



The Influence of Attachment Styles On Marital Satisfaction On A Wife Who Has Been Cheated

Maria Yuni Megarini Cahyono¹, Yuspendi²,
Nuria Ristnawati Nanrimansyah^{*3}

^{1,2,3} Universitas Kristen Maranatha, Bandung

^{*}Corresponding author, e-mail: itsnuriaritsnaa@gmail.com

Abstract

Infidelity is the main cause of divorce in West Java, which harms individuals, especially wives who are victims of infidelity. In response to infidelity, wives are more likely to react with intense emotions that tend to last a long time, and it is easier to recall the incident, thus requiring more attention. The subjects of this study were 55 individuals whose wives were aged 18-40 years and had experiences of being cheated on and domiciled in the city of Bandung. This study aimed to describe the effect of Attachment Styles on the Marital Satisfaction of wives who had been cheated on in Bandung. The research method used is quantitative. The measuring instrument used to obtain individual attachment styles is The Experience in Close Relationships-Revised (ECR-R) Questionnaire, which consists of 36 items referring to the theory of Bartholomew and Horwitz and consists of 36 items. The measuring instrument used to obtain the degree of individual marital satisfaction is enriching marital satisfaction, compiled by Olson & Fowers (1993), consisting of 15 items with 4 answer choices. Subjects in this study will be given both questionnaires. After that, the results of the two questionnaires will be analyzed using a simple regression method. The results showed that attachment style strongly influences and can predict 31% of marital satisfaction in wives cheated on. Anxious attachment contributed a negative 33% to the variation in marital satisfaction. Avoidant attachment contributed a stronger negative 57% to the variation of marital satisfaction.

Keywords: *Marital Satisfaction; Attachment Style; Infidelity*

Received February 16, 2023

Revised May 03, 2022

Published May 12, 2023



This is an open-access article distributed under the Creative Commons 4.0 Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. ©2023 by author.

Introduction

Affairs have been the main cause of divorce in West Java for two consecutive years, in 2018 and 2019. This traumatic event harms individuals. Emotionally, the impact experienced by the wife is greater, including negative emotions such as stress, disappointment, sadness, and anxiety. In other words, this affair gives the individual a negative view of his marriage. In line with marital satisfaction, the subjective evaluation of a husband/wife in their married life is based on satisfaction, happiness, and pleasurable experiences shared with a partner Fowers & Olson, (1989) (Oktasari & Primanita, 2022). Marital satisfaction is important because it impacts individual satisfaction with life as a whole, affecting mental and physical health, mood, social integration, and subjective well-being throughout life. For husbands, more frequent disagreements than usual within a given year were associated with poorer subjective health. For wives, the greater cumulative effects of disagreements over 16 years were harmful to subjective health (Shrout et al., 2019). A wife who has been cheated on has a Marital Satisfaction degree, namely a husband's or wife's subjective evaluation of their married life based on feelings of satisfaction, happiness, and pleasurable experiences they have had with

their partner, in the Enrich Marital Satisfaction Scale, explained 10 aspects that can help individuals achieve marital satisfaction.

First, personality issues are individual perceptions of partner behavior and their level of satisfaction with it. Second, communication describes individual views regarding feelings and attitudes when communicating in relationships. Third, conflict resolution describes individual perceptions about problem resolution in relationships. Fourth, financial management refers to behavior and concerns regarding economic issues regulated in relationships, including spending patterns and concern for financial decisions. Fifth, leisure activities describe individual preferences for spending free time, including personal or social activities, chosen based on shared or individual preferences. Sixth, sexual relationship describes individual feelings about affective and sexual relationships, including sexual problems and behavior, managing childbirth, and fidelity. Seventh, children and parenting describe the attitudes and feelings of having and raising children, including discipline, goals for raising children, and the impact of having children in relationship life. Eighth, family, and friends describe the feelings and concerns of individuals regarding relationships with relatives, in-laws, and friends, including expectations and comfort for spending time with relatives and family. Ninth, equalitarian roles describe individual feelings and attitudes regarding the various roles of marriage and family. Finally, religious orientation describes the meaning of religious beliefs and worship in relationships. A wife cheated on has a degree of marital satisfaction influenced by several factors. The strength of the commitment affects the degree of marital satisfaction. The attachment style an individual has affects the degree of marital satisfaction. Secure individuals will have higher satisfaction because they perceive their partner's behavior as reasonable. Controlling for IQ, age, and temperament, attachment security significantly predicted positive emotion (12-19% variance); father secure base support uniquely predicted positive emotion (Obeldobel & Kerns, 2020). Furthermore, the age of marriage affects the degree of marital satisfaction. Finally, the individual's socioeconomic status and how the individual's education can affect the degree of marital satisfaction.

