviors. Males will be expected to be more avoiding and dominating; females will be expected to be more obliging.
CHAPTER III

METHOD

Sample

The sample for this study included 452 undergraduate students registered in classes in the College of Human Sciences at Texas Tech University. One hundred fifty-five students were recruited from two classes required for Child Development and Family Studies majors. The rest of the 299 participants registered in courses that are open to students of all majors. Students were not required to give their majors during the data collection; however, the information regarding the number of majors in each class was obtained from instructors. Participants in this study were from various majors at Texas Tech University, including business, mechanical engineering, hotel and restaurant management, mathematics, to name a few.

To be eligible, participants had to be in a serious romantic relationship at some time, either past or present. Three participants were excluded from the sample because of failure to complete the MIMARA and the ROCI. A fourth one was excluded because the relationship she focused on lasted for only two days. This resulted in a sample of 448 participants (240 females, 208 males).

Procedure

Instructors teaching courses within the College of Human Sciences were contacted to obtain their consent for assisting in the proposed study. Once the consent was given, a schedule was made between the instructor and the researcher. The primary
investigator went to each class to explain the study and answer questions about the study. Participation was voluntary and those who participated were given reasonable extra credit with the consent of the instructor. An agreement was made between the primary investigator and the instructor to give assignments to students who were not willing to participate or who were not eligible for the study to enable them to obtain equal extra credit. Of all the students contacted, only one was not willing to participate, and two were not eligible.

Measures

Adult Attachment Style

Numerous adult attachment measures have been created since 1987, and it has been confusing as to which measure and how many dimensions can most accurately assess adult attachment style (Brennan et al., 1998). Among all the established adult attachment measures, the two-dimensional, four-category conceptualization based on the model of self and the model of others (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991) has been considered as reflecting adult attachment more precisely. However, it is not integrative of rich constructs identified in previous measures (Brennan et al., 1998). Recently, Brennan et al. (1998) have proposed that Ainsworth’s three attachment types can be conceptualized as two dimensions, Avoidance (discomfort with closeness and dependency) and Anxiety (crying, lack of confidence in exploration in the absence of mother, angry protest directed at the attachment figure during reunion). Moreover, further examination of adult attachment measures (e.g., Collins & Read, 1990, Hazan &
Shaver, 1987; Simpson, 1990) indicates they also can be conceptualized as consisting of the two dimensions (Brennan et al., 1998).

Based on the above conceptualization, Brennan et al. (1998) designed an adult attachment measure, the Multiple-Item Measure of Adult Romantic Attachment (MIMARA). This instrument not only integrates adult attachment constructs identified in previous measures, but corresponds to the two-dimensional adult attachment conceptualization (Anxiety and Avoidance). Furthermore, it has been shown to be more sensitive than the Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) two-dimensional, four-category attachment measure (Brennan et al., 1998). The 36-item measure assesses how individuals feel in the most salient adult attachment relationship, the romantic relationship. It is most appropriate for assessing adult attachment in romantic relationships and was used as the primary measure of adult attachment style in the current study. The MIMARA originally focused on how romantic relationships are experienced in general. In the current study, however, participants were asked how they feel in their current romantic relationships or how they felt in their most significant one if they currently are not romantically involved with anyone. Participants were asked to focus on the same relationship when answering the attachment history questionnaire and the conflict resolution questionnaire.

Each item on the MIMARA was answered on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from “1” (disagree strongly) to “7” (agree strongly), with a middle score of “4” (neutral/mixed). Continuous scores range from 18 to 126 for both dimensions. The measure consists of two 18-item subscales, Avoidance and Anxiety. The Avoidance subscale reflects levels to avoidance of intimacy, discomfort with closeness, and self-
reliance. Examples include “I prefer not to show a partner how I feel deep down,” “I am nervous when partners get too close to me,” and “I turn to my partners for many things, including comfort and reassurance.” The Anxiety subscale reflects jealousy, fear of abandonment, and fear of rejection. Examples include “I worry about being abandoned,” “My desire to be very close sometimes scares people away,” and “I get frustrated when my partner is not around as much as I would like.”

Both hierarchical and nonhierarchical cluster analyses have revealed four distinctive groups whose scores on the Avoidance and Anxiety subscales match the four groups Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) had identified. These groups are Secure, Dismissing, Fearful, and Preoccupied (known as Anxious/Ambivalent in the 3-category attachment measure). Participants in the Secure cluster score low on both Avoidance and Anxiety. Those in the Fearful cluster score high on both Avoidance and Anxiety. Participants in the Preoccupied (Anxious/Ambivalent) cluster score low on Avoidance and high on Anxiety. Finally, those in the Dismissing cluster score high on Avoidance and low on Anxiety (Brennan et al., 1998).

The measure has shown high internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of .94 for Avoidance and .91 for Anxiety (Brennan et al., 1998). In the current sample, the alpha was .94 for Avoidance and .90 for Anxiety. Good convergent validity has been demonstrated by high correlations between the Avoidance dimension and a large number of other scales measuring avoidance and discomfort with closeness (Brennan et al., 1998). The Anxiety scale also correlates highly with a large number of other scales measuring anxiety and preoccupation with attachment, jealousy, and fear of rejection (see
Brennan, et al., 1998, for details). Anxiety and Avoidance were moderately correlated ($r = .25, p < .001$) in this sample.

The Attachment Style Prototypes (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) was included as a secondary adult attachment measure. This scale is the first self-report adult attachment measure and has been by far the most commonly used. The major purpose of employing this scale in the current study was to compare the characteristics of attachment styles assessed by the categorical and dimensional measures, and by the three-category and four-category measures.

The Attachment Style Prototypes consists of three paragraphs corresponding to Secure, Avoidant and Anxious/ambivalent attachment styles. Hazan and Shaver derived their measure directly from Bowlby (1969, 1973, 1980) and Ainsworth et al. (1978) and did not include a fearful category. Participants were required to choose one of the three paragraphs that best described their feelings of comfort in romantic relationships. The reliability of the scale has been demonstrated by similar results in terms of distribution of attachment styles obtained internationally (e.g., Collins & Read, 1990, in the US; Feeney & Noller, 1990, in Australia; Mikulincer & Nachshon, 1991, in Israel). Adequate construct validity has been demonstrated by the relations of attachment style to attachment history and beliefs about self and others (Collins & Read, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987). This measure has been the one most widely used in adult attachment studies.
Attachment Experiences with Parents

The degree of closeness between the child and mother and father was measured by the Inventory of Parent-Peer Attachment (IPPA, Armsden & Greenberg, 1987). The current study only included the Mother and Father Scales. The IPPA consists of three subscales, Trust, Communication, and Alienation. Examples include “I felt it was no use letting my feelings show around my mother,” “When I was angry about something, my mother tried to be understanding,” “Talking over my problems with my father made me feel ashamed or foolish,” and “My father had his own problems, so I didn’t bother him with mine.”

All three subscales have demonstrated high reliability with an alpha of .91 for the Trust scale, .86 for the Communication, and .93 for Alienation (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987). The three-week test-retest reliability for the overall scale is .93 (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987). Good convergent validity has been demonstrated by its high correlation to several well-established measures (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987).

Participants were asked to think about their relationships with their mothers and fathers (or parental figures if parents were not available) before they reached 18. Therefore, the 50 items in this scale were modified to the past tense. Participants rated each item on a 5-point Likert scale (1=almost always or always true, 3=sometimes true, 5=almost never or never true). An overall score of positive relationship with each parent (high trust, high communication, and low alienation) was calculated. The sums of the three subscores were labeled Closeness with Mother and Closeness with Father. In the current sample, Cronbach alpha reliability for Closeness with Mother was .95, and
reliability for Closeness with Father was .96. Closeness with Mother and Father were moderately correlated with each other \( (r = .383, p < .001) \).

In addition, information was gathered regarding whether the participant was raised by biological parents, whether the participant experienced early separation from attachment figure(s), and which parents or parental figures were the focus when responding to the attachment history questionnaire.

