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The Contribution of Attachment Styles and Paternal Psychological Absence in Predicting Psychological Loneliness

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***Abstract*—**This study aims to investigate the contribution of attachment styles (secure, anxious, and avoidant attachment), paternal psychological absence (partial and total), and gender in predicting psychological loneliness (positive and negative). The study sample consisted of (270) male and female students from various educational levels. Following statistical analyses, the results revealed that both secure and anxious attachment styles contribute to predicting positive loneliness. Furthermore, the results showed that all attachment styles (secure, avoidant, and anxious), total paternal psychological absence, and gender contribute to predicting negative loneliness.

***Keywords*—**Secure Attachment, Anxious Attachment, Avoidant Attachment, Loneliness, Paternal Psychological Absence.

Introduction

Attachment is a prominent concept in developmental psychology, referring to the emotional bond between a child and their caregiver- most often the mother- who provides security and protection, thereby enabling the child to explore, learn, and build relatively balanced social relationships in the future. The importance of attachment is not limited to childhood; its effects extend into adolescence and adulthood. Consequently, studying attachment serves as a fundamental gateway to understanding an individual's emotional and social development and interpreting various patterns of human behaviour and interaction.

"The etymological origin of the word attachment (ta‘alluq) stems from the root ‘aliqa. It is said: ‘aliqa al-shay’- meaning it clung to and attached itself to something; or it signifies the embedding of love in the lover's heart so that it hardly departs. According to Mukhtar al-Sihah, it means holding fast, clinging, and bonding. It is also said: ‘aliqa fulanun fulanan bihi- meaning his love took root in his heart, representing attachment and steadfastness." (Arabic Language Academy, 2013, p. 431).

An individual's ability and desire to form emotional relationships with others are linked to the quality of care and attention received during childhood. Children construct initial expectations about themselves and others regarding interpersonal relationships. Attachment varies among individuals depending on age, gender, and family circumstances; it is an important and fundamental human requirement, a social need, and a pathway to social acceptance (Ali Qaimi, 1996, pp. 375–383).

Research on Attachment

Bowlby asserts that the neglect and harshness experienced by an individual from their parents in early childhood hinder the establishment of a positive attachment with them. This leads to an absence of interaction and dynamism, and a lack of feelings of security and tranquillity, subsequently driving the individual to encounter numerous problems related to social relationships. Thus, attachment disorder constitutes a major problem for adolescents, particularly those unable to open up or form successful relationships with

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others. (Amira Fikri, 2008, p. 13).

It is worth noting that attachment does not develop suddenly; rather, it emerges through a series of steady steps over 8 to 9 months. This demonstrates that attachment has a continuous impact throughout a person's life. Although future relationships may change under new circumstances, dysfunction is often rooted in the origins of these relationships. It is evident that during the first year, a child establishes a strong relationship with the mother, a fact that applies to most children (Mahi Maida & Al-Omari, 2017, p. 326).

Therefore, attachment behaviour is a fundamental need exhibited by the individual and a strong reciprocal emotion between the individual and their caregiver. Attachment can grow, develop, and result in intimate relationships and general social interactions. If an individual grows up within a secure attachment framework based on trust and support, they tend to build balanced social relationships that reduce the likelihood of experiencing psychological loneliness. Understanding psychological loneliness necessarily requires tracing its roots back to attachment styles as a primary determinant of how an individual perceives their relationships and experiences a sense of belonging or isolation.

Williams emphasizes that psychological loneliness is a serious and widespread problem in modern times, arising from a contradiction between an individual's actual relationships and the relationships they desire to achieve. This constitutes a social problem or a painful personal experience that generates psychological disorders such as anxiety, depression, withdrawal from the social world, and a lack of positivity in social situations (Williams, 1992, p. 32).

Psychological loneliness is a phenomenon of human life experienced by individuals in some form, causing pain, distress, and sorrow. It is an inescapable reality of life, not limited to a specific age group; children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly all suffer from it (Jowda Amal, 2005, p. 10).

Rokach views the feeling of psychological loneliness as one of the major problems in contemporary human life. It is a painful feeling resulting from an intense sense of helplessness due to social and emotional isolation, stemming from the perception that one is unwanted by others. This leads to feelings of unhappiness, pessimism, oppression, depression, and potentially suicide (Rokach, 2004, p. 44).