Various factors, including the strength of individual commitment, the possessed attachment styles, personality traits, age of marriage, and socioeconomic status, influence marital satisfaction. A study shows a positive relationship between secure attachment and relationship satisfaction in general, as seen from marital satisfaction, which has a significant relationship with secure attachment to individuals (Yuspendi et al., 2015). In another study by Schade and Sandberg (2012), it was stated that infidelity is an attachment injury, which is intense trauma or a breach of trust that questions the nature of the entire relationship and must be addressed if the relationship is to survive. Based on the explanation above, the researcher would like to analyze the influence of attachment styles on marital satisfaction in wives who have been cheated.

Literature Review

Marital Satisfaction

Marital Satisfaction is a husband or wife's subjective evaluation of their married life based on feelings of satisfaction, happiness, and pleasant experiences carried out with their partner. Several factors can affect an individual's marital satisfaction: strength of commitment; attachment style; personality traits; age of marriage; economic social status. Following research conducted by Massar and Patil (2020), this study also highlights that marital satisfaction was also found to be significantly related to adolescent behavior problems.

Attachment Style

Wives cheated on have attachment styles that stick when interacting with their partners. One of the assumptions of attachment theory is that individuals' attachment styles reflect their previous parenting experiences, beginning with their parental relationship. A study shows that attachment style, especially avoidant, can be affected by traumatic experiences (Yuspendi et

al., 2018). Briefly, the term "adult attachment" refers to the constellation of people's knowledge, expectations, and insecurities about themselves and their close relationships (Fraley & Roisman, 2019).

Bowlby (1969) stated that attachment is a deep emotional bond between a child and his caregiver. One of the assumptions of attachment theory is that individuals' attachment styles reflect their previous parenting experiences, beginning with their parental relationship. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) explain attachment styles using Bowlby's concept of self and other self-regarding how individuals perceive (positively or negatively) themselves and others. Secure attachment is characterized by greater interpersonal engagement and positive internalized perceptions of the self (Read et al., 2018).

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) produced 4/3 of attachment styles, the first, the secure attachment style, is characterized by having a positive view of oneself and others. Individuals will be comfortable interacting with others because they are comfortable with themselves and believe others will accept them. The second is preoccupied attachment styles are characterized by individuals who have negative views of themselves but have positive views of others. So, expect others to accept it excessively and have anxiety that they are not worthy of being loved. They were having thoughts that they would be left behind. In a relationship that is lived, individuals will feel more valuable.

The third is dismissing attachment styles, characterized by individuals who have a positive view of themselves but have negative views of other people so that in socializing, the individual will avoid and not be too familiar, and there is even a tendency to reject other people—not realizing and acknowledging the potential or kindness of a partner. If a person is in a close relationship, he/she tends to maintain independence and is not bothered by relationships without close emotional ties. The fourth fearful-avoidant attachment style is characterized by individuals with negative views of themselves and others—categorized as the least secure attachment pattern. Individuals are not adaptive because they are colored by anxiety about familiarity and the desire to avoid social relationships. Uncomfortable when socializing, difficult to trust and depend on others. Based on this explanation, this research wants to explore whether attachment styles influence marital satisfaction in wives who have been cheated on.

Based on Yuniar (2021) showed a positive relationship between safe and unsafe attachment (anxiety and avoidance) and social skills. Safe attachment will provide self-confidence, and responsiveness, and shows that children's social competence can relate well to teachers and peers at school and in the community. The unsafe attachment will hurt the child. Children are not confident and less good at responding to their environment or lack social skills. Complemented by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) in Lim et al., (2021), attachment styles possessed in infancy can be identified in four attachment styles in adult individuals; secure, preoccupied, dismissing, and fearful. By combining two dimensions, the individual's attitude towards himself and others. Thus, the wife's attachment to her partner who has cheated on her will affect how the wife evaluates her marriage's satisfaction.

