

PROBLEM SOLVING BEHAVIORS, ATTACHMENT STYLES AND EMOTION REGULATION IN ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

Nurten TOSUN

nurten.tosun27@gmail.com

Ministry of National Education, Turkey

Dr. Ezgi ULU

ezgi.ul@neu.edu.tr

Near East University, Cyprus

Suzan ASLAN

suzan.bagci27@gmail.com

Ministry of National Education, Turkey

Dr. Erhan TUNÇ

erhantunc25@gmail.com

Gaziantep University, Turkey

INRODUCTION

Due to human nature, humans tend to relate to other people in various ways since their birth. One of these relationships is the romantic relationship. A romantic relationship is defined as a relationship in which individuals have positive feelings towards each other, have sensual and economic sharing, and cause sadness if it terminates (Collins, 2003). Romantic relationships, which individuals consider a pre-marital preparation period, also affect the emotional development of individuals. Individuals in a romantic relationship may encounter various problems in their daily lives. In these processes, the ability of the individual to cope with the problem in the relationship can affect the relationship dynamic. Romantic relationships usually begin during adolescence. In this period, the reflections of the intense feelings that people have for the opposite sex can be observed in their future relationships. The outcome of the ongoing relationship may also affect the mental health of the individual in the future. If the individual has had a good relationship in the past, this will pave the way for forming relationship patterns and dynamics in the coming years (Kaya, 2020). The nature of romantic relationships to be experienced in young adulthood may differ according to individuals' attachment styles that begin to form in childhood.

Bowlby coined the concept of attachment in 1958. This concept defines a type of relationship that the baby is born with, is felt for his mother, and is guided by physical symptoms, which also constitutes the starting point of social relations and plays a vital role in the individual's future relationships (Bowlby, 1958; cited in Yılmaz, 2007). For this reason, attachment styles formed in childhood and problem-solving behaviors in romantic relationships or the ability of individuals to reflect and regulate their emotions differ.

Emotions, which have an essential role in human life, arise from the interaction and relations of psychological, environmental, and biological factors. Emotions lead to behavioral, physiological, and cognitive reactions depending on the environment in which the person is in and other individuals in his life and help the person adapt to new situations. This function of emotions also defines one's ability to regulate emotion. *Emotion regulation skills* are defined as all behaviors related to how a person perceives and expresses the emotion they experience (Gross and Thompson, 2007). External regulators and external influences provide the emotion regulation process, such as the caregiver in the first years of life. Emotion regulation emerges from mutual interactions between individuals within a particular social culture (Friedlmeier and Trommsdorff, 1999). Temperament, neurophysiological and cognitive processes are also effective in the emotion regulation process. In addition, the attitude of the family members, the family environment, and the parents' personality traits are also seen as the components that affect the emotion regulation process.

According to Mikulincer and Shaver (2007), attachment theory draws the most impressive conceptual framework for understanding emotion regulation processes and skills. Bowlby's clinical observations and studies on emotions such as expression, disappointment, grief, anger, anxiety, and emotional intimacy brought the concept of emotion regulation to the literature (Bowlby, 1973; cited in Rugancı, 2008). Attachment relationship is an essential factor that affects the relationship of the individual with the other people with whom he/she interacts and enables the development of the emotion regulation capacity of the individual (Cassidy, 1994).

Goodall, Trejnowska, and Darling (2012) conducted a study that revealed a positive relationship between attachment styles and difficulties in emotion regulation. When the literature is examined, it is seen that studies are examining the relationship between attachment styles and emotion regulation (Rugancı, 2008; Karabacak and Demir, 2017). When the research results are examined, it is seen that the relationship between the ability of individuals to express and regulate their emotions according to their attachment style is emphasized.

Feeney and Noller (1990) stated a significant relationship between attachment styles and romantic relationship satisfaction and problem-solving behaviors in romantic relationships. In addition, according to individuals' attachment styles, problem-solving

behaviors change (Stackert & Bursik, 2003) are among the results reached on the subject.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RELATED RESEARCH

This section gives conceptual explanations, definitions, and information about the previous research in the literature related to the study.

1. Problem Solving and Dimensions

The problem is the conflict situation that a person who wishes to achieve his goals is exposed to when faced with obstacles. When faced with obstacles, it becomes difficult to reach the goal as a typical result. According to Aslan (2002), the problem is that an event that confronts the person includes a difficulty or danger that must be overcome. According to Senemoğlu (2005), it is the effort to reach various goals and the means sought to achieve them.

Problem-solving can be defined as the individual's discovery of new solutions by going beyond their previous practices and life experiences to cope with negativity or put it in order (Türkoğlu, 2014). While problem-solving is a process that covers cognitive abilities, it also includes affective and social skills. In this respect, it can be claimed that it is a complex process to understand. According to Korkut (2002), problem-solving is closely related to many factors such as the individual's psychological adjustment, self-confidence in himself and his personality, decision-making methods, self-esteem in his academic and social life, and the effectiveness of his communication skills. Considering all these, it is understood that problem solving is an action that requires a certain level of skill.

It is possible for an individual who is confronted with a problem to show unusual reactions from time to time. When such a process is experienced, it is necessary to make the best decision to eliminate the problem (Kalkan, 2010). Instead, the person may engage in some nonconstructive behavior, such as ignoring the problem, waiting for the problem to disappear or be resolved unusually, hoping that problems will time out, waiting for others to solve the problem, delaying making decisions about the problem, or shifting the responsibility to another person (Korkut, 2002). For this reason, problem-solving brings with it some processes.

