



*Asesorías y Tutorías para la Investigación Científica en la Educación Puig-Salabarría S.C.  
José María Pino Suárez 460-2 esq a Lerdo de Tejada, Toluca, Estado de México. 7223898475*

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**TÍTULO:** Capacidad de predecir la preparación para la infidelidad basada en las relaciones tempranas de los objetos, la fuerza del ego y el estilo de conexión.

**AUTORES:**

1. Ph.D. Alireza Agha Yusefi.
2. Máster. Fariba Bolouri.

**RESUMEN:** El objetivo del estudio fue predecir la preparación para la infidelidad basada en las relaciones tempranas de objeto, la fuerza del ego y el estilo de apego en estudiantes. La población incluyó a todos los estudiantes de pregrado casados que estudiaron en las universidades Azad y Public de Qom en el año escolar 2014-2015. La muestra fue 260 individuos por muestreo de conglomerados. El estudio fue descriptivo-predictivo y utilizó la regresión múltiple. Los hallazgos mostraron que las relaciones de objeto y la capacidad de la fuerza del ego para la infidelidad a la debilidad y los estilos de apego a la infidelidad predicen en un nivel significativo. El apego inseguro se puede usar para explicar la infidelidad, y aquellos con un apego seguro tienden a ser menos propensos a la infidelidad en la relación de propensión.

**PALABRAS CLAVES:** Preparación para la infidelidad, relaciones tempranas de objetos, fortaleza del ego, estilo de apego, estudiantes casados.

**TITLE:** Predictability of Infidelity Readiness Based on the early object relations, Ego Strength and Attachment Style.

**AUTHORS:**

1. Ph.D. Alireza Agha Yusefi.
2. Master. Fariba Bolouri.

**ABSTRACT:** The objective of the study was to predict the preparation for infidelity based on the early object relationships, the strength of the ego and the attachment style in students. The population included all married undergraduate students who studied at the Azad and Public universities of Qom in the 2014-2015 school year. The sample was 260 individuals by sampling of conglomerates. The study was descriptive-predictive and used multiple regression. The findings showed that object relationships and the capacity of ego strength for infidelity to weakness and attachment styles to infidelity predict at a significant level. Insecure attachment can be used to explain infidelity, and those with secure attachment tend to be less prone to infidelity in the propensity relationship.

**KEY WORDS:** Readiness to Infidelity, Early Object Relations, Ego Strength, Attachment Style, Married Students.

**INTRODUCTION.**

Family as one of the most important factors in human development has a special place in society, while this institution can always be subjected to devastating damage.

One of the most serious and most serious threats to the family is infidelity proneness (Mesri Pour, Etemadi, Ahmadi and Jazayeri, 2017). Infidelity proneness is one of the important factors that threatens the performance, stability and continuity of proneness relationships. Research in this area suggests that about one-third of men and one quarter of women are likely to become infidelity proneness at least once during their life (Mark, Janssen & Milhausen, 2011; Ahmadi Kamarposhti & Geraeli, 2019; Monisha et al, 2019).

Infidelity is a feeling of being harmed by deliberate or inadvertent behavior by a trusted person (Rachman, 2010). Infidelity is defined as a breach of commitment in emotional or sexual relationships, or both, which results in the removal of fundamental communication without the consent of the opposing party (Fife et al, 2013; Hosseinzadeh et al, 2019). Shaye (2010) introduced the low satisfaction of relationships as the best predictor for infidelity proneness. Bravo & Ipkın (2010) introduced one of the most important factors in infidelity proneness is unmet needs, deficiencies in empathic response and fatigue, all of which are factors that have a direct effect on decreasing proneness satisfaction (Atoda, Sifarb, 1997). A number of studies support the idea that the cause of the individual's participation in external relations of proneness is due to the fact that some of the issues in their initial relationship are mistaken.

Dissatisfaction and low satisfaction in initial relationships increase the tendency to participate in external relations of proneness. Also, a negative correlation has been found between proneness and infidelity satisfaction that has been true for all aspects of the infidelity of proneness (emotional, sexual, emotional, and physical infidelity) (Shani Shaghayegh, 2011; Emmers-Sommer et al, 2010; Rasouli et al, 2019; Paarakh et al, 2018).