Method

The research method used is multiple regression when the researcher intends to predict how the state (ups and downs) of the dependent variable, when two or more independent variables as predictor factors are manipulated (increased and decreased in value) (Sugiyono, 2017). This study examines the influence of attachment style in predicting marital satisfaction in wives who have been cheated on. The participants of this study were 55 individuals. The criteria for the participants included (a) being married, (b) being aged 18-40 years, and (c) being domiciled in the city of Bandung.

In this study, the research instrument used was the Attachment Styles measuring instrument, namely The Experience in Close Relationship-Revised (ECR-R) Questionnaire.

The questionnaire consists of 36 items with a reliability value of 0.67, classified as moderate. As well as a measuring instrument made in 1989 called the ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Inventory consists of 15 items in the form of statements relating to married life. With a reliability value of 0.49 which is classified as moderate.

Result and Discussion

Data Description

The data in this study include attachment styles (X) and marital satisfaction (Y) variables. The following contains a description of the research data.

1. *Results of Structural Equation Model (SEM) Analysis*

The measuring tool consists of 36 items with 4 answer choices, with the highest score of 144 and the lowest score of 36. 53% of the attachment styles of wives who have been cheated on have attachment styles that are classified as insecure. It can happen because the wife has an unpleasant experience in the form of an affair committed by her partner in the marriage relationship she is in.

2. *Material Satisfaction*

The measuring instrument consists of 15 items with 5 answer choices, with the highest score of 75 and the lowest score of 15. Marital satisfaction of a wife who has been cheated on by 58% is low. It can happen because marital satisfaction has 10 components that form an individual's evaluation of his married life.

Data Analysis Requirements Testing

The requirements analysis tests carried out in this study are multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, and residual normality.

1. Multicollinearity Test

Data through the multicollinearity test found the VIF value = 1.131, so it meets the criteria because there is no multicollinearity in the independent variables.

2. Heteroscedasticity Test

Data through the heteroscedasticity test found that the data points spread above and below or around the number 0 and do not collect in one area, thus meeting the criteria because there is no heteroscedasticity in the attachment style and marital satisfaction variables.

3. Residual normality test

The data went through the residual normality testing process using the One Sample *Kolmogorov-Smirnov* test to see the spread of the data. The sig value = 0.200 is obtained, which is greater than the p-value (0.05), so it can be concluded that the data is normally distributed.

Linear Attachment Style and Marital Satisfaction Regression Testing

Table 1. Linear Attachment Style and Marital Regression Testing

R	R ²	Significance	Note	Hypothesis testing
0.557	0.31	0,00	0 < 0.05	H ₁ is Accepted

Based on the table above, R: 0.557 is obtained, which shows that there is a strong correlation between attachment style simultaneously to marital satisfaction. The R² or R square value is

0.31, meaning that attachment styles and other variables jointly can explain 31% of the variation in marital satisfaction. In comparison, the remaining 69% is explained by other variables or factors. A significance of 0.00 indicates that simultaneously there is a contribution made by attachment styles to marital satisfaction.

How a wife generally behaves and interacts with her partner will influence the individual's assessment of overall marital satisfaction. In addition, having an emotional bond can predict 31% of how a wife who has been cheated on will evaluate her married life. Some of the research showed the relationship between attachment styles and marital satisfaction, such as MOLERO et al., (2016) research.

A wife cheated on has an unpleasant experience that will affect marital satisfaction. In this case, the satisfaction is determined by the attachment styles lived by the wife who had been cheated on in her married life, the positive relationship between secure attachment and marital satisfaction which has a significant relationship with secure attachment to individuals. How a wife who has been cheated on and who has a secure attachment shows involvement and satisfaction in maintaining a relationship with her partner, can commit, trust, warm, depend, and can process conflicts that occur will have an influence on the wife's evaluation of her married life based on feelings of satisfaction, happiness, and fun experiences to do with the partner.

Multiple Attachment Style and Marital Satisfaction Regression Testing

Table 2. Multiple Attachment Style and Marital Satisfaction Regression Testing

Model		Coefficients ^a				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	78.854	7.120		11.075	.000
	Anxious Attachment	-4.254	1.577	-.331	-2.698	.009
	Avoidant Attachment	-9.007	1.921	-.574	-4.690	.000

Found that anxious and avoidant attachment give a contribution partially to marital satisfaction. Anxious attachment contributed a negative 33% to the variation of marital satisfaction. Meanwhile, avoidant attachment contributed a strong negative 57% to the variation of marital satisfaction.