**Conflict Resolution Behavior in Romantic Relationships**

Like adult attachment, styles of handling interpersonal conflict can be conceptualized on two dimensions, the dimension of attempting to satisfy his/her own concerns (high or low), and the dimension of a person wanting to satisfy the concerns of others (high or low). The combination of the two dimensions results in five conflict resolution styles (Rahim, 1983), Integrating (high on self, high on others), Dominating (high on self, low on others), Obliging (low on self, high on others), Avoiding (low on self, low on others), and Compromising (medium on self, medium on others). Integrating assesses the degree one can be open with the other and come up with solutions that satisfy both partners. Dominating describes the tendency to force one's opinion on the other. Obliging focuses on the tendency of other-pleasing behaviors at the cost of sacrificing the concern for self. Avoiding assesses the degree one stays away from disagreement with the partner. Compromising evaluates one's ability to propose a middle ground when facing a difficult issue. It is less favorable than Integrating because the proposal requires both partners to give up a certain benefit. The behaviors of compromising and integrating satisfy needs of both the self and others. These behaviors
are more likely to generate win-win solutions and therefore are considered as being more positive than the other three. In the current study, the five behaviors were used as continuous variables.

Factor analyses revealed five factors (Integrating, Avoiding Conflict, Dominating, Obliging, and Compromising) with factor loadings greater than .40. The five factors match the theoretical structure based on the two dimensions (Rahim, 1983) and constitute the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI-II, Rahim, 1983). Each item was answered on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from “1” (disagree strongly) to “7” (agree strongly), with a middle score of “4” (neutral/mixed). Continuous scores range from 7-49 for all five scales.

The ROCI-II also demonstrated adequate reliabilities. One-week rest-retest reliabilities ranged from .60 for Compromising to .83 for Integrating. Internal consistency reliability estimates were satisfactory with Cronbach alphas ranging from .72 to .77. Although the ROCI-II originally was designed to study styles of handling conflict with supervisors, subordinates, and peers in business organizations, studies have shown that the ROCI-II is useful in investigating conflict resolution styles in other interpersonal relationships such as sibling and friend (Hammock, Richardson, Pilkington, & Utley, 1987; Richardson, Hammock, Lubben, & Mickler, 1988) (see Levy & Davis, 1988, for details). Cronbach alphas ranged from .73 to .92 in the studies of close interpersonal relationships (Levy & Davis, 1988). The participants were assessed in the five conflict resolution behaviors identified by the author of the ROCI-II. The reliabilities in the current sample for the conflict resolution behavior of Integrating, Avoiding Conflict, Dominating, Obliging, and Compromising were .90, .85, .81, .81, and .74, respectively.
Social desirability contamination was checked using the Personal Reaction Inventory (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960) and the Lie scale from the Eysenck Personality Inventory (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1968). Only the Integrating subscale had significant, but marginal, correlations with these measures ($r=.29$, $r=.14$, respectively; Rahim, 1983).

The five conflict resolution styles were either moderately or not significantly related to each other, with most of them moderately related. The correlations ranged between -.02 for Avoiding Conflict and Compromising to .61 for Compromising and Integrating.

**Romantic Relationship Satisfaction**

The Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS; Hendrick, 1988) is a 7-item scale designed to measure overall relationship satisfaction. Each item was rated from a “1” (most negative) to “5” (most positive) scale. Continuous scores range from 7 to 35. The RAS has demonstrated adequate reliability and validity (Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). The internal consistency is reported to be .86 (Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). Convergent validity is shown by positive correlation with the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) and in predicting relationship stability (Fischer & Corcoran, 1994). The alpha in the current sample was .90.

**Design and Analysis**

Data analyses were divided into three sections, preliminary analyses, continuous attachment measure, and categorical attachment measure. In the preliminary analyses, the frequencies of demographic variables were calculated, and Pearson correlations were
run between the demographic variables and independent and dependent variables. In the second section, Hypotheses 1 through 3 were tested. To test Hypothesis 1, six standard multiple regressions were run with the two attachment dimensions as the independent variables and relationship satisfaction and conflict resolution behaviors as dependent variables. To test Hypothesis 2, six hierarchical multiple regressions were run with gender entered first followed by the two attachment dimensions. To test Hypothesis 3 regarding the impact of early attachment experience, six standard multiple regressions were conducted with Closeness with Mother and Father as the independent variables and the two attachment dimensions and five conflict resolution behaviors as dependent variables. MANOVA was conducted with separation with parents as the independent variable, and attachment dimensions and conflict resolution behaviors as the dependent variables. Finally, different age and relationship status groups were compared.

In the third section, k-means cluster analysis was conducted to categorize participants into four attachment styles, based on Brennan et al. (1998) theoretical speculation, and empirical evidence. Next, 2x4 chi squares were run in various age, relationship status, and relationship length groups to test whether these variables would affect the distribution of attachment styles. To test Hypothesis 4, a chi square was performed using the four attachment categories and gender. To test Hypothesis 5, a MANOVA was conducted with the five conflict resolution behaviors as the dependent variables, and gender and the four attachment styles as the independent variables.
CHAPTER IV
DATA ANALYSES

Preliminary Analyses

The frequencies for the demographic variables are presented in Table 1. The majority of the participants identified themselves as European Americans and in their early twenties. Of the eight categories of relationship status in the demographic questionnaire, each category received at least one response. Due to the small frequencies of some categories, the eight categories were collapsed into three: married or remarried (coded 1), single in a serious relationship currently (coded 2), and single in a relationship previously (coded 3). Status 2 included participants who were divorced and in a current serious relationship, single and living together, and never married and in a current serious dating relationship. Status 3 included participants who were divorced and dating previously, divorced and had not been seriously dating since, and never married and seriously dating previously (Table 1).

Missing data in the MIMARA, ROCI, RAS, and IPPA, accounting for 0.14% of items in the four questionnaires, were assigned neutral numbers ("4" for items in the MIMARA, ROCI, "3 " for items in the RAS and IPPA). Pearson correlations were run between the demographic variables of age and length of relationship and the independent and dependent variables (Table 2). Age was not significantly correlated with any variable except Closeness with Mother and Closeness with Father before 18, accounting for less than 5% of the variance in either variable. Length of relationship was not significantly correlated with the independent and dependent variables included in the
study. The means and standard deviations of the independent and dependent variables are listed in Table 3.

Test of Hypotheses

Continuous Attachment Measure

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 stated that attachment dimensions are predictive of relationship satisfaction and conflict resolution behaviors. To test the associations, six standard multiple regressions were performed between the two attachment dimensions, Anxiety and Avoidance, and six dependent variables, relationship satisfaction and five conflict resolution behaviors. Standardized regression coefficients (Beta) and R square values are displayed in Table 4. The alpha level for the significance of $t$ was set at .005 to correct for family-wise error. For R square, the alpha level was .01.

In regression 1, both Anxiety and Avoidance contributed significantly to prediction of relationship satisfaction with higher levels of Anxiety and Avoidance associated with lower relationship satisfaction. The two dimensions in combination explained 47.2% of the variance in relationship satisfaction.

In regression 2, only the Avoidance dimension contributed significantly to the prediction of Avoiding Conflict. Predictably, those who scored higher on the Avoidance dimension were more likely to be avoidant of conflict. In combination, the two independent variables explained 12.4% of the variance in Avoiding Conflict.

In regression 3, it is also the Avoidance dimension that contributed significantly to the prediction of Compromising. Participants who scored higher on the Avoidance
dimension were less likely to compromise when faced with a conflict or disagreement. Together, the attachment dimensions accounted for 14% of the variance.

In regression 4, both Anxiety and Avoidance were significant predictors of dominating behaviors in conflict resolution situations. Participants who had higher scores on Anxiety and Avoidance reported themselves as being dominant in conflict resolution attempts. In combination, however, the two dimensions accounted for only 8.6% of the variance in Dominating.

In regression 5, only Avoidance contributed significantly to the prediction of integrating behaviors in conflict resolution. Participants who had higher scores on Avoidance were less likely to integrate their partners' opinions. Together, the two attachment dimensions accounted for 36.9% of the variance in Integrating.

Finally, in regression 6, both Anxiety and Avoidance contributed significantly to Obliging. Anxiety was positively and Avoidance was negatively related to partner-pleasing behaviors that handicap the generation of a win-win solution. The two dimensions in combination contributed 14.2% of the variance in Obliging.