One of the predictive factors affecting readiness is infidelity, early object relations. The theory of object relations and psychology is one of the psychoanalytic approaches that are based on the need for communication and self-respect. Common and endorsed propositions in these two approaches include:

- 1) The importance of unconscious processes in human mental life, including thoughts, feelings, motives and unconscious actions.
- 2) Conflict, ambivalence, and compromise.
- 3) Personality sustainability and importance of childhood experiences.
- 4) Emphasis on the role of incarnation of oneself, others and their relationships.

##### 5) Transitional paths.

In the theory of object relations, it is believed that the personality of a person is shaped by his interactions with others in the environment; interaction with others, especially in critical periods and critical stages of development, is very important, as important transformational assignments such as basic trust, autonomy and separation-individuality result from the quality of individual experiences with others.

One of the effective factors in readiness for infidelity is ego strength. Ego's strength refers to my capacity to handle conflicting demands, the super ego, and the requirements of external reality, and to the extent that I cannot achieve functional equilibrium, the personality involved will be disturbed (Lavertue et al, 2002). Ego strength is an important variable in human performance. The term ego strength refers to the ability of an individual to effectively deal with competitive demands and overwhelming situations and to function effectively despite the demands and expectations of these conflicting forces.

The presence of an ego strength causes less sign of psychological harm and suffers from stress due to stressful life conditions and sufficient capacity. On the other hand, the weakness of the ego causes the organism to return from the outer world to the inner world and retreat (Rouchi Kouchaki et al, 2016; Razavi et al, 2015). Since ego is responsible for managing the psychological system, all psychological problems appear when ego is unable to fulfill its responsibilities. In general, our ability to cope with our lives, that is, our psychological balance, depends on the ability and ego strength to overcome the various pressures on which it enters (Gold, 1980; Agha Mohamadian Sherbaf et al, 2016; Bahremand, 2015).

Another important predictor of readiness to infidelity is attachment style. An attachment is a lasting emotional bond between two individuals, so that one of the parties strives to maintain attachment in the adjacency of attachment, and act in a way to ensure that the relationship continues (Khanjani,

2011). Individual differences in attachment style originate from the experiences of individuals in past close relationships and begin with an attachment relationship between the child and the primary caregivers (Mikulinger & Shaver, 2010; Taubaye et al, 2018).

Attachment behavior activates when one experiences feelings such as fear, sadness, and illness, and prompts the person to search or stay close to the person (Zimmermann and Baker, 2002). Attachment styles can be defined as thoughts, feelings, and personal behaviors in close relationships with caregivers, sexual partners and other intimate individuals (Bottonari et al., 2007).

The three attachment styles are: secure, avoidant, ambivalence. Individuals with secure attachment style are comfortable in establishing intimate relationships; they tend to receive support from others; they have a positive image of themselves; others have positive expectations. People with avoidant attachment style are considered to be cold and suspicious emotions.

They find it hard for them to trust and rely on others and feel worried when others are very close to them. Individuals with ambivalence attachment style regard themselves as people who are not properly understood by others and who lack self-esteem and feel worried that others have left or really do not like them. (Marcus, 2003). Some studies on evolutionary pathology emphasize the relationship between early negative educational experiences, familial and adult problems in developmental assignments, psychological problems, and defective proneness networks (Young et al, 2012; Melo et al, 2017).

The results of Hamidi et al., (2007) suggest that individuals with secure attachment style have less proneness and interpersonal problems and more happiness than attachment style of avoidant and ambivalence. Research of Ho, Chen, Bond, Hui, Chan & Friedman (2010) showed that avoidant attachment and anxiety attachment have a negative relationship with personal commitment.

Fish (2010) showed that anxiety and avoidance attachment styles had a significant relationship with infidelity proneness. According to Yumbul, Cavusoglu & Geyim findings (2010), there was a significantly positive relationship between childhood injuries and infidelity (quoted from Hojatkah, Mohammadi and Valad Beigi, 2016).