This is demonstrated by the study of **Atilgan Erozkan (2011)**, which aimed to investigate the predictive role of attachment styles on loneliness and depression. The study sample consisted of 652 university students. After analyzing the data using Pearson’s correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis, it was revealed that attachment styles are significantly correlated with loneliness and depression. A strong relationship between loneliness and depression was also found, and the results indicated a significant impact of attachment styles on both loneliness and depression. (Atilgan Erozkan, 2011)

Psychological loneliness has been interpreted according to various theories:

- **Psychoanalytic Theory:** Attributes the causes of psychological loneliness to early experiences encountered during childhood.
- **Phenomenological Theory:** Posits that the feeling of loneliness arises from the discrepancy between an individual's true inner self and the self-presented to others, while emphasizing the importance of present experiences in shaping loneliness.
- **Social Perspective:** Views loneliness as stemming from weakened family relationships, increased family mobility, and increased social mobility.
- **Interactionist Theory:** Suggests that loneliness results from incomplete social interactions, with a weighting toward situational factors; it does not arise solely from personal or situational factors, but rather from their interaction.
- **Cognitive Theory:** Believes that loneliness arises when an individual perceives a contradiction between existing relationships and desired relationships.
- **Trait Theory:** Asserts that personality traits play a significant role in the experience and persistence of psychological loneliness, meaning some individuals are more targeted than others for loneliness due to their inherent personality traits (Mazen Melhem, 2010, pp. 637–638).

Another study by **Sülen Kıralp and Nergüz Serin (2017)** aimed to investigate the relationship between loneliness levels and attachment styles among university students, utilizing a randomly selected sample of 247 university students. The results revealed higher levels of loneliness among those who perceived their socioeconomic status as low and those who had not received psychological help. Furthermore, male students

receiving psychological help scored higher in secure attachment. According to the research findings, there is a low negative correlation between students' loneliness levels and the avoidant attachment style, a low positive correlation between the level of loneliness and the preoccupied attachment style, and a low negative correlation between the level of loneliness and the secure attachment style (Sülen Kıralp & Nergüz Serin, 2017, p. 37).

Qenawi (1996) considered that the absence of parental educational and psychological roles within the family deprives the child of obtaining needed items or doing favoured activities in a manner reflecting parental stinginess. This represents a form of neglect where parents avoid interacting with the child, leaving them without encouragement for desirable behaviour, without accountability for undesirable behaviour, and without guidance on what to do or avoid (Abdulrahman Al-Bulaihi, 2008, p. 25).

Ali Qaimi (1994) notes that the absence of the father's educational role, his abandonment of familial responsibility, his failure to show love, affection, and care toward his children, and his lack of concern for creating an atmosphere of calm and harmony within the family environment- both with the mother and the children- fail to solidify family relationships. Consequently, this does not foster a sense of security and tranquillity, and children do not reciprocate love in the face of indifference. These are fathers who are physically present at home in appearance, but practically absent (Qaimi, 1994, pp. 306–307).

Raghda Shreim (2010) defines the father's emotional-affective absence as the family breadwinner's inability to fulfil familial obligations and fully care for their children. This is manifested in a lack of family supervision and emotional warmth- which includes love, respect, dialogue, children's participation, and the use of activation and persuasion styles- thereby preventing children from enjoying high psychological health (Raghda Shreim, 2010, p. 1822).

Grick and Grotpeter (1995) view the father's psychological absence as: "the parent exhibiting behaviours in their treatment that make the child feel unrounded by affection, love, and tenderness. Its consequences include the child's lack of psychological and social adjustment and the development of behavioural disorders in general and aggressive behaviour in particular, which is the antithesis of parental acceptance" (Maansar Masouda, 2014, p. 12).

Al-Bahi (1992) added that child neglect stems from being preoccupied outside the home, or from indifference to the child's affairs, lack of concern for their upbringing, or disregard for their welfare. Consequently, the child is left without fulfilling their needs for affection, tenderness, and care, or lacking attention to their food and clothing needs. Neglect may also manifest by failing to hold the child accountable for misbehaviour, failing to encourage or materially and morally motivate them upon accomplishing any task, or ridiculing them instead of offering praise (Yosra Awad, 2018, p. 23).