This finding is similar to Bedair et al., (2020) research which showed that insecure attachment negatively affects marital satisfaction with a fairly strong correlation with a value of $r = 0.476$, $p < .001$. Insecure attachments such as anxiety and avoidant are negative predictors for marital satisfaction.

Based on the Najarpourian et al., (2018) research that found anxious attachment give contributed a negatively to the marital satisfaction with value of $r = 0.76$. According to the stepwise regression analysis, 78% of the variance in marital satisfaction in women is determined by several components, one of which is anxious and avoidant attachment, love story components of popularity, dominance, submission, and pleasure and entertainment Sherly & Suryadi (2022) showed that these results indicate that individuals who have high anxiety attachment and/or avoidance attachment have low levels of marital satisfaction. Conversely, individuals who have low anxiety attachment and/or avoidance attachment or can be said to have secure attachment, have a high level of marital satisfaction Based on the results of the hypothesis in this study, attachment styles have a strong influence on marital satisfaction in wives who have been cheated on. Meanwhile, one important factor that can influence marital adjustment is assertive communication. This is also in line with research proposed by Banse (2004) which explains that marital satisfaction can be predicted by individual attachment,

partner attachment, and how they interact with each other. That implied there was a positive relationship between assertiveness and marital adjustment. The higher assertiveness the better marital adjustment or vice versa (Retiara et al., 2016).

The results of the calculation that marital satisfaction owned by 60% of respondents is classified as low. Meanwhile, the results of the calculation on attachment styles owned by 47% of respondents are classified as secure attachments. These results explain that the early years of marriage are filled with unexpected things, in which there are many crises or problems faced. Based on the final level of education of the respondents, namely the wife who had been cheated on, it was found that 58% of respondents with a high school level of education had low marital satisfaction. 23% of respondents with a junior high school level of education have low marital satisfaction. 9% of respondents with a bachelor's level of education have high marital satisfaction. Meanwhile, Masarik et al., (2016) showed that on average and for both generations, economic pressure predicted relative increases in couple's hostile, contemptuous, and angry behaviors; however, couples who were highly effective problem solvers experienced no increases in these behaviors in response to economic pressure.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion, the following conclusions can be put forward.

- 1) On average, attachment styles owned by wives who have been cheated on are classified as insecure. Most wives who have been cheated need to repair the emotional bond between themselves and their partners.
- 2) On average, the marital satisfaction of a wife cheated on is still low. It means most wives who have been cheated on have a fairly low personal evaluation of their married life.
- 3) A fairly strong correlation exists between attachment styles and marital satisfaction in wives who have been cheated on. The more secure attachment an individual has, the higher the degree of marital satisfaction is.
- 4) Attachment style can have as much as 31% influence on the marital satisfaction of a wife who has been cheated on. An individual's more secure attachment as a predictor will increase marital satisfaction.
- 5) Anxious attachment contributed a negative 33% to the variation in marital satisfaction.
- 6) Avoidant attachment contributed a stronger negative 57% to the variation of marital satisfaction

Based on the results of the research, discussion, and conclusions that have been stated previously, several suggestions can be recommended as follows:

1. For future researchers who wish to do similar research, do not stop at knowing how strong the influence and predictions of attachment styles have on marital satisfaction in wives who have been cheated on, but follow up on the results of the research so that respondents can receive direct benefits from this research.
2. This research is expected to be a lesson for wives who have been cheated on that individuals can improve their quality of life through concern for marital satisfaction that lives by individuals.

References

- Banse, R. (2004). Adult Attachment and Marital Satisfaction: Evidence for Dyadic Configuration Effects. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 21(2), 273–282. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407504041388>
- Bartholomew, K., & Horowitz, L. M. (1991). Attachment styles among young adults: A test of a four-category model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 61(2), 226–244. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.61.2.226>
-