The results of Cohen (2010) study, which aimed to investigate the relationship between attachment and infidelity in romantic relationships, showed that individuals with secure attachment style are less likely to join to attachment style than insecure infidelity. Donavan (2010) and Mc Anulty et al., (2008) showed that individuals with secure attachment style have a stricter attitude than infidelity. While individuals with avoidant attachment style and anxiety are less rigorous in this regard. Khosh Kham (2011) found that individuals with secure attachment style experience less conflict, more satisfaction and stability, and longer periods in their romantic relationships.

Since proneness infidelity is one of the threats to family strength, the present study can provide more data for preventing proneness infidelities. Ego strength and early object relations are two important factors in shaping the personality of children in childhood that can affect the life of proneness in adolescence, as well as ego strength and attachment styles play an important role in our interpersonal and social life. Therefore, the present study was conducted with the aim of evaluating predictability of readiness to infidelity based on object relations, of ego strength and attachment style.

## **DEVELOPMENT.**

### **Method.**

This research is a descriptive-correlational research based on predictive research. The statistical population includes all married undergraduate students studying in Azad, public and non-profit universities of Qom who studied in the school year of 2015-2016. Using available sampling and selecting two universities randomly, as well as Morgan table with population size (1,400 individuals of married students), 300 individuals were selected as the investigating sample. 190 married students

from the Azad university of Azarbaijan and 110 married students from public university who were studying in undergraduate degrees in two groups of humanities and engineering were selected. The inventories used in this research are:

**A) Attitudes Inventory towards Infidelity.**

An attitude to infidelity inventory was created in 2006 by Watley at the university of the State of Wales in the United States. The inventory has 12 questions that each individual receives a lower score in this test, indicating that he or she does not accept the phenomenon of infidelity, and the higher the individual's score indicates its acceptability for the individual.

Score of 48 is the average score of this test, which indicates the relative acceptance of infidelity proneness. Reliability and validity of this test has been evaluated on 150 male students and 136 female students at the university of Wales State University. Significantly of this scale was calculated at a level of 0.05, and the results indicated that the special value of the invoices was more than 0.1. The reliability of this scale is calculated to be 0.80.

Reliability and validity of this inventory in Iran was evaluated by Yasamin Karimi, which Cronbach's alpha of this test was calculated to be 0.89. This inventory has been used only in a study that the researcher, after returning it to Persian and examining by 10 professors in the field of proneness, performed this test on 30 individuals and the average score of these individuals was 35.27 and its standard deviation is 13.58.

The researcher also calculated the reliability of the Cronbach's alpha test in a test sample, which resulted in an equivalence of 0.892. Meanwhile, the reliability of the two halves of this scale was calculated using a split half method of 0.821 and the correlation of these two halves was calculated using the Gutman method and equal to 0.892.

**B) Bell Object Relations Inventory.**

Object relations inventory is a self-report inventory developed by Bell (1986). The inventory has 45 questions that measure four components of Alienation (ALN), Insecure Attachment (IA), Ego centric bias (EGO), Social Inaccuracy (SI).

Average score for students was reported for all components of ALN was 53; IA was 51; EGO was 51; SI was 51. Bell et al. (1986) reported the validity of the inventory in their research and reported the reliability of its components from 78 to 90. Hadi Nejad, Tabatabaian and Dehghani (2014) in their research reported the validity and reliability of a three-week re-test of the inventory appropriate. Cronbach's Alpha sub-scales were 0.66 for social inequity to 0.82 for alienation.

**C) Psycho-social Inventory Ego Strength (PIES).**

The ego strength psycho-social inventory was developed by Strom et al., in 1997. A self-report inventory of eight ego strength that is derived from eight levels of psychosocial development. Each of the sub-scales in this personal inventory is intended to solve conflicts at a psycho-social stage associated with individuals' ego.