Overall, hypothesis 1 was confirmed. Specifically, both the Anxiety and Avoidance dimensions were predictive of Relationship Satisfaction (higher scores on either dimension predicted lower Relationship Satisfaction) and conflict resolution behaviors of Dominating and Obliging. However, they only contributed moderately to the variance in Dominating. A lower level of Avoidance, rather than the predicted higher level of Avoidance, was related to Obliging behavior in conflict resolution. Avoidance alone was predictive of Avoiding Conflict (positive), Compromising (negative), and Integrating (negative), with a lower level of Avoidance related to more positive
behaviors. When there was a significant contribution of the Anxiety dimension, it was always a positive relationship.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 stated that attachment style is expected to be a stronger predictor of relationship satisfaction and conflict resolution behaviors than gender. The test of Hypothesis 2 included two steps. First, a MANOVA was conducted with gender as the independent variable and relationship satisfaction and the five conflict resolution behaviors as the dependent variables. There was a significant main effect of gender with the use of Wilks' criterion, $F(6, 439) = 5.92, p < .001$. Table 5 displays the main univariate effects of gender on relationship satisfaction and conflict resolution behaviors. Gender had significant effect on Avoiding Conflict and Integrating ($p < .006$). Males were more avoidant of conflict than females and females were more integrative during conflict resolution than males. No gender difference was found for relationship satisfaction or the conflict resolution behaviors of Compromising, Dominating, and Obliging.

Next, six hierarchical multiple regressions were employed to determine whether the addition of gender improved prediction of relationship satisfaction and conflict resolution behaviors. In each of the regressions performed, gender was entered into the equation first, followed by Anxiety and Avoidance as a block. Standardized regression coefficients and R squares are displayed in Table 6, using the same alpha criteria as in the previous multiple regressions.

In regression 1, the Beta for gender on relationship satisfaction was not statistically significant. Anxiety and Avoidance, each a significant predictor of
relationship satisfaction, raised the percentage of the variance explained to 47.4%. The
significant increase in R square ($F=128.96, p< .001$) with the addition of the attachment
dimensions was .473.

In regression 2, a significant negative Beta was found for gender in the first step
(1=male, 0=female), indicating males were more avoidant of conflict than females.
Gender accounted for only 4.1% of the variance in Avoiding Conflict, indicating that the
contribution of gender is minimal. In the second step, Avoidance yielded a significant
positive beta, suggesting that the attachment style of Avoidance was positively related to
the behavior of Avoiding Conflict. With the two attachment dimensions added to the
equation, the percentage of the variance explained was raised to 14.7%. The change in R
square was significant ($F=9.06, p< .001$).

In regression 3, only Avoidance in step 2 was found to be a significant predictor
of Compromising . A negative Beta suggested those who scored higher on the
Avoidance dimension were less likely to compromise during conflict resolution. The
second step raised the percentage of the variance explained to 14%, and there was a
significant increase in R square ($F=8.91, p< .001$) with the addition of the attachment
dimensions was .136.

In regression 4, gender was not found to be a significant predictor of Dominating.
In step 2, both Anxiety and Avoidance yielded a positive significant Beta, indicating
participants who had higher scores on the two attachment dimensions were more likely to
be dominant during conflict resolution. However, the second step raised the percentage
of the variance explained in the dependent variable to only 8.6%. This increase in the R
square (F=3.12, p> .05) with the addition of the attachment dimensions was not significant.

In regression 5, a positive significant Beta was found for gender, indicating females were more integrative than males during conflict resolution. However, it accounted for only 2.3% of the variance in Integrating, suggesting that the contribution was minimal. In the second step, only Avoidance was found to be a significant predictor of Integrating. The negative Beta suggested participants who scored higher on the Avoidance were less likely to be integrative in conflict resolution situations. The two attachment dimensions in combination raised the percentage of the variance explained to 37.5%. The change in R square was significant (F=72.55, p< .001).

In the final regression, a negative significant Beta was found for gender in the first step, suggesting females were more obliging during conflict resolution than males. However, gender accounted for only 1.2% of the variance, indicating the contribution was minimal. In the second step, both Anxiety and Avoidance yielded a significant Beta, indicating that participants who scored higher on Anxiety and lower on Avoidance were more prone to engage in obliging behaviors in conflict resolution. The two in combination raised the percentage of variance explained to 17.3%. The change in R square was significant (F=13.67, p< .001).

Overall, Hypothesis 2 was confirmed. Although gender was found to be a significant predictor of Avoiding Conflict, Integrating, and Obliging, its contribution to the variance of the three conflict resolution behaviors was minimal. The addition of the attachment dimensions into the equations dramatically increased the R square, suggesting
attachment style was a much stronger predictor of conflict resolution behaviors than gender.

Hypothesis 3

Closeness to Parents. To test whether early attachment experiences with parental figures have influence on adult attachment style and romantic relationship functioning, eight standard multiple regressions were performed between closeness with parental figures and attachment dimensions, relationship satisfaction, and conflict resolution behaviors. Standardized regression coefficients and R Squares are displayed in Table 7.

Sixteen cases were excluded from the analyses because of failure to complete the IPPA or absence of a male parental figure when growing up. Three hundred and seventy participants (81.5%) identified biological father as their primary father figure, and 41 (9%) identified stepfather as their primary father figure. Others identified grandfather (7), adopted father (2), foster father (1), and uncle (2) as their primary father figure. Four hundred and eighteen participants (92.1%) identified biological mother as primary mother figure. Others identified stepmother (4), grandmother (4), adopted mother (2), and aunt (1) as their primary mother figure.

Overall, early attachment experiences with parental figures were not strong predictors of the dependent variables. In regression 1, closeness with father figure yielded a significant negative Beta on Anxiety, indicating closeness with the father figure was related to a lower level of anxiety. However, closeness with mother and father figures in combination accounted for only 4.4% of the variance. In regression 5, closeness with the father figure yielded a significant negative Beta on Dominating,
indicating closeness with the father figure was related to a lower level of domination during conflict resolution. Yet in combination the independent variables were not significant predictors of Dominating.

In regression 2, neither Closeness with the father figure nor with the mother figure alone was a significant predictor of Avoidance. In combination, they contributed to 2.4% of the variance. Closeness with mother and father figures alone did not yield a significant Beta on Integrating (regression 6) or Relationship Satisfaction (regression 8), but in combination they accounted for 2.3% and 2.9% of the variance respectively. Closeness to either/both parents did not contribute significantly to the Avoiding Conflict (regression 3), Compromising (regression 4), or Obliging (regression 7) scores. Thus, early attachment experiences do have significant, if small, effects on relationship satisfaction and some conflict resolution behaviors, as predicted.

Early Separation. One hundred twelve participants (25.5%) experienced a separation from either one or both parents before they reached 18. Eighty-three reported experiencing separation from the father figure, 18 reported separation from the mother figure, and 10 reported from both parental figures. To examine whether early separation had an impact on adult attachment and relationship adjustment, a MANOVA was conducted with separation from a parental figure as the independent variable and the attachment dimensions and conflict resolution behaviors as the dependent variables. Separation from parental figures was dummy coded (0=no separation, 1=separation). With the use of Wilks' criterion, the combined dependent variables were significantly affected by separation from parent figures, $F(7, 436)=2.32, p<.05$. Univariate tests ($p<.006$) indicate that separation from parental figures had a significant effect on the
Anxiety dimension (Table 8). Participants who experienced separation with parental figures scored higher on the Anxiety dimension.

Age Effects

Although there is a wide age range in the sample (18-55), the majority of the participants (90.3%, 190 males, 217 females) were under age 25. To test if age had a significant impact on the results, the same analyses performed when testing Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 were repeated on participants who were 25 or younger. The results in the younger sample were no different from those in the total sample of 448 subjects.

Relationship Status Effects

As mentioned earlier, relationship status was collapsed into three categories. The first category included participants who were married or remarried, the second in current serious relationships, and the third in previous relationships. A MANOVA was conducted with the three relationship categories at the independent variable and the conflict resolution behaviors and relationship satisfaction as the dependent variables. With the use of Wilks' criterion, the combined dependent variables were significantly affected by the relationship status, $F(16, 866)=9.86, p<.01$. Univariate tests indicated that relationship status significantly affects the two attachment dimensions, relationship satisfaction, and the conflict resolution behavior of Integrating (Table 9). A Tukey post hoc analysis indicated no differences any of the seven dependent variables between those participants who were married/remarried and those in a current relationship. These groups, however, both differed from those reporting on a previous relationship.
Specifically, married/remarried participants and participants in a current relationship reported significantly lower mean scores (p<.001) on the Anxiety and Avoidance dimensions than those reporting on previous relationships and higher scores on Integrating. These results suggest that participants who were in a current serious romantic relationship, married or dating, were more secure in regard to their relationship and were more likely to be integrative in conflict resolution.