Previous Studies

A. Studies on Attachment Styles and Loneliness

- **Shahla Pakdaman et al. (2016):** This study investigated the relationship between attachment styles, resilience, and psychological loneliness among students, selecting a sample of 200 participants. Regression analyses revealed that insecure and avoidant attachment styles positively predict emotional loneliness, that the ambivalent (preoccupied) attachment style is the strongest predictor of emotional loneliness, and that resilience negatively predicts loneliness. Furthermore, the results of the t-test showed a significant difference between males and females, with male students reporting higher feelings of family loneliness and emotional symptoms associated with loneliness compared to females (Shahla Pakdaman et al., 2016, p. 268).
- **Zaghdoudi et al. (2009):** Aimed at examining the relationship between attachment styles, perceived social support, and depression, the researchers compared 83 depressed individuals with a control group of 50 non-depressed individuals in the capital of Tunisia. Depression was diagnosed using the DSM-IV, alongside the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (HDRS), Bartholomew and Horowitz’s Relationship Scales Questionnaire (RSQ) to distinguish the four attachment styles, and Sarason’s Social Support Questionnaire (SSQ) to measure the importance of and satisfaction with social support. The results showed a statistically significant difference between the study sample and the control group in secure attachment, with 56% securely attached in the control group compared to 29% in the study sample. A statistically significant positive correlation was found between secure attachment, maternal availability, and social satisfaction. Consequently, depressed individuals are characterized by insecure attachment and weak social support (Zaghdoudi et al., 2009).

B. Studies on the Relationship between Psychological Absence and Loneliness

- **Li-Juan Liu et al. (2010):** This study aimed to compare self-concept and loneliness between children of "absent migrant parents" and a comparison group of children in rural areas, to examine the relationship between self-concept and loneliness across both groups, and to investigate self-concept predictors in both populations. The sample consisted of 230 children of "absent migrant parents" and 250 comparison children in a rural area of a Chinese province. Following statistical analyses, the results indicated that children of "absent migrant parents" were more prone to lower self-concept and higher loneliness. Negative correlations were found between self-concept and loneliness among the children of "absent migrant parents," and their lower self-concept stemmed primarily from poor relationships with parents, particularly spending less time in physical and leisure activities (Li-Juan Liu et al., 2010, p. 1).
- **Awatif Mohamed (2013):** This study aimed to uncover the relationship between the father's psychological presence and absence and psychological security among high school students. The sample consisted of 500 male and female students aged 15–18. After statistical analyses, the results demonstrated a relationship between psychological presence and absence, psychological security, and family communication. Furthermore, there were gender differences in psychological security favouring females, differences in psychological security attributed to the father's psychological presence favouring high paternal presence, and differences in psychological security based on parents' parental educational level favouring university education (Awatif Mohamed, 2013, p. 12).
- **Dave O'Dwyer (2017):** This research involved semi-structured interviews with four psychologists and a counselling psychologist, each possessing at least five years of experience working with children and adolescents. The therapists worked with both genders, allowing the research to assess the differing experiences of paternal absence for boys and girls. Each interview lasted between 25 and 45 minutes and covered the following topics: the therapist's experience with clients having absent fathers, exploring whether the reason for the father's absence matters, and discovering whether the child's age when the absence occurs affects how it is experienced. The findings indicated that although the father is equally important to both genders, his absence is processed differently by boys and girls. Literature has emphasized that females tend to suffer from depression and anxiety while males experience behavioural problems, and the research supported this view, as most participants encountered these issues with their clients (Dave O'Dwyer, 2017, p. 1).

Statement of the Problem

Previous studies have attempted to uncover the relationship and predictive role of attachment styles regarding psychological loneliness. Arab and international studies have also established a link between paternal absence, loneliness, and psychological security. The current research proceeds along this trajectory but attempts to incorporate both attachment styles and paternal psychological absence in predicting psychological loneliness among secondary school students- variables that are rarely investigated concurrently in prior literature, to the best of the researcher's knowledge. Furthermore, this study conducts parallel analysis on the study instruments to investigate their universal factor structure. Addressing these research gaps, the problem of the current study is formulated in the following research questions:

- Do the contributions of attachment styles, paternal psychological absence, and gender differ in predicting positive psychological loneliness?
- Do the contributions of attachment styles, paternal psychological absence, and gender differ in predicting negative psychological loneliness?

Objectives of the Study

The significance and objectives of the study are summarized as follows:

- Uncovering the contribution of attachment styles, paternal psychological absence, and gender in predicting positive psychological loneliness.
- Uncovering the contribution of attachment styles, paternal psychological absence, and gender in predicting negative psychological loneliness.
- Utilizing Horn's Parallel Analysis to extract the underlying factors of the Paternal Psychological Absence Questionnaire, the Loneliness Scale, and the Attachment Styles Scale.