The inventory is based on an entire analysis of the writings of Eriksson on this subject. Structural validity and content validity of this inventory have been confirmed by a large number of Ericsson students.

The internal stability of this scale has been proved in various studies. Also, convergent validity has been demonstrated by assessing the development of identity, self-esteem, life goals, internal control, and gender roles. Moreover, the separation of this scale with the discovery of a negative relationship between the ego strengths and disappointment, identity crisis, delayed identity, and personal disappointment 3 have been proven. The first version of the questionnaire consisted of 128 items that used five Likert scores for scoring.



After the initial analysis, eight weaker materials were eliminated in each sub-scale. The result of this study was 64 items with 8 sub-scales with Cronbach's alpha 0.83 for hope, 0.69 volition, 0.52 for goal, 0.78 for competence, 0.62 for loyalty, 0.64 for love, 0.84 for care and 0.8 for wisdom. The target sub-scale was low reliability ( $\alpha = 0.52$ ). The rest of the sub-scales were acceptable at the level. Cronbach's alpha was 0.93 for the overall scale.

#### **D) Hazan and Shaver attachment style inventory.**

Attachment style inventory has been made by Hazan and Shaver (1987). The inventory is a 15-question test and has three attachment style include: secure, avoidant and ambivalence. Hazan and Shaver (1987) obtained a total re-test reliability of this inventory of 0.81 and a reliability of 0.87 with Cronbach's alpha.

Coulitz and Reid also obtained reliability by using Cronbach's alpha method of 0.79. In addition, Khaledian (2010) also conducted a n inventory on a sample of 60 individuals and obtained a Cronbach's alpha of 0.82 that was an acceptable value.

The factor analysis of Hazan and Shaver (1987) inventory by Coulitz and Reid led to the extraction of three major factors that were interpreted by researchers as the capacity for joining close relationships. Hazan and Shaver have well-documented content and criterion validity and reported their constructive validity to the most desirable extent.

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics indicators (average and standard deviation) and inferential (multiple regression) statistics using SPSS software version 22.

#### **Research findings.**

The descriptive statistics of the variables under investigation are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the studied variables.

Maximum	Minimum	Standard Deviation	Average	Variable
70	24	8.42	47.05	Readiness to infidelity
		<b>Early object relations.</b>		
24	0	4.84	7.89	Self-consciousness
26	1	4.56	10.79	Insecure attachment
34	0	7.97	13.64	Alienation
29	0	3.71	5.97	Social inaccuracy
		<b>Social Ability</b>		
38	5	4.54	25.81	Love
38	7	4.47	22.73	Volition
40	8	5.61	27.41	Competence
44	6	5.58	26.7	Wisdom
44	6	5.58	29/63	Loyalty
42	16	4.66	29.99	Hope
40	6	5.71	28.02	Goal
43	15	5.44	28.81	Care
		<b>Attachment style.</b>		
33	5	3.53	13.25	secure
31	3	3.41	10.26	avoidant
30	1	4.23	9.65	ambivalence

In Table 2, a summary model of the correlation between early object relations components, the ability of ego strength and attachment style with readiness to infidelity has been obtained.

Table 2. A summary model of the correlation of components of predictive variables with readiness to infidelity.

<b>R-squared adjusted</b>	<b>R-squared</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>Model</b>
	<b>Early object relations</b>		
0.012	0.025	0.159	1
	<b>Ego strength</b>		
0.041	0.067	0.259	1
	<b>Attachment styles</b>		
0.259	0.267	0.517	1

Based on the information of above table, the relationship between the components of "early object relations", "ego strength" and "attachment style" with readiness to infidelity is estimated to be 0.159, 0.259, and 0.517, respectively. In other words, these variables explain 0.02, 0.06 and 0.26, respectively, of variance related to "readiness to infidelity" of married students in Qom.

Table 3: Standardized regression coefficient (beta) for readiness to infidelity and early object relations components.