Categorical Attachment Styles

Distributions in the Entire Sample

Distribution of Four-category Attachment Style. Cluster analysis (k-means) was performed using the two attachment dimensions, Anxiety and Avoidance, to define the clusters. The solution was restricted to four clusters, and the result was consistent with the four-category model of Brennan et al., (1998): Secure (low on Anxiety and Avoidance), Fearful (high on Anxiety and Avoidance), Dismissing (low on Anxiety and high on Avoidance), and Preoccupied (high on Anxiety and low on Avoidance). The means for each cluster are shown in Table 10. Comparison of means with those in the Brennan et al. study was not possible since means were not reported for that study. The cluster analysis classified 164 (36.6%) into the Secure category, 69 (15.4%) into the Fearful category, 155 (34.6%) into the Preoccupied category, and 60 (13.4%) into the Dismissing category. This distribution of attachment style is quite different from the one Brennan et al. (1998) reported in their sample of 1,086 undergraduate students majoring in Psychology. In that sample, 30.4% were classified as Secure, 24.4% as Fearful, 24.4% as Preoccupied, and 20.8% as Dismissing. In the current study, a similar percentage of
participants were categorized into the secure style, however, the preoccupied style was over-represented and the dismissing style and the fearful style were under-represented. A chi-square comparing the two distributions was significant \( \chi^2(7) = 78.33, p < .001 \), indicating a significant difference in attachment distribution between the two studies.

**Distribution of Three-Category Attachment Style.** The Attachment Style Prototype (ASP, Hazan & Shaver, 1987) revealed a distribution of attachment style that is consistent with that in previous studies, 268 (59%) subjects fell into the secure category, 125 (27.5%) fell into the avoidant category, and 41 (9%) belonged to the anxious/ambivalent category. A cross-tabulation of attachment style categories assessed by the four-category and three-category measures was performed (Table 11). A chi-square test comparing the two assessments was significant \( \chi^2(6) = 146.19, p < .001 \), indicating a significant difference in distribution of the two measures. The closest match was with the Secure attachment style (145 in Secure category for both measures).

Distributions in Various Groups

**Four-Category.** Three previous studies suggested that the distribution of attachment style can be affected by characteristics of the population studied such as age, length of relationship, and relationship status (Fuller & Fincham, 1995, Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994; Senchak & Leonard, 1992). Specifically, insecure attachment styles were underrepresented in a sample consisting of participants in serious dating relationships, while secure attachment style was underrepresented in a sample consisting of participants who were married and in their early thirties. To test whether this was the case in the present sample, three chi square tests were conducted to test whether category
membership varies by age, length of relationship, and relationship status. Age categories were defined as <25 and ≥25 years, length of relationship categories were defined as <12 and ≥12 months in the present study. It should be noted that age range differed from those used in previous studies.

Results indicated that the distribution of attachment style was affected by relationship status but not by age and length of relationship (Table 12). Participants not in a current relationship were less likely to be in the Secure category. Compared to the distribution reported by Brennan et al. (1998) and to the overall distribution in the present study, Secure attachment style was under-represented among those who were not currently involved in a serious relationship. Conversely, the three insecure attachment styles were over-represented among participants who were currently not involved in a relationship. As noted earlier, the preoccupied attachment style was over-represented across all groups in comparison to the Brennan et al. study.

Three-Category. The frequencies of attachment styles from the Hazan and Shaver single-item measure (ASP) were compared, using chi square tests for different age, relationship length and relationship status groups. The frequencies are displayed in Table 13. Again, the distribution of attachment style was affected by relationship status but not by age and length of relationship. Compared to the distribution reported by Hazan and Shaver (1987) and others and with the current data, the percentage of Secure attachment style was higher among participants who were married or currently in serious relationships. The percentage of Secure was the lowest among those who were not involved in serious romantic relationships.
Overall, both the four-category and three-category attachment measures indicated that the distribution of attachment style did vary with relationship status. With both measures, the percentage of Secure attachment was higher among those who were in a current serious dating relationship, which is consistent with Senchak and Leonard's (1992) finding. Both measures also agreed that the distribution of secure attachment was higher among married participants, which contradicted Fuller and Fincham's (1995) finding. However, the mean age of married participants ($M=27.58$) was younger than that in the other study (early thirties), making it likely they had been married for less time.

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 stated that there would be gender differences in the distribution of insecure attachment styles. To test the hypothesis, a chi square test was performed using the four attachment styles and gender. Chi square was not significant [$\chi^2 (3)=3.20$, $p=.36$], indicating no gender differences in attachment styles. Hypothesis 4 was not supported.

Hypothesis 5

The final hypothesis predicted that males and females with insecure attachment styles would engage in different conflict resolution behaviors. That is, there would be an interaction between gender and attachment styles in a MANOVA. To test this hypothesis, a MANOVA was conducted with gender and attachment style as the independent variables and the conflict resolution behaviors as the dependent variables.
As expected, there was a significant overall effect of gender with the use of Wilks' criterion, $F(5, 436)=5.01, p<.01$, with significant ANOVA results for Avoiding Conflict (males lower) and Integrating (females higher) ($p<.006$). There was also a significant overall effect of attachment style with significant differences among attachment styles for all five dependent variables. However, the effect of the interaction between attachment style and gender was not significant [Wilks' criterion, $F(15, 1204)=1.33, p=.175$], therefore, the ANOVA results were not examined. Hypothesis 5 was not supported.
Table 1: Demographic Characteristics

<table>
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<th>Variable</th>
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<th>SD</th>
<th>Range</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age (n=435)</td>
<td>21.91</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>18-55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Relationships (n=445)</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>1-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Relationship (n=436)</td>
<td>24.27 (mo.)</td>
<td>36.23</td>
<td>1-348</td>
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<td>Gender (n=448)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>53.6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific Islander</td>
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<td>1.1</td>
<td></td>
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<td>3.3</td>
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<td>Hispanic American</td>
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<td>European American</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>Relationship Status (n=445)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Remarried</td>
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<tr>
<td>Divorced &amp; in a relationship currently</td>
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<td>1.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Single &amp; live together</td>
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<tr>
<td>Single &amp; in a serious relationship</td>
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<td>43.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Divorced &amp; in a relationship previously</td>
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<td>0.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Divorced &amp; not in a relationship since</td>
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<td>0.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Single &amp; have been in relationship previously</td>
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<td>Married or remarried</td>
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<tr>
<td>In a relationship currently</td>
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<tr>
<td>In a relationship previously</td>
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Table 2: Pearson correlation between the demographic variables and the independent and dependent variables

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<th>CO</th>
<th>DO</th>
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<td>-0.060</td>
<td>-0.024</td>
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<td>(n=435)</td>
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<td>-0.018</td>
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Table 2 Continued

<table>
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<th>OB</th>
<th>RAS</th>
<th>MIPPA</th>
<th>FIPPA</th>
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<td>-0.067</td>
<td>-0.003</td>
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<td>-0.205**</td>
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<td>(n=433)</td>
<td>(n=427)</td>
<td>(n=422)</td>
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<td>0.033</td>
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<td>(n=436)</td>
<td>(n=434)</td>
<td>(n=428)</td>
<td>(n=423)</td>
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Two-tailed significance: *p<0.01; **p<0.001

Note: Length=Length of the Relationship being Reported, AC=Avoiding Conflict, CO=Compromising, DO=Dominating, IN=Integrating, OB=Obliing, RAS=Relationship Satisfaction, MIPPA=Closeness with Mother Figure, FIPPA=Closeness with Father Figure.
Table 3: Means and Standard Deviations of Continuous Variables

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<th>( n )</th>
<th>( M )</th>
<th>( SD )</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
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<td>7.00</td>
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Table 4: Standard Multiple Regression (n=448)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regression</th>
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<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DV: Relationship Satisfaction</td>
<td>-0.213</td>
<td>-5.970</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>198.056</td>
<td>0.472**</td>
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<tr>
<td>IV: Anxiety Avoidance</td>
<td>-0.603</td>
<td>-16.906</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regression 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>DV: Avoiding Conflict</td>
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<td>1.845</td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>31.537</td>
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<td>IV: Anxiety Avoidance</td>
<td>0.322</td>
<td>7.021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regression 3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>DV: Compromising</td>
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<td>2.038</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>36.094</td>
<td>0.140**</td>
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<td>IV: Anxiety Avoidance</td>
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<td>DV: Dominating</td>
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<td>Regression 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>DV: Integrating</td>
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<td>0.016</td>
<td>130.171</td>
<td>0.369**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regression 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>DV: Obliging</td>
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Note: *p < 0.01, **p < 0.001
Table 5: Tests of Gender on Conflict Resolution Behaviors and Relationship Satisfaction