Since problem-solving is a common but complex process (Aslan, 2002), it would be more practical and accurate to analyze the situation by dividing it into stages. When the relevant literature is searched, it has been seen that there is no single correct method that can be used in solving all problems. Many researchers have categorized the processes and stages related to solving a problem in different ways. Senemoğlu (2005), on the other hand, listed the generally accepted steps in the problem-solving process as follows:

- Understanding the problem

- Making a plan to solve the problem
- Putting the plan into practice and
- Evaluate results

1.1.Problem Solving Behaviors and Romantic Relationship Beliefs

According to Doğan (2012), romantic relationships constitute an essential and indispensable aspect of people's lives and are usually established with the expectation of a long-term and happy union. However, it is not right to expect every relationship established to be satisfying. According to researches, satisfaction from a romantic relationship is related to many factors. One of these factors is relationship beliefs developed for romantic relationships. Studies by Saraç, Hamamcı, and Güçray (2015) have shown that beliefs about romantic relationships affect the satisfaction obtained from the relationship.

Gizir (2012) defines romantic relationship beliefs as perceptions and expectations that form certain ideals for a relationship. These beliefs can be divided into two categories, functional beliefs, and dysfunctional beliefs. *Dysfunctional relationship beliefs* are beliefs that are resistant to change, unrealistic, and exaggerated about themselves, their partner, and the nature of their relationship with their partner (Eidelson and Epstein, 1982). Some research results indicate that individuals who have problems in their romantic relationships have common dysfunctional beliefs about themselves, their partners, or their relationships (Gizir, 2012; Sarı and Owen, 2016).

Romans and DeBord (1995) determined the dysfunctional relationship beliefs that can be found in romantic relationships due to their study. These beliefs are as follows:

- o We should be open and honest with each other with the person I am in a romantic relationship with.
- o By reading each other's minds with the person I am in a romantic relationship with, we should know what is on our minds.
- o We should do Everything together with the person I am in a romantic relationship with.
- o We should meet each other's needs with the person I am in a romantic relationship with.
- o We should be able to change each other with the person I am in a romantic relationship with.
- o Everything should be perfect with the person I am in a romantic relationship with.

o It should be easy to maintain a good relationship with the person I am in a romantic relationship with.

It was stated by Kim, Sharp, and Carbone (2014) that dysfunctional relationship beliefs generally develop through observation of parent relationships or other couples or the media.

1.2. Research on Problem Solving

According to studies (Feeney and Noller, 1990) in which dysfunctional beliefs are handled together with relationship satisfaction and attachment styles, it has been concluded that there is a significant relationship between attachment styles and dysfunctional relationship beliefs and romantic relationship satisfaction.

As a result of Knee's (1998) research, it was understood that dysfunctional beliefs lead to communication problems and negative problem-solving behaviors in the romantic relationships of individuals.

In addition, among the scientific results on the subject, individuals exhibit less constructive problem-solving behaviors as their dysfunctional beliefs increase (Stackert and Bursik, 2003).

Hamamcı (2005), on the other hand, showed in his study with married couples that as individuals' dysfunctional relationship beliefs increase, their relationship satisfaction decreases.

A study was conducted by Kalkan (2010) with 300 students continuing their education at Ondokuz Mayıs University. The research investigated the relationship between physical abuse, emotional abuse, problem orientation, and social interest in adolescent romantic relationships. As a result of the research, it was seen that social interest was associated with physical abuse, emotional abuse, and problem orientation and was a significant predictor of these. While there was a negative relationship between emotional abuse and physical abuse and social interest, it was found that there was a positive relationship between problem orientation and social interest. According to the results obtained from the study, while the physical abuse levels of males were higher than the females, there was no significant difference in terms of emotional abuse according to the gender variable.

Yılmaz and Kalkan (2010) included individuals with romantic relationships in the premarital relationship development program. At the end of this program, it was observed that the relationship satisfaction of individuals increased.

Duran and Hamamcı (2010) gave premarital communication skills and conflict resolution training to university students with romantic relationships. At the end of the program, it

was observed that individuals' communication skills and problem-solving skills increased.

A study was conducted by Helvacı Küçük (2012) examining the relationship between problem-solving styles, social interest and love styles in romantic relationships of university students. The sample group of the study consisted of 330 university students. A positive relationship was found between attitudes towards love and emotional and physical abuse from problem-solving styles in the study. As a result of the research, no significant difference was found between social interest and problem-solving styles according to gender.

In their study, Dinçyürek, Akıntuğ, and Bedioğlu (2013) investigated the main conflict issues and conflict resolution strategies in university students' relationships with their friends and romantic friends, and whether there were any differences according to the relationship type. The sample group of the study consisted of 19 university students studying in the PDR department. The data were collected by the unstructured memoir method. According to the result obtained from this study; While the main problem in conflicts with friends was academic disagreement, jealousy was the main problem in conflicts with romantic friends. Another result is that positive conflict resolution strategies are frequently used in conflicts with romantic friends.

In a study conducted by Türkoğlu (2014), the relationship between university students' problem-solving skills in romantic relationships and their forgiving characteristics was investigated. Four hundred forty-four students studying in various departments of different universities formed the study group of the research. According to the results obtained, it was determined that there was a positive and significant relationship between the emotional abuse of university students and the variable of forgiving others. There was no significant relationship between the total scores of self-forgiveness, forgiving the situation, and forgiveness. It was determined that there was no significant difference between emotional abuse and physical abuse according to the gender variable.