Operational Definitions

- **Attachment Styles:** Defined as a strong emotional bond between two individuals characterized by emotional reciprocity and a desire to maintain proximity. The primary attachment for a child is typically formed with the mother, though attachments may also form with other regularly interacting figures such as the father, grandparents, or relatives. It comprises the following dimensions:
  - **Secure Attachment:** Reflects the extent to which an individual views themselves and others positively. It consists of 6 items and is represented by the score obtained through responses to the items of this specific dimension.
  - **Anxious Attachment:** Reflects the extent to which an individual views themselves negatively and others positively. It consists of 7 items and is represented by the score obtained through responses to the items of this specific dimension.
  - **Avoidant Attachment:** Reflects the extent to which an individual views themselves positively and others negatively. It consists of 7 items and is represented by the score obtained through responses to the items of this specific dimension.
- **Paternal Psychological Absence:** The father's failure to fulfil his duties toward his family and children, whether educational pertaining to the children or familial relating to a lack of shared responsibility. This results from neglect, abandonment, indifference, or a deficit in serving as a role model. It is quantified as the score obtained on the items of the Paternal Psychological Absence Questionnaire designed for this study.
- **Loneliness:** An individual's feeling of the gap or distance between what actually exists or is currently achieved versus what ought to be as they perceive it, following Hobbes and colleagues, as validated by Imtanius Mikhail (2015). It is measured by the total score obtained across all items of this specific scale.

Delimitations of the Study

The scope of the study is defined by the following boundaries:

- **Objective Delimitation:** Focused on uncovering the contribution of attachment styles and psychological loneliness in predicting paternal psychological absence.
- **Spatial Delimitation:** Conducted in a secondary school in Ouled Fares, with a sample size of 260 students distributed across first, second, and third-year secondary levels, during the period between November and February of the (2019–2020) academic school year.
- **Typological Delimitation:** Focused specifically on secondary school students.

Methodology and Procedures of the Study

The quantitative statistical approach was adopted to statistically analyze the study data, as it is the most appropriate method for the nature of this research.

Primary Sample Selection Method and Characteristics

The final sample- after applying the Mahalanobis distance method to exclude outlying and extreme values- consisted of 260 students. They were selected using a purposive sampling technique based on the students' willingness to cooperate voluntarily, evidenced by explicit public consent to complete the data and answer the study instruments, alongside the approval granted by the Directorate of Education to conduct research in this specific secondary school, as distributed in the following table:

Gender	**Males**	**Females**	**Total**
104	166	270	
Educational Level	**1st Year**	**2nd Year**	**3rd Year**
	130	74	66
Age Categories	**15–17**	**18–20**	
	212	58	

Table (01): Distribution of the Primary Sample by Gender, Age, and

7. Study Instruments

7-1. Attachment Styles Scale

The current study utilized the Yarmouk Scale for Adult Attachment Styles, prepared by Muawiya Abu Ghazal and Abdul Karim Jaradat (2009). It comprises (20) items distributed across three subdimensions: (Secure Attachment, containing 6 items; Anxious Attachment, containing 7 items; and Avoidant Attachment, containing 7 items).

- **Validity and Reliability of the Attachment Styles Scale:** To demonstrate the relationship of each item to its respective dimension, the Pearson correlation coefficient was adopted. Cronbach's alpha and split-half methods were employed to verify reliability. The results were as follows:

Table (02): Extraction Methods for Validity and Reliability of the Attachment Styles Scale

Study Instrument	Construct Validity (Item-Dimension Correlation)	Reliability Methods	
Secure Attachment	Ranged between (0.35 and 0.72) at a significance level of (0.01)	Cronbach's Alpha	0.70
		Split-Half	0.78
Anxious Attachment	Ranged between (0.42 and 0.60) at a significance level of (0.01)	Cronbach's Alpha	0.75
		Split-Half	0.60
Avoidant Attachment	Ranged between (0.42 and 0.60) at a significance level of (0.01)	Cronbach's Alpha	0.53
		Split-Half	0.40

7-2. Paternal Psychological Absence Questionnaire

This questionnaire was prepared by Dr. Adda Benattou (2019) following a review of theoretical literature specifically measuring paternal psychological absence. After conducting interviews with students and excluding non-statistically significant items lacking discriminatory power, only items with high correlations satisfying validity and reliability conditions were retained. The questionnaire consists of (30) items rated using a five-point Likert scale.