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<th>DV</th>
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<th>p</th>
<th>df</th>
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<tr>
<td>Avoiding Conflict</td>
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<tr>
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Table 6: Hierarchical Multiple Regression with Gender Entered First Followed by the Attachment Dimensions

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<th>p</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>R²</th>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
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Table 6 Continued

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<th>p</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>R²</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>DV: Obliging</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Gender</td>
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<td>30.927</td>
<td>0.173**</td>
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<td>-8.972</td>
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Note: *p<0.01, **p<0.001; 0=male, 1=female
Table 7: Multiple Regression with Closeness with Parents as IVs (n=432)

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<td>0.044**</td>
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<td>Regression 3</td>
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<td>DV: Dominating</td>
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<td>-2.773</td>
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<td>0.005</td>
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<td>Regression 6</td>
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<td>DV: Integrating</td>
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### Table 7 Continued

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<td>DV:</td>
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<td>1.495</td>
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<td>IV: Closeness with Father</td>
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<td>Closeness with Mother</td>
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Table 8: Effect of Separation from Parents on Attachment Dimensions and Conflict Resolution Behaviors

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>7.73</td>
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<td>1,442</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avoidance</td>
<td>2.95</td>
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<td>1,442</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avoiding Conflict</td>
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<td>0.801</td>
<td>1,442</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compromising</td>
<td>0.07</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dominating</td>
<td>1.23</td>
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<td>Integrating</td>
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Table 9: Effect of Relationship Status on Attachment Dimensions, Conflict Resolution Behaviors, and Relationship Satisfaction

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<tr>
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<td>Avoidance</td>
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<td>Avoiding Conflict</td>
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<td>Dominating</td>
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<td>Integrating</td>
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<td>Obliging</td>
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<td>Relationship Satisfaction</td>
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Table 10: Mean MIMARA Scores for Four Clusters

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 (Dismissing)</td>
<td>2 (Fearful)</td>
<td>3 (Preoccupied)</td>
<td>4 (Secure)</td>
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<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>164</td>
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<td>Anxiety</td>
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<td>3.76</td>
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<td>1.61</td>
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<td>Four-Category</td>
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<td>--------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>Avoidant</td>
<td>Anxious/Ambivalent</td>
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<td>Preoccupied</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>147</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>162</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>433</td>
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Table 12: Four-Category Attachment Styles Distribution by Age, Length of Relationship, and Relationship Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dismissing</th>
<th>Fearful</th>
<th>Preoccupied</th>
<th>Secure</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>p</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age &lt;25</td>
<td>54 (14%)</td>
<td>69 (15%)</td>
<td>133 (35%)</td>
<td>136 (36%)</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>.52</td>
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<tr>
<td>≥25</td>
<td>6 (11%)</td>
<td>10 (18%)</td>
<td>15 (27%)</td>
<td>24 (44%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Length &lt;12 mo.</td>
<td>25 (18%)</td>
<td>26 (18%)</td>
<td>46 (32%)</td>
<td>46 (32%)</td>
<td>5.70</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥ 12 mo.</td>
<td>33 (11%)</td>
<td>40 (14%)</td>
<td>107 (37%)</td>
<td>113 (39%)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status married</td>
<td>3 (6%)</td>
<td>2 (4%)</td>
<td>15 (29%)</td>
<td>31 (61%)</td>
<td>89.80</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>current</td>
<td>23 (10%)</td>
<td>16 (7%)</td>
<td>80 (35%)</td>
<td>111 (48%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>previous</td>
<td>34 (21%)</td>
<td>49 (30%)</td>
<td>59 (36%)</td>
<td>22 (13%)</td>
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Table 13: Three-Category Attachment Styles Distribution by Age, Length of Relationship, and Relationship Status

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<th>Avoidant</th>
<th>Anxious/Ambivalent</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>p</th>
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</thead>
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<td><strong>Age &lt;25 ≥25</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Age &lt;25</td>
<td>220 (60%)</td>
<td>111 (30%)</td>
<td>38 (10%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age ≥25</td>
<td>41 (76%)</td>
<td>10 (19%)</td>
<td>3 (6%)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Length &lt;12 mo. ≥12 mo.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Length &lt;12 mo.</td>
<td>86 (61%)</td>
<td>42 (30%)</td>
<td>12 (9%)</td>
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<td>0.86</td>
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<td>Length ≥12 mo.</td>
<td>176 (63%)</td>
<td>78 (28%)</td>
<td>27 (10%)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Status married current previous</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Status married</td>
<td>41 (82%)</td>
<td>8 (16%)</td>
<td>1 (2%)</td>
<td>57.43</td>
<td>0.000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Status current</td>
<td>163 (73%)</td>
<td>51 (23%)</td>
<td>9 (4%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Status previous</td>
<td>64 (41%)</td>
<td>63 (40%)</td>
<td>30 (19%)</td>
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CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION

Attachment Dimensions and Conflict Resolution

The primary focus of the study was to examine the association between adult attachment style and conflict resolution behaviors. It was predicted that lower levels of Anxiety and Avoidance would be predictive of positive conflict resolution behaviors and higher levels of Anxiety and Avoidance would be predictive of negative conflict resolution behaviors. This hypothesis was largely confirmed. Anxiety and Avoidance each predicted at least some of the conflict resolution behaviors assessed. Those who scored lower on Anxiety were less likely to be dominating and obliging in conflict resolution, however, Avoidance was a stronger predictor of conflict resolution behaviors. Those who scored lower on Avoidance in terms of attachment were less likely to avoid disagreements, less likely to be dominant during the conflict resolution process, and were more likely to be compromising, integrative, and obliging. Those who scored higher on Avoidance, on the other hand, were less likely to engage in behaviors that satisfy self and others. From these scores, it would be predicted that they would choose not to verbalize their disagreements, and when a disagreement did occur, they would try to avoid a discussion about the issue. Once engaged in a disagreement, they would be more likely to be dominant and less likely to be obliging, compromising, and integrative in their conflict resolution attempts.

These associations between attachment styles and conflict resolution behaviors are consistent with previous research findings (Levy & Davis, 1988; Pistole, 1989;
Scharfe & Bartholomew, 1995) that individuals classified as Secure are more likely to be active problem solvers, integrative, and compromising, and individuals classified as insecure are more likely to engage in the opposite behaviors. These findings are also consistent with the theoretical speculation suggested by the author. Individuals with a Secure attachment have faith in self-worth and others' availability and accessibility. As a result, they tend to communicate more openly with their partners. Individuals with an insecure attachment have less confidence in self-worth and others' availability and accessibility. They tend to be avoidant of conflict, and to be dominant or clinging. These behaviors serve as means of self-protection (West & Sheldon-Keller, 1994).

The avoiding conflict resolution behaviors displayed by those who scored high on Avoidance are parallel to those displayed by Avoidant babies in the Strange Situation (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Avoidant babies do not usually seek support and closeness from their parental figures during reunion episodes. Instead, they direct their attention to toys. Going through many disappointing experiences of not being comforted and validated after giving signals for rescue, they simply cannot tolerate another painful disappointment. Turning away from the attachment figure when distressed has become the way to handle the fear of losing connection with the attachment figure.

In an adult conflict resolution situation, the fear is translated into the avoidance of discussion of the stressful issue, if possible. Constructive conflict resolution requires an open discussion of the issue and taking the risk of being vulnerable. Informed by the negative model of others, these adults are not able to expose their positions and seek support from their partners. Pulling away from intimate and important interaction such as
conflict resolution becomes a shield against getting hurt. Gradually, the avoiding behavior has become more automatic and unconscious.

By the same token, conflict resolution behaviors of compromising and integrating require a higher level interaction that involves self-disclosure, understanding of the other, and willingness to consider different opinions as valid. In other words, those positive conflict resolution behaviors demand a person to put aside fear, anxiety, and defensiveness, and to be comfortable with self-exposure and reasonable reliance on the other. Adults with avoidant characteristics are unable to enter into conflict resolution without fear of rejection. This defensiveness pushes them to flee from constructive interactions that could strengthen their relationships.