Studies by Kaya (2020) revealed a positive and significant relationship between problem-solving behavior in romantic relationships and altruism and the life satisfaction of individuals. Problem-solving skills in romantic relationships show a significant difference depending on whether individuals have a romantic relationship or not. It was also concluded that altruism and life satisfaction predicted problem-solving skills in romantic relationships.

2.Attachment

Bowlby first introduced attachment as a concept in 1958 (Bowlby, 1958; cited in Soysal, Bodur, İşeri, and Şenol, 2005). After that, many researchers, the newborn baby is more congenial, guided by the physical symptoms; they studied attachment theory, which manifests itself with behaviors towards his mother or caregiver such as crying,

sucking, smiling, watching, calling, calling, waiting. This form of relationship constitutes the starting point of social relations and plays a vital role in the relationships that the individual will establish in the future.

Bowlby defines *attachment* as an automatic mechanism, a product of instinctive behavioral subsystems, and focuses on physical intimacy. The bonding process, which starts with the first contact that the baby makes with his mother after birth, affects every aspect of the individual's life (family life, education life, romantic life, business life, etc.) throughout his life. At this point, the role of the mother is to act as a bridge in the relationship between her baby and the outside world (Morsünbül & Çok, 2011). In other words, the mother directs the baby's attitudes, perceptions, and value judgments towards himself and the outside world to be positive or negative. This type of relationship between the baby and the mother in the first months is the first sign of the individual's future relationship patterns (Yılmaz, 2007).

2.1.Approaches to the Concept of Attachment:

2.1.1. Attachment Theory

According to Bowlby (1988), the person who cares for the baby and increases the sense of trust has a vital role in protecting the baby against stress and dangers. If the baby's caregiver or attachment object is sufficiently sensitive, compliant, and sensitive, the baby develops a secure attachment style (Bowlby, 1988; cited in Morsünbül, 2005). Individuals with a secure attachment style; exhibit a pattern of trusting their values, self-efficacy, and realistic and valid. In this way, they can develop positive relationships with the person who will be their partner in the future. These styles and models are based on the individual's competence and develop positive and good relationships with their peers. However, if individuals cannot develop sincere and close relationships during infancy, they experience a feeling of loneliness (Hamarta, 2004).

It should be noted that the concept of attachment and attachment behavior are two different concepts. Attachment behavior is the behavior of an individual to gain intimacy with another person or to maintain a close relationship with another person (Bowlby; 1979; cited in Erözkan, 2009). The first person children choose when they are in a difficult situation is often the mother, but if there is no mother, they can get intimate with another person.

While attachment behavior can be shown to people from a broader environment in such cases, attachment is shown to fewer and limited numbers of people. Attachment behavior can be observed at the earliest in early childhood and throughout the rest of the person's life. Attachment behavior can be observed, especially in emergencies where individuals require aid (Bowlby, 2014; Akman & Koçoğlu, 2017).

2.1.2.Attachment Styles

Psychiatrist John Bowlby (1907-1990), with his studies, drew the attention of the scientific world to the concept of attachment, thus not only to what happens inside people but also to what happens between people (Bowlby, 1988; cited in Soysal, Bodur, İşeri, and Şenol, 2005). Bowlby's scientific work with 44 thieves is notable for reinforcing the claim that deprivation of a mother in early childhood can cause severe problems with a social and emotional adjustment later in life. In the most concise terms, Bowlby's views are that attachment is first based on the mother after birth (Gürsoy, 2018). One of the essential requirements for survival is the attachment of the child to the mother.

There may be some conditions that are not suitable for establishing a secure bond between mother and baby. These conditions can be considered premature birth, putting the baby in the incubator, medication, narcosis, early separation of the baby from the mother, little or no physical contact between the mother and the baby, or the mother's refusal to breastfeed the baby. It is stated that the mother's mental health, which is the basis of attachment, plays a significant role in the development of attachment from the moment a woman learns about her pregnancy, and this situation continues for at least one year after birth (Soysal, Bodur, İşeri, and Şenol, 2005).

2.1.3. Bartholomew and Horowitz's Quadruple Attachment Theory

The four adult attachment styles (secure, obsessive, indifferent and fearful attachment) defined by Kim Bartholomew and Leonard M. Horowitz (1991; as cited in Gürsoy, 2018) are explained below:

Secure Attachment

Secure attachment is based on the positive acceptance of oneself and others. In the secure attachment style, the individual is sure that they can reach their mother or father when they experience a negative situation, which will help them. With the support of parents, the individual act more courageously in making discoveries. The fact that the mother or another person who takes care of the child is sensitive to the child's signs and approaches him with love when he needs it supports forming a secure attachment style (Bowlby, 2014). Secure attachment forms the basis of a healthy personality structure. It can be said that securely attached people are advantageous in terms of mental health. Self-thoughts are positive. Relationships with other people are healthy, and there is a sense of trust underlying this. In addition to their consistent and long-term relationships, they can make their own decisions (Gürsoy, 2018).

Obsessive Attachment

Obsessive attachment is based on the assumption that the self is negative and others

are positive (Rugancı, 2008). These individuals perceive their personality traits as worthless, and these perceptions cover their whole lives. They have unhealthy thoughts about themselves, lack self-confidence due to feelings of worthlessness, and these traits distance them from other people. Social relationships are easily broken or not established at all. Trust problems cause them to use commitment too much in social relationships (Gürsoy, 2018). Individuals with this attachment style consider themselves worthless and others as valuable; this may cause them to grow up as individuals who cannot make their own decisions and are very open to directing.

Indifferent Attachment

Indifferent attachment is based on the assumption that the self is positive and others are negative. Their most typical characteristic is that they do not want to be attached to the people they socialize with. These individuals prioritize their characteristics, care about making their own decisions freely, and social norms are not considered necessary (Gürsoy, 2018).