<b>Significantly level</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>Standardized coefficients</b>	<b>Not standardized coefficients</b>			<b>Model</b>
		<b>Beta</b>	<b>Standard error</b>	<b>B</b>		
0.001	39.814		1.125	44.804	Constant value	1
0.001	1.022	0.085	0.140	0.143	Insecure attachment	
0.001	0.941	0.089	0.145	0.086	Alienation	
0.001	0.740	0.055	0.091	0.108	inaccuracy	
0.001	-0.639	-0.057	0.140	0.089	Self-consciousness	

Based on the above regression model, one can say that by increasing a standard deviation in the "insecure attachment" as much as 0.085 standard deviations into "readiness to infidelity", by increasing a standard deviation of "alienation" as much as 0.089 standard deviations into "readiness

to infidelity ", by increasing a standard deviation of" inaccuracy "as much as 0.055 standard deviations into" readiness to infidelity, "married students are added. By increasing a standard deviation in the " self-consciousness " as much as 0.057 standard deviations is reduced to readiness for infidelity of married students in Qom.

Table 4: Standardized regression coefficient (beta) for readiness to infidelity and ego strengths components.

Significantly level	T	standardized coefficients	Not standardized coefficients		Model
		Beta	Standard error	B	
0.001	15.899		3.437	54.651	Constant value
0.001	-0.711	-0.046	0.107	-0.076	Love
0.001	1.198	0.088	0.130	0.156	Volition
0.001	-1.443	-0.119	0.112	-0.162	Competence
0.001	0.740	0.059	0.109	0.081	Wisdom
0.001	-0.023	-0.002	0.115	-0.003	Loyalty
0.001	-3.149	-0.243	0.123	-0.386	Hope
0.001	-0.119	-0.011	0.118	-0.014	Goal
0.001	1.874	0.139	0.104	0.195	Care

Based on the above regression model, it can be said that by increasing a standard deviation of "volition" as much as 0.088 standard deviations into "readiness to infidelity", by increasing a standard deviation of "wisdom" as much as 0.059 standard deviations "readiness to infidelity" increases the "readiness to infidelity" of married students by increasing a standard deviation into "care" as much as 0.139 standard deviations.

By increasing a standard deviation in "love" as much as 0.046 standard deviations from "readiness to infidelity", by increasing a standard deviation in "competence" as much as 0.119 standard deviations from "readiness to infidelity", by increasing a standard deviation in "loyalty" as much as 0.002 standard deviations from "readiness to infidelity", with an increase in a standard deviation of "hope" as much as 0.243 standard deviation from "readiness to infidelity", with an increase in a standard deviation in the "goal" as much as 0.011 standard deviations from readiness to infidelity, married students are reduced.

Table 5: Standardized regression (beta) coefficient for readiness to infidelity and attachment style components.

Significantly level	T	standardized coefficients	Not standardized coefficients		Model	Model
		Beta	Standard error	B		
0.001	26.104		1.601	41.795	Interactive effect	<b>1</b>
0.001	-4.741	-0.257	0.097	-0.46	secure	
0.001	0.141	0.008	0.126	0.018	Insecure	
0.001	8.204	0.440	0.098	0.807	ambivalence	

According to the above table, by increasing a standard deviation in the "secure attachment" as much as 0.257 standard deviations from "readiness to infidelity" decreased of married students. By increasing a standard deviation in the "insecure attachment" as much as 0.008 standard deviations into "readiness to infidelity," by increasing a standard deviation in the "ambivalence attachment" as much as 0.440 standard deviation into "readiness to infidelity" is added to married students in the Qom city.

**Discussion.**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the prediction of readiness into infidelity based on early object relations, ego strength and attachment style in married students in Qom. The results of regression analysis showed that there is a relationship between early object relations and its components (self-consciousness, inaccuracy, alienation and insecure attachment) with readiness to infidelity. The results confirmed a significant negative relationship between "self-consciousness" and a significant positive relationship between "inaccuracy", "alienation" and "insecure attachment", with readiness to infidelity, and also between the ego strength and its components (love, volition, competence, wisdom, loyalty, hope, goal, and care) with readiness to infidelity.