The level of Avoidance was negatively related to obliging, a behavior that reflects a tendency for lower concern for satisfying the self. Further reflection shows that this association is consistent with the internal working model of being avoidant. Individuals with avoidant characteristics are hesitant to enter into any deep and long interactions with emotionally important figures in their lives. To engage in other-pleasing behaviors may raise the expectation of being rewarded for love and care, which to them means asking for inevitable pain of disappointment. Those who scored lower on Avoidance were more likely to engage in obliging behavior, either because they held a more positive model of others or as a way of controlling their anxiety.

A higher score on Anxiety is associated with a more negative model of self, seeing oneself as unworthy. It is not surprising that individuals with high Anxiety tend to sacrifice the concern for self to satisfy the concern of others (obliging). Even though both Anxiety and Avoidance predicted the conflict resolution behavior of dominating, the
underlying mechanisms may not be the same. Individuals with avoidant characteristics may use dominance as a way to avoid deeper and more intimate interactions so as to protect themselves from the potential for emotional pain. Individuals with an anxious attachment style, on the other hand, may use dominance as an attempt to ensure their partners' availability. This speculation was not empirically confirmed in this study. A conflict resolution measure that is more sensitive to various styles of dominance, however, might be able to detect the subtle differences empirically.

Avoidance predicted all five conflict resolution behaviors whereas Anxiety only predicted only two. The results from this study indicated that, in the context of conflict resolution, Avoidance is a more important factor than Anxiety. In other words, individuals who are avoidant of intimacy, uncomfortable with closeness, and are unreasonably self-reliant are at a greater disadvantage in generating win-win solutions. A potential explanation for the discrepancy in the ability of prediction of the two attachment dimensions may lie in their characteristics. The main tendency for an avoidant person is to withdraw and for an anxious person is to pursue. Although attempts to engage in conflict resolution are considered positive (Jacobson & Addis, 1993), the pursuit of an anxious person is different. The goal of the pursuit is not for conflict resolution, but for a temporary relief from anxiety. However, the pursuit might result in real conflict resolution engagement and unexpectedly become a positive contribution to conflict resolution. Withdrawal, on the other hand, kills any possibility for conflict resolution. Anxious individuals are occasionally rewarded with satisfactory conflict resolution, but very avoidant individuals hardly ever are.
Attachment Style and Relationship Satisfaction

It was predicted that higher levels of Anxiety and Avoidance would be related to lower relationship satisfaction. The results from this study confirmed this association. One reason for this association is that conflict resolution behaviors that are related to low levels of Anxiety and Avoidance, such as dominating, contribute negatively to relationship satisfaction (Christensen & Pasch, 1993).

Further reflection on the association leads back to attachment dynamics. Although partners with avoidant and anxious characteristics display their internal working models in different manners, they both constantly struggle with the fear of losing their partners' love. It is this force that pushes them to be overly avoidant or anxious toward their relationships. Partners with an avoidant attachment style may be successful in every attempt to avoid working on disagreement, using the strategy of withdrawal, refusing to compromise or be obliging, and refusing to see the other's side (not integrating) when pursued for engagement. Hard feelings originating from unresolved issues, as well as the lack of essential problem-solving communication, however, will pile up and lead to lower relationship satisfaction. Partners with an anxious attachment style may suffer from lower confidence in their ability to keep romantic relationships. When anxiety is activated in conflict resolution situations, it interferes with the process of this important interaction. For both groups, the feeling of insecurity leads to the engagement in conflict resolution behaviors that eventually reduce the satisfaction with the relationship.
Gender, Conflict Resolution Behavior, and Attachment Style

Gender differences were found in Avoiding Conflict and Integrating, with females being less avoidant of conflict and more integrative in conflict resolution. The result is consistent with gender socialization males and females have received (Collins & Read, 1990). Society has defined femininity as being soft, weak, considerate, and expects females to be relationship problem-fixers. To many females, it is their duty to approach their male partners for conflict resolution. It is also their duty to be considerate of their partners' wishes and to be integrative. In addition, as a less powerful party of the two, females may have no choice but to accommodate. While being integrative is a positive quality in relationship conflict resolution, the fact that females were more concerned with being integrative could handicap relationships and reduce relationship satisfaction. The observation that males in this sample in general are more likely to pull away from disagreements and are less willing to participate in conflict resolution makes it easy to see that the combination of integrating females and avoiding males could soon lead to the pursue-distance interaction pattern that is predictive of relationship dissolution (Gottman, 1991).

Even though there were statistically significant differences in two of the five conflict resolution styles, the impact of gender is far less powerful than that of attachment style. A significant effect of gender was found for Avoiding Conflict and Integrating, but it was minimal, accounting for only 1% to 4% of the variance. In contrast, the two dimensions of attachment style accounted for 10% to 15% of the variance. This indicates that attachment style is more powerful than gender in shaping conflict resolution patterns.
It was predicted that there would be gender differences in the distribution of the four-category attachment style measure. Specifically, it was expected that males would be more Dismissing and females more Fearful and Anxious/Ambivalent. No gender differences, however, were found with the four-category measure. The majority of previous studies (e.g., Brennan & Shaver, 1995; Carnelley & Janoff-Bulman, 1992; Hazan & Shaver, 1987) failed to find gender differences, and the result from this study is consistent with this general consensus. An observational study using the Adult Attachment Interview measure to classify clinical couples also reached the same conclusion (Shi & Wampler, 1997). In addition, no gender differences were found in this study using the Hazan and Shaver single-item attachment measure. These results suggest that going through similar life experiences in terms of physical and emotional availability of attachment figures, men and women have an equal opportunity to develop secure or insecure attachment styles. When it comes to attachment style, it seems the real life experience is one of the important things to consider when examining the formation of attachment style.

**Early Attachment Experience, Current Attachment Style, and Conflict Resolution Behavior**

Based on attachment theory, both mother and father figures should have an impact on children's formation of attachment style, although the degree of impact can be different with different attachment figures. Previous studies found that relationships with both parents are related or predictive of later adult attachment style (e.g., Collins & Read, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987) or that only the relationship with mother is predictive (Carnelley & Janoff-Bulman, 1992). Unlike what was predicted and contrary to the
previous findings, early attachment experiences with parental figures were neither strong predictors of current attachment style nor of conflict resolution behaviors. In addition, only less closeness with father was found to be an independent predictor of greater anxiety and more of the behavior of Dominating, but these scores contributed very little to the variance. Closeness with both parents predicted lower Avoidance and Anxiety in attachment and more Integrating behaviors; however, the effects were also weak. In general, participants reported high levels of closeness with mother and father figures. Perhaps the unexpected weak associations were due in part to the lack of variability in this sample, making it difficult to detect the differences it could make on attachment dimensions and conflict resolution behaviors. Closeness with father figures did show more variation than Closeness with mother figures. Results from non-college samples might yield greater variability in relationship with parents.

Nevertheless, the results are encouraging in terms of the expansion of the focus of attachment history to both mother and father figures. It was Closeness with father, not Closeness with mother that was a unitary predictor in this study. Attachment theory has traditionally focused on the impact of mothers on children's formation of attachment styles. The father's role in the attachment process has been largely ignored or assumed to be of little importance. One justification behind this over-focus on mothers is that mothers spend much more time than fathers interacting with their children; therefore, they are generally considered as having a greater impact on their children. Another reason is from the long-existing mother-blame trend in psychotherapy field (West & Shelton-Keller, 1994): if there are attachment problems, the fault lies with the mother. Yet the results in this study clearly show that, although small, the relationship with the
father has an impact on the development of adult attachment and relationship functioning. Given this sample of relatively well-functioning college students, the impact of the father on attachment may be highlighted.

Separation from parental figures before 18 was related to increases in the Anxiety scores. This association is in line with what attachment theory speculates. Separation is one form of rejection that could lead to the fear of abandonment (Feeney & Noller, 1990). Because of the small proportion of participants who experienced separation from parental figures, it could not be determined whether separations from mother or father figures predicted differentially. Also, since the effect of separation was not a central question in this study, types of separation (e.g., death, divorce) were not solicited but this information would be important to gather in future research.