Fearful Attachment

Fearful attachment is based on the assumption that the self and others are negative. A lack of confidence marks it. This situation causes the person to distance himself from his social relations and thus experience social relations problems. In addition, this attachment style causes a lack of trust, and relationships are built on insincerity (Gürsoy, 2018).

2.1.4. Ainsworth's Triple Attachment Model

Bowlby, the founder of attachment theory, examined the relationship between mother and child together with Mary Ainsworth, who played a role in developing the theory (Ainsworth and Bowlby, 1991; cited in Alantar and Maner, 2008). Based on the idea that individual differences exist in attachment relationships and that each person develops different internal models, Ainsworth (1989) focused on revealing these differences in his studies. Ainsworth, who conducted experimental research on Bowlby's attachment theory, also contributed significantly to the development of this theory. Ainsworth's most remarkable contributions to Bowlby's theory are the concept of "safe base" and his comments on individual differences in individuals' attachment relationships (Ainsworth, Blehar, and Waters, 1978; cited in Onur, 2006).

Based on Bowlby's theory, Ainsworth (1989) examined attachment relationship models between mother and child through an experimental test called "foreign status". With this test, it was aimed to examine how babies aged between 12 and 18 months prefer attachment figures as a safe base in an environment where they have not been before, how they behave when strangers try to get close to them, and how they cope with the fear and anxiety they feel in the absence of attachment figures. (Ainsworth, 1989; cited

in Morsünbül and Çok, 2011).

The stages of this test are as follows: first, the baby is left in an unfamiliar environment with their mother for a while. Then the mother leaves the room, and the baby stays alone in the room with the stranger for a while. Subsequently, the mother returns to the room, and the baby's reactions to their mother are observed with the mother returns. As a result of this study, Ainsworth concluded that children show three types of attachment patterns: secure attachment, avoidant attachment, and anxious/ambivalent attachment, thus forming the triple attachment model (Morsünbül and Çok, 2011).

The secure attachment style can develop when the caregiver meets the baby's basic needs adequately and promptly (Gürsoy, 2018). Babies who develop a secure attachment style have both intimacy and warmth in their relationships with their mothers. In addition, when a distressing situation arises, the baby may dare to explore his environment with the feeling of confidence that he will be supported (Bowlby, 1988; cited in Sevinç and Kılınç, 2016). These babies typically show irritable reactions when separated from their mothers, but these reactions are minimal, and they do not panic. Without resisting intimacy, they quickly communicate and calm down when they meet their mother again and return to explore their surroundings. (Sümer and Güngör, 1999).

Anxious-ambivalent attachment style is an attachment style that can develop in cases where the caregiver does not show sufficient sensitivity to the basic needs of the baby and becomes desensitized (Kesebir, Kavzoğlu, and Üstündağ, 2011). When babies who have internalized the anxious-ambivalent attachment style are examined, it has been revealed that when they cry, they are ignored by the caregivers, they do not receive attention, and their activities such as games are interrupted and prevented (Ainsworth, 1989; cited in Rugancı, 2008). Babies who internalize this attachment style cannot develop trust towards their mothers (Kesebir, Kavzoğlu, and Üstündağ, 2011). They are suspicious about the availability of their caregivers and behave nervously towards them. They are hesitant to explore their environment because they are not sure they will be supported when they experience a negative situation. They hold tight to their mothers and resist letting go.

It has been observed that the avoidant attachment style develops in babies who grow up with caregivers who are mainly cared for with a distant attitude, who object to their babies' need for intimacy in general and try to avoid bodily contact. Even if these babies are separated from their mothers for a short time, they perceive this situation as being abandoned, and they protest the situation and display hostile attitudes (Ainsworth, 1989; cited in Onur, 2006). In addition to doubting that they will be supported, these babies are careful not to act in attention, thinking they will be scolded. In addition, these babies, who do not seem to be affected much when separated from their mothers, seem not to expect to meet their mothers again (Sümer and Güngör, 1999). When avoidant-attached infants are separated from their mothers; It has been observed that they experience a strong sense of uneasiness and anxiety and object to contact with people they do not know, and when

they are reunited with their mothers, they do not calm down quickly; therefore they do not tend to explore the environment (Sümer and Güngör, 1999). Although these babies do not want to have a relationship, they tend to protest this situation when there is no relationship in conflict with these desires; this causes them to display inconsistent behaviors towards their caregivers (Bell and Ainsworth, 1972; cited in Kesebir, Kavzoğlu and Üstündağ, 2011).

2.1.5. Hazan and Shaver's Triple Attachment Model

Influenced by Ainsworth's 1989 research on infants' attachment patterns, Hazan and Shaver argued that attachment styles, the foundations of which were laid in infancy, could continue in adulthood and that patterns reflecting similar dynamics could emerge on romantic relationships in adulthood (Hazan and Shaver, 1987). The thought that the negativity experienced in one of the interlocking operational principles will affect the other in a chained way has strengthened this defense and led researchers to examine this issue (Hazan and Shaver, 1994).

The results of Hazan and Shaver's (1987) research on adults' romantic relationships between the ages of 14-82 revealed dynamics that overlap with the styles in Ainsworth's triple attachment model. In the study, sub-dimensions such as jealousy, sexual attraction, trust, and longing were included, and these cases were evaluated in terms of secure, anxious, and avoidant-ambivalent attachment styles. According to the research results, adults who internalized the secure attachment style in early childhood stated that the romantic relationships they experienced were satisfactory relationships that made them feel happy and secure in a friendly way. It has also been noted that these people do not have a problem getting close to others (Hazan and Shaver, 1994). Adults who internalize the anxious-ambivalent attachment style; stated that although they wanted to get close to other people, they were worried about being rejected and abandoned. They also added that they do not believe in their partners easily and cannot trust them quickly, and they defined their relationship as "jealousy, emotional tides and passion" (Hazan and Shaver, 1987).