-
- Bedair, K., Hamza, E. A., & Gladding, S. T. (2020). Attachment Style, Marital Satisfaction, and Mutual Support Attachment Style in Qatar. *The Family Journal*, 28(3), 329–336. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1066480720934377>
- Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and Loss: Attachment*. Basic Books.
- Davila, J., Karney, B. R., Hall, T. W., & Bradbury, T. N. (2003). Depressive Symptoms and Marital Satisfaction: Within-Subject Associations and the Moderating Effects of Gender and Neuroticism. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 17(4), 557–570. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0893-3200.17.4.557>
- Fraley, R. C., & Roisman, G. I. (2019). The development of adult attachment styles: four lessons. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 25, 26–30. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2018.02.008>
- Lim, A. S., Khoo, E. E. T., & Khoo, R. E. . (2021). Attachment Style, Friendship Quality and the Mediating Effect of Communication Skills in Young Adults Friendship. *JPAI (Journal of Psychology and Instruction)*, 5(1), 33–42.
- Masarik, A. S., Martin, M. J., Ferrer, E., Lorenz, F. O., Conger, K. J., & Conger, R. D. (2016). Couple Resilience to Economic Pressure Over Time and Across Generations. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 78(2), 326–345. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12284>
- Massar, D., & Patil, P. B. (2020). Effects of Parenting Practices and Marital Satisfaction on Adolescent Behavioral Problems. *International Journal of Current Microbiology and Applied Sciences*, 9(3), 109–120. <https://doi.org/10.20546/ijcmas.2020.903.014>
- MOLERO, F., SHAVER, P. R., FERNÁNDEZ, I., ALONSO-ARBIOL, I., & RECIO, P. (2016). Long-term partners' relationship satisfaction and their perceptions of each other's attachment insecurities. *Personal Relationships*, 23(1), 159–171. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pere.12117>
- Najarpourian, S., Samavi, S. A., & Sina, F. (2018). The Prediction of Marital Satisfaction Through Attachment Styles and Love Story. *Iranian Journal of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, In Press(In Press)*. <https://doi.org/10.5812/ijpbs.62774>
- Obeldobel, C. A., & Kerns, K. A. (2020). Attachment security is associated with the experience of specific positive emotions in middle childhood. *Attachment & Human Development*, 22(5), 555–567. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616734.2019.1604775>
- Oktasari, T., & Primanita, R. Y. (2022). HUBUNGAN ANTARA PEMAAAFAN DENGAN KEPUASAN PERNIKAHAN BAGI WANITA YANG MENGALAMI KDRT DI SUMATERA BARAT. *NUSANTARA: Jurnal Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial*, 9(2), 681–688.
- Read, D. L., Clark, G. I., Rock, A. J., & Coventry, W. L. (2018). Adult attachment and social anxiety: The mediating role of emotion regulation strategies. *PLOS ONE*, 13(12), e0207514. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0207514>
- Retiara, G. S., Khairani, M., & Yulandari, N. (2016). Assertiveness and Marital Adjustment of Young Adult in Central Aceh. *Jurnal Psikogenesis*, 4(2), 161–169.
- Schade, L. C., & Sandberg, J. G. (2012). Healing the Attachment Injury of Marital Infidelity Using Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy: A Case Illustration. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 40(5), 434–444. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01926187.2011.631374>
- Sherly, & Suryadi, D. (2022). PENGARUH ADULT ATTACHMENT STYLE TERHADAP KEPUASAN PERNIKAHAN PADA DEWASA AWAL. *Jurnal Muara Ilmu Sosial, Humaniora, Dan Seni*, 6(2), 386–392.
-

-
- Shrout, M. R., Brown, R. D., Orbuch, T. L., & Weigel, D. J. (2019). A multidimensional examination of marital conflict and subjective health over 16 years. *Personal Relationships*, 26(3), 490–506. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pere.12292>
- Sugiyono. (2017). *Metode Penelitian kualitatif, kuantitatif dan R&D*. Alfabeta.
- Yuniar, N. F. (2021). CHILDHOOD SOCIAL SKILLS AND ATTACHMENT STYLES: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW. *OPTIMA: Journal of Guidance and Counseling*, 1(1).
- Yuspendi, Handojo, V., Athota, V. S., Sihotang, M. Y. M., & Aryani, P. N. A. D. (2018). Adult Attachment Stability-Instability Before and After Marriage Between Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and Non-IPV Women Separated from Partners During Military Duty in Indonesia. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, 39(1), 103–116. <https://doi.org/10.1002/anzf.1281>
- Yuspendi, Y., Lie, F.-F., & Maria, C. (2015). Adult Attachment and Personality Traits and the Quality of Marriage of Husband and Wife Couples. *ANIMA Indonesian Psychological Journal*, 30(3), 127–138. <https://doi.org/10.24123/aipj.v30i3.542>