**Distribution of Attachment Style**

The cluster analysis based on the two attachment dimensions was successful in defining four of attachment styles in the entire sample. When compared to the distribution Brennan et al. (1998) reported in their sample, one distinctive difference in the present sample was the high percentage of participants with a Preoccupied attachment style. Not only was the percentage of Preoccupied attachment style in the entire sample higher than the 20.8% reported by Brennan, et al. (1998), it was almost identical to that of the Secure style. In the entire sample, the distribution of attachment styles measured by the Hazan and Shaver single-item attachment measure was consistent with that reported in previous studies. This suggests that the current sample was not atypical.
There are three potential explanations for the high percentage of the Preoccupied style (four-category) in this sample. First, in the Brennan et al. sample, less than half of the participants described themselves as seriously involved in a relationship at the time of testing. The rest were dating casually or not at all. In the current study, only those who were currently or had been in a serious romantic relationship were included. The concern for losing the attachment relationship may become more real and serious, which could contribute to the higher percentage of those in this sample endorsing the items indicating anxiety. Second, the Brennan et al. sample consisted exclusively of students majoring in psychology, whereas the current sample included students from various majors. Students majoring in Psychology may have more knowledge of human emotion and behavior. When responding to the attachment questionnaire, they may, for example, under-report behaviors they perceive as negative. Since anxious behavior is not as subtle as avoidant behavior and is relatively easy to recognize, students majoring psychology may under-report anxiety and anxious behaviors, resulting in a lower percentage of Preoccupied style in that sample. Finally, the Brennan study asked their participants about how they experienced romantic relationships in general; the current study asked the participants about their experience in a specific relationship. The focus on general experiences in relationships could moderate some feelings and perceptions and lead to a lower percentage of a certain style. Thus, the higher than expected percentage of those categorized as Preoccupied in this sample may be due to relationship status, social desirability factors, and the nature of the relationship being reported.

The attachment distributions varied by relationship status, with the proportion of the Secure attachment style the highest among married participants (61%) followed by
those who were in a serious relationship at the time (48%), and lowest among those who were not in a serious relationship (13%). It is reasonable to speculate that attachment style and relationship reinforce each other. The variation of the distribution lends support to this speculation—it could be that people with the Secure attachment are better able to maintain their relationships and have a better chance to move into marriage. On the other hand, nurturing marital relationships may create an environment for the development and maintenance of a secure attachment style. The same may be true for those who were not in a relationship. A person who has an insecure attachment style is less able to maintain a relationship successfully, or the ending of a serious relationship contributes to felt insecurity. Perhaps, both explanations are true. Finally, after experiencing the failure of the relationship, a person might develop a negative perception toward the relationship with negatively colored perceptions of self and the relationship.

Although the attachment distribution was highly consistent with previous ones under the ASP, the distribution did change with relationship status. The percentage of the Secure attachment style was higher among those who married and in a current relationship. In fact, the percentage of participants categorized as Secure by the ASP was higher than that measured by the four-category measure in any of the three relationship categories. This suggests that the ASP is less sensitive to insecure attachment styles, but instead is more likely to categorize people into the Secure attachment style. Also, the distribution of the Anxious/Ambivalent style (equivalent to the Preoccupied style in the Brennan et al. [1998] measure) remained low in all sub-groups, indicating a discrepancy in the ability of the ASP to identify Preoccupied or Anxious/Ambivalent participants between the two measures.
Limitations

There are two major limitations of the current study. First, the sole reliance on self-report measures may result in some inaccuracy of report of attachment style and conflict resolution behavior due to social desirability. Because insecure attachment involves defensiveness, participants with insecure attachment styles may under-report their sense of insecurity. The same concern exists for the assessment of conflict resolution behavior. In addition, although the self-report adult attachment measure seems to be an effective assessment of attachment style, studies have shown that the three-category self-report and observational (AAI) measures of adult attachment do not seem to measure the same attachment elements (Shi & Wampler, 1997). More and better understanding of the association between adult attachment style and conflict resolution behavior could be achieved by including both self-report and observational methods.

The other limitation is with the limited generalizability of the study. The current sample mainly consists of young, white, unmarried college students from intact families. The results from this study showed that relationship status did affect the distribution of attachment styles. Because of a restricted age distribution, the effects of age and/or length of relationship could not be established in the present study. Studies need to be conducted with various populations to shed light on this issue. In addition, because of the small percentage of minorities in this sample, the study was not able to assess whether culture could affect attachment style and conflict resolution behaviors.
Clinical Implications

Because of the importance of adult attachment style and early attachment experiences to relationship satisfaction and conflict resolution behaviors, it may be helpful for marriage therapists to address attachment issues and highlight how they are displayed in romantic relationships. Early attachment experiences with parental figures need to be explored to determine whether they are contributing to current levels of anxiety and avoidance. The exploration could be conducted by using questions from the AAI or by inviting clients tell stories of salient experiences with parental figures.

In the present study, the two attachment dimensions contributed 47% of the variance in relationship satisfaction; therefore, the characteristics of Anxiety and Avoidance displayed in the couple relationship deserve considerable attention. The therapist can work on changing negative models of the self and others by helping the couple provide a secure base for each other. One source of information about attachment is in the couple's way of handling conflict. Teaching and practicing more effective conflict resolution tactics may assist in building a secure base for each member of the dyad. For example, the therapist can ask the spouse of an avoidant partner to respond in a way that challenges the existing negative model. The therapist needs to pay special attention to the more subtle characteristics of avoidant behaviors, and highlight their dynamics and effects when necessary.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION
Demographic Information

Gender (Circle one): Male Female
Age _______

What is your racial or ethnic origin? (Circle number):
1. American Indian or Alaska Native
2. Asian or Pacific Islander
3. African-American
4. Hispanic-American
5. European-American (Anglo)
6. Other (Please identify) __________________________

How many serious romantic relationships have you had? (Please specify) ______

What is your current relationship status? (Please circle)

1. You have never been in a serious romantic relationship
   If your answer to this question is positive, stop and return the questionnaire to your instructor.

2. You are in a serious romantic relationship (Choose one, please circle)
   a. You are married How long? ______
   b. You are remarried How long? ______
   c. You are divorced and in a serious dating relationship
      How long have you been divorced? ______
      How long have you been in this relationship? ______
   d. You are single and living together How long? ______
   e. You are single and in a serious dating relationship How long? ______

   Your choice will be the romantic relationship you focus on when answering the next three questionnaires, the MIMARA, the ROCI-II, and the RAS.

3. You are not currently in a serious romantic relationship (Choose one, please circle)
   f. You are divorced and were in a serious romantic relationship previously.
      How long have you been divorced? ______
      How long were you in this relationship? ______
   g. You are divorced and have not been in a serious romantic relationship since.
   h. You are not currently in a serious romantic relationship but you have been.
      How long was the relationship? ______

   Your choice will be the romantic relationship you focus on when answering the next three questionnaires, the MIMARA, the ROCI-II, and the RAS.
APPENDIX B

MIMARA
MIMARA

The following statements concern how you feel in the romantic relationship you have just chosen. Please respond to each statement by indicating how much you agree or disagree with it.

1. I prefer not to show my romantic partner how I feel deep down.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. I worry about being abandoned.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. I am very comfortable being close to my romantic partner.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. I worry a lot about my relationship.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. Just when my romantic partner starts to get close to me I find myself pulling away.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. I worry that my romantic partner won't care about me as much as I care about him/her.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. I get uncomfortable when my romantic partner wants to be very close.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8. I worry a fair amount about losing my romantic partner.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

9. I don't feel comfortable opening up to my romantic partner.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10. I often wish that my romantic partner's feelings for me were not as strong as my feelings for him/her.
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7

11. I want to get close to my romantic partner, but I keep pulling back.
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. I often want to merge completely with my romantic partner, and this sometimes scares him/her away. 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

13. I am nervous when my romantic partner gets too close to me. 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

15. I feel comfortable sharing my private thoughts and feelings with my romantic partner. 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

16. My desire to be very close sometimes scares people away. 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

17. I try to avoid getting too close to my romantic partner. 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

18. I need a lot of reassurance that I am loved by my romantic partner. 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

19. I find it relatively easy to get close to my romantic partner. 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

20. Sometimes I feel that I force my romantic partner to show more feeling, more commitment. 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

21. I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on my romantic partner. 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

22. I do not often worry about being abandoned. 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

23. I prefer not to be too close to my romantic partner. 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

24. If I can’t get my romantic partner to show interest in me, I get upset or angry. 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