After defining the attachment styles; The concept of "disorganized attachment" was developed with the thought that it would be insufficient to describe the attachment pattern that occurs in abnormally bad conditions as "insecure attachment" (Kesebir, Kavzoğlu, and Üstündağ, 2011). Considering the results of the studies conducted with pre-school children on attachment, children with secure attachment style have higher social skills and more positive affect than their peers; in addition, they can adapt and cooperate with adults. It has been observed that insecurely attached children are prone to social isolation, disturbed, angry, restless, aggressive towards their peers, maladaptive, and prone to depression, and they cannot fulfill their responsibilities. It was determined that those who showed tense resistance resorted to physical violence, displayed disruptive behaviors, automatically reacted to the rules, and had sudden outbursts of anger. On the other hand, it

has been determined that anxious-avoidant children try to control the people around them and cannot express their anger (Soysal, Bodur, İşeri, and Şenol, 2005).

In adolescence, the attachment of the child to the parent changes. Attachment of adolescents can be categorized into three groups: On the one hand, some distance themselves by separating themselves from their parents; on the other hand, some are intensely attached to their parents, and those who are unwilling or unsuccessful to attach to others. Between these two extremes, some adolescents continue to be attached to their parents and care about connecting to new people (Bowlby, 1969; cited in Saribal, 2017).

2.2. Attachment in Adulthood

The bonds established during infancy and childhood are mostly those established with parents or the people who care for the baby. These bonds established with puberty and adulthood generally tend towards the opposite sex (Bowlby, 2013). Along with the hormonal changes experienced during adolescence, individuals seek a close relationship with their opposite-sex partner, including their reproductive and care systems (Ainsworth, 1989; cited in Karabacak and Demir, 2017).

It is seen that the parent-child relationship in childhood affects adult attachment, but according to Hazan and Shaver (1987), adult attachment is different and more sophisticated than childhood. One of the crucial differences is that the romantic relationship is two-way and reciprocal between individuals. While individuals may be anxious and seek security from time to time in a relationship, they may also be in a position to provide security and care when necessary. During infancy, babies expect security from the person they are attached to, but they cannot provide security to anyone, whereas in adults' relationships, the security relationship is mutually established. Each couple can be both a trustee and a security receiver (Hazan and Shaver, 1994).

Another difference is that babies need physical contact to feel safe. However, adults can experience a sense of security and comfort even without physical contact. Adults experience this sense of security and comfort with the knowledge that they can contact their partners when needed. Again, adults have a higher chance to make physical contact than babies (Hazan and Shaver, 1994). Another difference between infants and adults is that the romantic relationship includes sexual attraction in adulthood (Hazan and Shaver, 1987). When infancy and adult attachment are compared, it is seen that the individual's needs and expectations, which change with his development, are also reflected in attachment relationships.

2.2.1. Adult Attachment Styles and Romantic Relationships

According to Hazan and Shaver (1994), although it is known that the search for intimacy in adults is different from that of infants, the initial stage of the relationship with the

other party shows similarities. In adulthood, the person with whom a romantic and close relationship is established takes on the role of an attachment figure. Adults in a romantic relationship, like infants seeking intimacy, focus on the responses of the attachment figure. While the positive reactions of the person with whom a romantic relationship is established create a feeling of happiness and confidence in the individuals, their adverse reactions cause distress and anxiety (Hazan and Shaver, 1994).

According to Ainsworth (1991), a secure attachment relationship increases the individual's competence and functionality outside the relationship. Because in a secure attachment relationship, the individual reaches a sense of trust and comfort and sees his partner, the person with whom he has a relationship, as a secure base. In this way, the individual can take the risk of getting away from their partner and engage in other activities.

Studies have shown that adults with a secure attachment style have feelings of love, commitment, and trust in their romantic relationships. These individuals support the person they are in a romantic relationship by accepting them as they are. Similarly, individuals with a secure attachment style are more sincere in their conversations with their partners than individuals with other attachment styles (Hazan and Shaver, 1987). The fact that individuals with a dismissive attachment style find it difficult to ask for support and help from the person they are in a romantic relationship with when they need support has been revealed by studies (Burger, 2006). On the other hand, studies show that obsessively attached individuals want to establish a controlling, sticky and intense closeness towards their partners in romantic relationships (Mikulincer and Shaver, 2019).

2.3. Romantic Relationship and Attachment Theory

According to Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991), close relationships are established in adulthood, and the patterns of these relationships are affected by the attachment relationships established with the mother or caregiver during infancy. On the other hand, Hazan and Shaver (1987) stated that while explaining the romantic relationship and emotional intimacy, this situation corresponds to an attachment process. This attachment process manifests differently in individuals with different attachment histories. In other words, the person who has developed some attachment patterns with his mother or caregiver, like every human being, maintains these patterns while establishing a romantic relationship with another person in the later stages of his life.