- **Validity of the Paternal Psychological Absence Questionnaire:** To demonstrate the consistency of each item with its dimension, the Pearson correlation coefficient was adopted, while Cronbach's alpha and split-half methods were used to verify reliability. The results were as follows:

Table (03): Extraction Methods for Validity and Reliability of the Paternal Psychological Absence Questionnaire

Study Instrument	Construct Validity (Item-Dimension Correlation)	Reliability Methods	
Paternal Psychological Absence	Ranged between (0.28 and 0.73) at significance levels of (0.01 and 0.05); two items were deleted.	Cronbach's Alpha	0.89
		Split-Half	0.87

7-3. California Loneliness Scale

This scale was translated and validated for the Arab environment by Imtanius Naif Mikhail (2015) and comprises a total of (20) items.

- **Validity and Reliability of the Loneliness Scale:** To demonstrate the consistency of each item with its dimension, the Pearson correlation coefficient was adopted, alongside Cronbach's alpha and split-half methods to confirm reliability. The results were as follows:

Table (04): Extraction Methods for Validity and Reliability of the Loneliness Scale

Following the verification of validity and reliability, it is observed from the table that most correlation and reliability coefficients reached statistically acceptable levels. Consequently, the scales can be reliably utilized in the current study.

Study Instrument	Construct Validity (Item-Dimension Correlation)	Reliability Methods	
Loneliness Scale	Ranged between (0.34 and 0.65) at significance levels of (0.01, 0.05)	Cronbach's Alpha	0.65
		Split-Half	0.68

Parallel Analysis of Study Instruments

Parallel Analysis for the Attachment Styles Scale (Horn's Parallel Analysis):

The logic of parallel analysis relies on conducting factor analysis on a random sample drawn from the original sample using SPSS, by clicking on the syntax command and editing the commands to apply Horn's parallel analysis logic prepared by O'Connor (2000) in a dedicated file to facilitate SPSS usage. Factor analysis was executed, and the Eigenvalues were compared between the initial factor analysis and the random data selected by the program (in Benattou, 2017, p. 194). The results extracted three factors, with Eigenvalues/latent roots for the three factors as follows: Secure Attachment = 4.94, Avoidant Attachment = 2.94, and Anxious Attachment = 1.77.

Parallel Analysis for the Paternal Psychological Absence Questionnaire:

Following the application of parallel analysis to the absence questionnaire, two factors were extracted with the following values: (Partial Psychological Absence = 7.47, Total Psychological Absence = 2.17).

Parallel Analysis for the California Loneliness Scale:

To ensure the efficiency of extracting and identifying underlying factors, Horn's parallel analysis was employed. The results extracted two factors with the following Eigenvalue/latent root values: (Positive Loneliness = 4.02, Negative Loneliness = 2.32). These variables (underlying factors) will be utilized during statistical processing.

Presentation and Discussion of Hypothesis Results

Presentation and Discussion of the First Hypothesis:

- **Hypothesis Statement:** "The contributions of attachment styles (secure attachment, avoidant attachment, anxious attachment), partial paternal psychological absence, and gender differ in predicting positive psychological loneliness among students."

To test this hypothesis, multiple regression analysis was employed, yielding the results displayed in the following table:

Table (05): Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis Model

Model	Correlation Coefficient (R)	Coefficient of Determination (R^2)	Adjusted Coefficient of Determination (R^2)	Standard Error of the Estimate
1	0.550	0.302	0.286	4.387

The table displays the total correlation value between the independent variables and the dependent variable (positive psychological loneliness). The correlation coefficient is (0.55), which, when squared and adjusted, equals (0.28). This indicates that 28% of the variance in positive psychological loneliness is explained by the independent variables—a notable percentage. The standard error indicates relatively low errors in the model.

To verify the significance of the model, an ANOVA regression variance analysis was conducted as shown in the following table:

Table (06): Regression Variance Analysis (ANOVA)

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F-Value	Significance Level
Regression	2189.405	6	364.901	18.963	0.05
Residual	5060.969	263	19.243		
Total	7250.374	269			

It is evident from the table that the calculated F-value is statistically significant at the (0.05) level, indicating a strong regression equation. To determine the contribution of predictors to the dependent variable (positive

psychological loneliness), standardized Beta coefficients were extracted as shown in the following table:

Table (07): Beta Coefficients for Independent Variable Contributions

Independent Variables	B-Coefficient	Standard Error	Standardized Beta Coefficient	t-Value	Significance Level
Constant	28.265	2.397	—	11.791	Significant at 0.05
Secure Attachment	-,5920	,0590	-,5180	10.021	Significant at 0.05
Avoidant Attachment	,0540	,0570	,0510	,9500	Not Significant
Anxious Attachment	,1160	,0490	,1240	2.378	Significant at 0.01
Partial Psychological Absence	,1300	,0760	,1030	1.716	Not Significant
Total Psychological Absence	-,0070	,0210	,0210	,3510	Not Significant
Gender	-,3490	,5700	-,0330	,6130	Not Significant