25. I tell my romantic partner just about everything. 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

26. I find that my romantic partner doesn’t want to get as close as I would like. 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
27. I usually discuss my problems and concerns with my romantic partner.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

28. When I'm not involved in a relationship, I feel somewhat anxious and insecure.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

29. I feel comfortable depending on my romantic partner.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

30. I get frustrated when my romantic partner is not around as much as I would like.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

31. I don't mind asking my romantic partner for comfort, advice, or help.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

32. I get frustrated if my romantic partner is not available when I need him/her.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

33. It helps to turn to my romantic partner in times of need.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

34. When my romantic partner disapproves of me, I feel really bad about myself.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

35. I turn to my romantic partner for many things, including comfort and reassurance.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

36. I resent it when my romantic partner spends time away from me.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Nice job! The next one is ROCI-II. Please remember that you will focus on the same relationship. Thank you!
APPENDIX C

ROCI-II
ROCI-II

The following statements concern how you deal with disagreements in the romantic relationship you have just chosen. Please respond to each statement by indicating how much you agree or disagree with:

1=Disagree Strongly
4=Neutral/Mixed
7=Agree Strongly

01. I try to investigate an issue with my partner to find a solution acceptable to us.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

02. I generally try to satisfy the needs of my partner.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

03. I attempt to avoid being “put on the spot” and try to keep my conflict with my partner to myself.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

04. I try to integrate my ideas with those of my partner’s to come up with a decision jointly.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

05. I give some to get some.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

06. I try to work with my partner to find solutions to a problem which satisfy our expectations.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

07. I usually avoid open discussion of my differences with my partner.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

08. I usually hold on to my solution to a problem.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

09. I try to find a middle course to resolve an impasse.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10. I use my influence to get my idea accepted.
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7

11. I use my authority to make a decision in my favor.
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. I usually accommodate the wishes of my partner.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

13. I give in to the wishes of my partner.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

15. I exchange accurate information with my partner to solve a problem together.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

16. I sometimes help my partner to make a decision in his/her favor.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

17. I usually allow concessions to my partner.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

18. I argue my case with my partner to show the merits of my position.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

19. I try to play down our differences to reach a compromise.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

20. I usually propose a middle ground for breaking deadlocks.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

21. I negotiate with my partner so that a compromise can be reached.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

22. I try to stay away from disagreement with my partner.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

23. I avoid an encounter with my partner.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

24. I use my expertise to make a decision in my favor.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

25. I often go along with the suggestions of my partner.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

26. I use “give and take” so that a compromise can be made.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
27. I am generally firm in pursing my side of the issue.

28. I try to bring all our concerns out in the open so that the issues can be resolved in the best possible way.

29. I collaborate with my partner to come up with decisions acceptable to us.

30. I try to satisfy the expectations of my partner.

31. I sometimes use my power to win a competitive situation.

32. I try to keep my disagreement with my partner to myself in order to avoid hard feelings.

33. I try to avoid unpleasant exchanges with my partner.

34. I generally avoid an argument with my partner.

35. I try to work with my partner for a proper understanding of a problem.

Hello, the next questionnaire, the RAS is a short one. Remember, you will focus on the same relationship. Thank you!
APPENDIX D

RAS

116
RAS

Please circle the number for each item that best answers that item for you. Please focus on the romantic relationship you have just chosen.

1. How well does your partner meet your needs?
   1
   2
   3
   4
   5
   Poorly
   Average
   Extremely well

2. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?
   1
   2
   3
   4
   5
   Unsatisfied
   Average
   Extremely satisfied

3. How good is your relationship compared to most?
   1
   2
   3
   4
   5
   Poor
   Average
   Excellent

4. How often do you wish you hadn’t gotten into this relationship?
   1
   2
   3
   4
   5
   Never
   Average
   Very often

5. To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations?
   1
   2
   3
   4
   5
   Hardly at all
   Average
   Completely

6. How much do you love your partner?
   1
   2
   3
   4
   5
   Not much
   Average
   Very much

7. How many problems are there in your relationship?
   1
   2
   3
   4
   5
   Very few
   Average
   Very much

The next one is even shorter!
APPENDIX E

ASP
ASP

Which of the following best describes your feelings? Please circle one of the following paragraphs.

1. I find it relatively easy to get close to others and am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don’t often worry about being abandoned or about someone getting too close to me.

2. I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others; I find it difficult to trust them completely, difficult to allow myself to depend on them. I am nervous when anyone gets too close, and often, love partners want me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being.

3. I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I often worry that my partner doesn’t really love me or won’t to stay with me. I want to merge completely with another person, and this desire sometimes scares people away.

There is only one questionnaire left!
APPENDIX F

IPPA
Please answer the following questions before moving to the last questionnaire, IPPA. Thank you!

Who performed the Mother and Father roles when you were growing up? (Please circle)
1. Biological mother
2. Biological father
3. Stepmother
4. Stepfather
5. Grandmother
6. Grandfather
7. Foster mother
8. Foster Father
9. Other (Please identify)

Who do you consider as your primary mother and father figures? (Please circle)
1. Biological mother
2. Biological father
3. Stepmother
4. Stepfather
5. Grandmother
6. Grandfather
7. Foster mother
8. Foster Father
9. Other (Please identify)

Did you experience significant separation from your primary mother and father figures (not able to see him/her for a extended period of time) when you were growing up? (Please circle)
Yes Mother figure Father figure
No
IPPA

Please focus on your primary mother and father figures when answering the IPPA. Please read each statement and indicate which one item tells how true the statement is for you before you reached 18:

1=Almost always or always true
2=Often true
3=Sometimes true
4=Seldom True
5=Almost never or never true

01. My mother respected my feelings.
   1  2  3  4  5

02. I felt my mother did a good job as my mother.
   1  2  3  4  5

03. I wish I had a different mother.
   1  2  3  4  5

04. My mother accepted me as I was.
   1  2  3  4  5

05. I liked to get my mother's point of view on things I was concerned about.
   1  2  3  4  5

06. I felt it was no use letting my feelings show around my mother.
   1  2  3  4  5

07. My mother could tell when I was upset about something.
   1  2  3  4  5

08. Talking over my problems with my mother made me feel ashamed or foolish.
   1  2  3  4  5

09. My mother expected too much from me.
   1  2  3  4  5

10. I got upset easily around my mother.
    1  2  3  4  5

11. I got upset a lot more than my mother knew about.
    1  2  3  4  5
12. When we discussed things, my mother cared about my point of view.
1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

14. My mother had her own problems, so I didn’t bother her with mine.
1 2 3 4 5

15. My mother helped me to understand myself better.
1 2 3 4 5

16. I told my mother about my problems and troubles.
1 2 3 4 5

17. I felt angry with my mother.
1 2 3 4 5

18. I didn’t get much attention from my mother.
1 2 3 4 5

19. My mother helped me to talk about my difficulties.
1 2 3 4 5

20. My mother understood me.
1 2 3 4 5

21. When I was angry about something, my mother tried to be understanding.
1 2 3 4 5

22. I trusted my mother
1 2 3 4 5

23. My mother didn’t understand what I was going through in those days.
1 2 3 4 5

24. I could count on my mother when I needed to get something off my chest.
1 2 3 4 5

25. If my mother knew something was bothering me, she asked me about it.
1 2 3 4 5

01. My father respected my feelings.
1 2 3 4 5
02. I felt my father did a good job as my father.  
03. I wish I had a different father.  
04. My father accepted me as I was.  
05. I liked to get my father's point of view on things I was concerned about.  
06. I felt it was no use letting my feelings show around my father.  
07. My father could tell when I was upset about something.  
08. Talking over my problems with my father made me feel ashamed or foolish.  
09. My father expected too much from me.  
10. I got upset easily around my father.  
11. I got upset a lot more than my father knew about.  
12. When we discussed things, my father cared about my point of view.  
14. My father had his own problems, so I didn't bother him with mine.  
15. My father helped me to understand myself better.  
16. I told my father about my problems and troubles.
17. I felt angry with my father.

18. I didn’t get much attention from my father.

19. My father helped me to talk about my difficulties.

20. My father understood me.

21. When I was angry about something, my father tried to be understanding.

22. I trusted my father.

23. My father didn’t understand what I was going through in those days.

24. I could count on my father when I needed to get something off my chest.

25. If my father knew something was bothering me, he asked me about it.

Thank you and have a nice day!