The person may have different attachment styles in the attachment process according to the patterns inherited from infancy. The secure attachment style is the most consistent of all attachment styles and works best in the relationship. Securely attached individuals can easily communicate with their partners and thus establish intimacy. They do not have anxiety about attachment to their partner, and they do not fear abandonment. However, individuals with an anxious-ambivalent attachment style maintain their protesting attitudes towards their partners in their romantic relationships when they are away from

their mothers during childhood (Sevinç and Kılınç, 2016). Individuals with an anxious-ambivalent attachment style cannot establish closeness with their partners as much as they want and cannot be sure of their partner's feelings and love for them. Because of this, they are constantly worried and may think that their partner does not want them. Individuals with an avoidant attachment style, on the other hand, cannot quickly establish closeness with other people and have difficulty in attaching to someone. They may get angry because their partners do not act close to them, and they may show the behavior of breaking off from the relationship frequently. They also exhibit the behavior of not maintaining the relationship. These individuals have difficulty attaching to another person, do not like closeness, and stay away from close relationships (Hazan and Shaver, 1987).

People continue their attachment styles and behaviors that they have developed since the first years in their choice of spouse and marriage. The most basic and permanent bond that a person establishes is usually the marriage bond (Duran and Hamamcı, 2010). The marriage bond is the most enduring bond formed and maintained after parents and other close family members. Couples of two individuals with different attachment styles maintain the behaviors required by their attachment styles in their married life and even continue developing these behaviors. They reinforce the behaviors they adopt during the marriage process or shape them according to the state of their relationship (Hamamcı, 2005). Individuals interact with their partners according to their secure, anxious-ambivalent, and avoidant attachment styles.

2.4. Researches on Attachment

In a study conducted with 313 university students in Ankara, Sümer and Güngör (1999) observed that individuals with secure attachment experience higher levels of self-esteem, satisfaction with their friends, and lower levels of anxiety compared to individuals with insecure attachment. It has been seen in studies that individuals with fearful and preoccupied attachment styles show the opposite pattern of individuals with secure attachment, and those with negative self-models have higher averages than individuals with positive self-models in terms of their desire to please others and disapproval anxiety.

Studies examining children's attachment relationships with their parents have stated that children who have a secure attachment relationship are also successful in their future relationships. Repeatedly, the results of the research showed that these individuals felt more socially competent. It is known that these individuals, who establish a secure attachment relationship with their family members, are also physically healthier and have a high level of self-esteem (Sümer and Güngör, 1999).

Mikulincer and Shaver (2012) examined the relationship between empathy and attachment styles and concluded that as the scores on the anxious and avoidant attachment styles increased, the scores on the empathy dimension decreased.

Erözkan (2004), on the other hand, researched with 380 university students to determine the variables that affect the communication skills of university students. As a result of the study, it was found that attachment styles, interpersonal relationship styles, and self-esteem are essential predictors of communication skills. It has been observed that young people with a secure attachment style are more adaptable and establish a more satisfying relationship with the individuals around them. In contrast, young people with an insecure attachment style have more challenging relationships with their dependents, parents, or other family members (Hamarta, 2004).

Yılmaz (2007) compared genders regarding attachment styles and interpersonal communication skills and found that female students were more fearfully attached than male students; revealed that male students were more securely attached than female students.

Some research results show a positive relationship between attachment styles and emotional intelligence (Deniz, Hamarta, and Arı, 2005). Individuals with a secure attachment style become more aware of their emotions and are more confident in dealing with problems. At the same time, it has been seen as a result of research that they show more adaptive behavior and have higher motivation to cope with stress (Deniz, Hamarta, and Arı, 2005).

A study examining emotional reactions according to attachment styles was conducted with university students by Gentzler, Kerns, and Keener (2010). According to the research results, it has been observed that individuals with an anxious attachment style focus more on negative experiences. On the other hand, Securely attached individuals approached negative experiences with less anxiety and tended to focus on positive events and experiences rather than negative ones.

Akbağ and İmamoğlu (2010) found that individuals with secure attachment experience fewer feelings of loneliness than individuals with other attachment styles and stated that loneliness is positively related to insecure attachment and negatively related to secure attachment.

According to Kesebir, Kavzoğlu, and Üstündağ (2011), the attachment styles of young people determine their success in adapting to social relationships and difficulties of life. Cabral, Matos, Beyers, and Soenens (2012) examined the relationship between attachment styles, emotion regulation skills, and coping strategies in a study conducted with undergraduate students. According to the research results, it has been observed that individuals with secure attachment and close emotional bonds use more constructive emotion regulation skills and coping strategies than insecurely attached individuals.

Pepping, Davis, and Donovan (2013) conducted a study with university students. This study examined the mediating role of emotion regulation in the relationship between attachment and awareness. According to the results obtained from the research, it was

determined that the difficulties experienced by individuals in the process of emotion regulation mediated the relationship between insecure attachment and awareness. It has been observed that individuals with anxious attachment experience more emotion regulation difficulties.

A study was conducted by Ergün (2019) to examine the predictive power of university students' attachment dimensions with their parents on their romantic relationships. According to the results obtained from the research, it was determined that attachment anxiety in a romantic relationship was positively related to the divorce status of the parents. University students whose parents are divorced have higher romantic relationship attachment anxiety scores and higher avoidance scores.

3.Emotion Regulation

Although people in daily life frequently use emotion, it cannot be easily defined. Goleman's (2007) definition of emotion states that emotion is a feeling and specific thoughts, biological and psychological states, and a set of movement tendencies. According to Morgan (2009), emotions have a motivating effect on individuals. Gross's (2002) view is that emotions reveal regulated behavioral, physiological, and experiential response tendencies that affect how individuals respond to perceived challenges or opportunities. According to Gross and Thompson (2007), a person can intensify, reduce or maintain the emotion he/she experiences depending on his/her goals. Emotion regulation processes can be conscious or unconscious, automatic or controlled. Its effects can be seen at one or more points in the emotion generation process.