The results confirmed a significant negative relationship between love, competence, loyalty, hope, and goal, and a significant positive relationship between volition, wisdom and care with readiness to infidelity.

There is also a relationship between attachment style and its components (secure, avoidant, and ambivalence attachments) with readiness to infidelity. The results showed a significant negative relationship between "secure attachment" and a significant positive relationship between "insecure attachment" and "ambivalence attachment" with readiness to infidelity. Whatever the secure attachment is high, married students have less readiness to infidelity. Also, as the avoidant attachment and ambivalence attachment are high, married students have greater readiness into infidelity. Therefore, the research hypothesis is confirmed. This finding was in line with the results of Cohen (2010), Donovan (2010), McAnolty et al., (2008), Jeanfreau (2009), and Bokam et al., (2005).

In explaining the research findings, can be said that adults with secure attachment style ones to be those who have a positive sense of self and a positive perception of others and are socially more confident and more successful. They are individuals with Positive self-esteem (low anxiety) and

perceive others positive (low avoidance), and in their relationships have feeling of security (Cann, Norman, Welbourne & Calhoun, 2008).

Dewall et al., (2011) have shown that individuals with avoidant attachment style may be less resistant to infidelity because they have lower levels of proneness commitment. In fact, individuals with a high avoidant attachment have a much easier attitude towards infidelity, as well as more focused attention to alternative spouses. They have a more positive relationship with the new partners and are more involved in infidelity. An avoidant attachment is more likely to act as infidelity than other attachment styles because they interfere with interpersonal communication. These individuals rarely show dependence and fear of rejection in interpersonal relationships, they do not have value for communication with others (including the spouse), and do not see any reason for emotional connections; in their view, emotional communication with others is unnecessary.

Few excitement assets, insecure distracting attachment, predict short-term propensity relationships. Jeanfreau (2009) has shown that insecure attachment can be used to explain infidelity, and those with a secure attachment tendency are less likely to be infidelity proneness, because they feel comfortable in their proneness relationships and ensure that this feeling will act as a barrier to the initiation of sexual excitement of ultra-proneness.

In research of Borna and Shevir (2006) have showed that individuals with secure attachment style have the highest levels of self-esteem in terms of socio-sexual orientation, and individuals with avoidant attachment style and the attitude of at least sexual abstinence (in ultra-proneness relationships).

The results of the research by Ferriko (2006) showed that individuals who had an attachment style were insecure avoidant or had a ludus style of love, were more likely to seek alternatives and had less commitment, were more involved in the relation of ultra-proneness, and vice versa, secure

attachments style, eros love style , had a higher commitment, and were less involved in ultra-proneness relationship.

Bokam et al. (2005) found that men with ambivalence attachment style are more prone to engage in infidelity. Research by Hazan and Shaver (1978; quoted by Kardaktaz, 2009) showed that about 56% of adults are on the secure attachment category. Individuals with a secure attachment style tend to describe their relationship experiences more positively and they tend to continue their relationships more than those who are anxious / ambivalence.

Sohrabi and Rasouli (2007) have shown that there is a relationship between insecure attachment style and ultra-proneness relationships. They also in 2008 have shown that individuals with insecure attachment style have a lower commitment to life than proneness, and moreover, ultra-proneness relationships are more common among individual with avoidant attachment style.

## **CONCLUSIONS.**

From the research constraints, it can be said that the present research was carried out in Qom, so the generalization of the results to other areas should be cautious.

It is suggested that this research can be carried out in other regions and provinces, and the results should be compared, and since this research is limited to students, the research results cannot be generalized to the whole society. Therefore, to increase the external credibility of the research, it should be done on other samples.

Applied applications of this research, considering the attachment style of individuals, apply strategies to change avoidant attachment style and ambivalence to secure attachment or adaptive practices. By teaching life skills on individuals with avoidant attachment style and ambivalence to improve mental health and reduce infidelity.



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**DATA OF THE AUTHORS.**

**1. Alireza Agha Yusefi.** Associate Professor of Psychology, Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran.

**2. Fariba Bolouri.** Master of Science in Psychology. Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran.

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