In regulating emotions, the main goal is not to eliminate negative emotions but to accept and control these negative emotions in the individual's state (Tull and Roemer, 2007). Briefly, emotion regulation skills consist of attempts by individuals to manage their emotional states.

Thompson (2008) also mentioned various features of the emotion regulation process. The first of these is that children gain the ability to cope with their emotions as they grow up, and the other is that they provide a different perspective on the development of individual differences (Karabacak and Demir, 2017). Thus, we can interpret that emotion regulation skill shows how the individual communicates with his social environment.

There are some emotion-based developmental tasks that a human infant must perform in the first seven years of its life. These tasks are:

- Dealing with disappointments,
- To attract and entertain other people,

- Realizing the danger, coping with feelings such as anxiety and fear,
- Being able to tolerate being alone,
- Motivation and interest in learning, and
- It is the ability to establish friendship relations (Duman, Yılmaz, Umunç, and İmre, 2019). It is known that all these tasks that should be performed in childhood can be realized thanks to emotion regulation skills (Cole, Michel, and Teti, 1994; cited in Thompson 2008).

3.1. Emotion Regulation Process and Its Basic Features

Although there is no assumption about whether regulating emotions is good or bad, it is stated that both positive and negative emotions can be regulated in studies on emotion regulation (Saribal, 2017). Individuals in the emotion regulation process can maintain their positive or negative emotions. However, they can reduce or increase these feelings they experience. Therefore, emotion regulation mainly involves changes in individuals' emotional responses. These changes can manifest themselves according to the type of emotions experienced by individuals (Gross, 1999, cited in Duy and Yıldız, 2014).

Emotions can include not only positive but also adverse effects. According to Gross and Thompson (2007), reducing, increasing, or maintaining a particular emotion is individuals' actions to regulate their emotions. The primary and most basic purpose of emotion regulation is to adequately change the emotional reaction experienced by individuals (Gross, 2002). The emotion regulation mechanism enables the person to extinguish, strengthen or maintain the emotion under the influence of his/her goals (Gross, 2002; Gross and Thompson, 2007).

There are some steps that an individual should follow in order for the emotion regulation process to take place healthily:

- i. Recognition and understanding of emotions by the individual
- ii. Acceptance of emotions by the individual
- iii. Control of impulsive behaviors by the individual and act towards desired goals (Gratz and Roemer, 2004).

According to Thompson (2008), the emotion regulation process consists of internal and external processes. While internal processes mean the individual's ability to regulate their own emotions, external processes mean someone else's regulation of their emotions (Duy and Yıldız, 2014). An example of an external process is the caregiver's soothing the baby's

restlessness. When emotion regulation literature is examined in terms of adults, it is seen that emotion regulation is an internal process for adults (Gross and Thompson, 2007), while it is emphasized that it is an external process in the development literature (Cole, Martin, and Dennis, 2004; cited in Southam Gerow, 2013). In addition, it has been stated that emotion regulation skills and strategies are acquired in the early stages of life and emerge during developmental processes (Duy and Yıldız, 2014). From this point of view, emotion regulation emerges from the relationship between the child and the caregiver and develops in the process (Southam Gerow, 2013).

3.2.Emotion Regulation Strategies and Attachment

According to Meredith, Strong, and Feeney (2007), the concept of emotion regulation and the emotion regulation process are accepted as a basic structure in attachment theory. According to Cassidy (1994), regulating the baby's disturbing emotional states is a function of the attachment system. Attachment theory is practical on the structure of emotion regulation and has an essential role in developing and maintaining close relationships. The ability of individuals to develop skills for the emotion regulation process occurs within their social environment (Thompson, 2008). As a matter of fact, with the infancy period, the first social environment of children is formed. This social environment is the family for the baby.

According to Cole, Michel, and Teti (1994; cited in Thompson, 2008), individuals learn to express and regulate different emotions by experiencing different emotions, thanks to the relationships they live and develop during infancy and childhood and the social environments enter. Indeed, a person carries these emotion regulation skills gained in childhood to other periods of his life. It is crucial that the caregiver answers the baby's needs and that this person is accessible to maintain the closeness established by the baby (Saribal, 2017). In this way, babies also learn to express their emotions. Depending on whether emotions can be expressed clearly in the family, which is the first social environment, emotion regulation skills can be developed and successfully regulated, or difficulties can be experienced. According to Çalışır (2009), feeling that the attachment figure is accessible in adulthood turns into internal and external resources used to cope with adverse situations or emotions experienced by the person.

According to Bowlby (1988), the infant sees the caregiver as a secure base if the attachment figure, that is, the caregiver, meets the infant's needs and responds positively to the attempt to establish intimacy. In this way, the feeling of secure attachment is supported (Bowlby, 1988; cited in Saymaz, 2003). With this sense of secure attachment, the individual's perception of their worth and importance develops, and consequently, their emotion regulation skills begin to develop (Mikulincer, Shaver, and Pereg, 2003). For example, when the individual encounters an event that creates stress or fear, the search for intimacy emerges first. If the attachment figure is accessible to the individual, the individual uses security-based strategies (Çalışır, 2009). The purpose of using these strategies is to make

personal adjustments, reduce distress, and increase access to supportive relationships.

People with a secure attachment style do not avoid facing situations that involve threats and fear. Securely attached individuals have firmer beliefs that they can regulate negative emotions than insecurely attached individuals (Soysal, Bodur, İşeri, and Şenol, 2005). At the same time, their belief and expectation that they can solve their problems or be supported without being criticized, belittled, and rejected by others are also higher than those with insecure attachments. For this reason, they feel comfortable and act about opening up, getting cooperation from other people, or being open to new ideas (Helvacı Küçük, 2012).

Emotion regulation needs are lifelong, just like the attachment. However, the adequacy of emotion regulation differs in each individual according to the attachment style (Karabacak and Demir, 2017). When evaluated in terms of attachment styles, individuals with secure attachment styles are more successful in adapting to the environment and regulating their emotions. However, individuals with insecure attachment styles have lower emotional regulation skills and social adaptation. A person with a secure attachment style has a more optimistic stance towards life. When encountering a dangerous situation or difficulty, they tend to use more constructive emotion regulation strategies and skills than insecurely attached individuals (Kaya, 2020).

3.3. Researches on Emotion Regulation

Gentzler and Kerns (2006) also conducted a study with university students. This study obtained a vital result that adults with insecure attachment styles tend to underestimate the intensity of positive events and emotions.

Goodall, Trejnowska, and Darling (2012) conducted a study with young adults. According to the results of this study, it was revealed that there is a positive relationship between insecure attachment styles and difficulties in emotion regulation.

Rugancı (2008), on the other hand, in his study to support these findings, examined the relationship between emotion regulation skills and attachment style in university students. As a result of the findings obtained from the research, it was determined that students with a secure attachment style were able to express and regulate their emotions better than students with insecure attachment.

As a result of the research conducted by Arndt and Fujiwara (2014), it was stated that the reorganization skills, which are the sub-dimensions of the emotion regulation process, beneficially affect mental health and accompanying events. It has been explained that the suppression dimension, which is another sub-dimension, affects it inconsistently.

Marganska, Gallagher, and Miranda (2013) conducted a study with participants between

18 and 48. This study examined the role of emotion regulation in the relationship between adults' attachment styles, generalized anxiety disorder, and depression. According to the results obtained from the research, it has been determined that insecurely attached individuals have more difficulties in emotion regulation than securely attached individuals.

As a result of the study conducted by Özbay, Palancı, Kandemir, and Çakır (2012), it was found that emotion regulation skill predicted subjective well-being.

Gülgez and Gündüz (2015), on the other hand, developed a dialectical behavior therapy-based program to reduce emotion regulation difficulties. It was concluded that this program was effective in reducing the emotion regulation difficulties of university students.

Topkaya and Meydan (2013) conducted a study on the problems experienced by university students and their intention to seek psychological help. As a result of the study, it was determined that university students mainly experienced emotional problems. In addition, it has been determined that they have problems such as romantic problems, family problems, smoking/substance use problems, emotional problems, and personality problems.

Conclusion

Attachment styles formed during childhood and problem-solving behaviors in romantic relationships and individuals' ability to reflect and regulate their emotions differ. In this compilation study, the basic features of these concepts and their relations did discuss in terms of their theoretical foundations.

According to Karabacak and Demir (2017), emotion regulation competence differs in each individual according to the attachment style. When evaluated in terms of attachment styles, individuals with a secure attachment style are more successful in adapting to the environment and regulating their emotions. However, individuals with insecure attachment styles have feebler emotional regulation skills and social adaptation.

In the literature, it has been emphasized that individuals are showing secure attachment style resort to emotional abuse less in problem-solving, while individuals showing dismissive or preoccupied attachment style use emotional and physical abuse methods (Çalışır, 2009; Ergün, 2019). In this context, experts can support individuals to gain healthier problem-solving skills without resorting to emotional or physical abuse by conducting seminars to improve their problem-solving skills, individual or group psychological counseling.

As a result of the study conducted by Ergün (2019), it has been shown that individuals who have a secure attachment relationship with their parents are also more successful in their romantic relationships in the future. According to the results of this study, it can be interpreted that individuals who have a secure attachment relationship with their family members feel more competent socially and can positively use their emotion regulation skills.

When the results of the study conducted by Kesebir, Kavzoğlu, and Üstündağ (2011) are examined, it is seen that young people with a secure attachment style are more adaptable, and therefore they can establish a more satisfying relationship with their friends and parents. On the other hand, young people with insecure attachment styles were more dependent and had more challenging relationships with their parents or other family members.

The results of the study indicate that there is a positive relationship between attachment styles and emotional intelligence. According to the results of the research conducted by Deniz, Hamarta, and Arı (2005), individuals with a secure attachment style become more aware of their emotions and are more confident in dealing with problems. At the same time, the study showed that they showed more adaptive behavior and had higher motivation in situations where they had to cope with stress.

When the study results by Cabral, Matos, Beyers, and Soenens (2012) were examined, it

was seen that individuals with secure attachment styles and close emotional bonds used more constructive emotion regulation skills and coping strategies than individuals with insecure attachment styles.

The study results show that the difficulties experienced by individuals in the process of emotion regulation mediate the relationship between insecure attachment and awareness. It indicates that individuals with an anxious attachment style have more emotional regulation difficulties (Pepping, Davis, and Donovan, 2013). According to this result, it can be interpreted that there is a positive relationship between insecure attachment styles and difficulties in emotion regulation.

As a result, the study concludes the adverse effects of insecure attachment on emotion regulation in the individual's life and problem-solving behaviors in romantic relationships. Based on this result, information and awareness studies can be carried out for parents about child-rearing attitudes and approaches that will ensure the development of secure attachment in children; considering this effect, psychological support services can be provided for individuals who have problems in their relationships.

In addition, increasing researchers' research and publication activities on the relationship between attachment styles, emotion regulation skills, and problem-solving behaviors will contribute to obtaining more reliable results.

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