We observe from the table above the contribution of the secure attachment variable in predicting positive psychological loneliness with a standardized beta coefficient of (0.518) at the significance level of (0.05), accounting for 52%. This means that every one-standard-deviation increase in secure attachment is accompanied by a slight decrease in positive psychological loneliness not exceeding (0.52). Furthermore, anxious attachment contributed to predicting positive psychological loneliness with a standardized beta coefficient of (0.12) at the significance level of (0.05), accounting for 12%, meaning that every one-standard-deviation increase in anxious attachment is accompanied by a slight increase in positive psychological loneliness not exceeding (0.12). Meanwhile, the following variables showed no contribution in predicting loneliness: (partial paternal psychological absence, avoidant attachment, and gender).

Accordingly, the regression equation can be formulated as follows:

Positive Psychological Loneliness= Constant (28.265) +
(0.518 x Secure Attachment) + (0.124 x Anxious Attachment)

Discussion of the First Hypothesis:

The results of the multiple regression analysis demonstrated a contribution of secure attachment in predicting positive psychological loneliness among secondary school students, with a standardized beta value of (0.52). This means that 52% of the variance occurring in positive psychological loneliness as a dependent variable is attributed to secure attachment- a considerable percentage. This can be interpreted in light of theoretical literature explaining secure attachment. Attachment holds paramount importance in building and refining a child's personality, as the child receives psychological and material support that fosters feelings of trust, security, and reassurance. This, in turn, constructs a secure base for the child to explore the environment and adapt to it.

The negative standardized beta value—whereby an increase in secure attachment by one standard deviation is accompanied by a decrease in positive psychological loneliness—indicates that when a child feels reassured and secure, feelings of loneliness (even in its positive aspect, such as viewing parental absence as temporary) rarely infiltrate their psyche, as the child quickly returns to feeling secure upon the parent's return. This reasonably explains the negative standardized beta value. Moreover, the positive nature of secure attachment does not align with loneliness, even when perceived positively, as the child understands that the father's absence is temporary and will soon adapt upon maturing and recognizing the value of the father leaving for work. This can also be interpreted in light of longitudinal study findings showing that secure attachment levels in the first year of life lay the foundation for personality formation and maturation during preschool years; for instance, three-year-old nursery children with high secure attachment scores exhibit significant competence in both social and cognitive skills.

Additionally, regression analysis results indicated a contribution of anxious attachment in predicting positive loneliness with a standardized beta value of (0.12), which is a relatively weak value. This can be interpreted in light of interactionist theory, which views psychological loneliness as resulting from incomplete social interactions heavily weighted by situational factors, arising not solely from personal or situational factors, but from their interaction. A child's feeling of threat stemming from parental absence generates anxiety and tension,

which reasonably explains the beta value of anxious attachment in predicting positive psychological loneliness. This may also be interpreted in light of the findings of Dave O'Dwyer (2017), which affirmed that while fathers are equally important to both genders, their absence is processed differently by boys and girls, with literature emphasizing that females suffer from depression and anxiety while males experience behavioural problems—a view supported by this research as most participants encountered these issues.

Presentation and Interpretation of the Results of the Second Hypothesis:

- **Hypothesis Statement:** "The contributions of attachment styles (secure attachment, avoidant attachment, anxious attachment), total paternal psychological absence, and gender differ in predicting negative psychological loneliness among students."

To test this hypothesis, multiple regression analysis was employed, yielding the results displayed in the following table:

Table (08): Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis Model

Model	Correlation Coefficient (R)	Coefficient of Determination (R^2)	Adjusted Coefficient of Determination (R^2)	Standard Error of the Estimate
1	0.492	0.242	0.225	5.891

The table displays the total correlation value between the independent variables and the dependent variable (negative psychological loneliness). The correlation coefficient is (0.49), which, when squared and adjusted, equals (0.22). This indicates that 22% of the variance in negative psychological loneliness is explained by the independent variables- a very weak percentage. The standard error indicates relatively low errors in the model.

To verify the significance of the model, an ANOVA regression variance analysis was conducted as shown in the following table:

Table (09): Regression Variance Analysis (ANOVA)

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F-Value	Significance Level
Regression	2884.992	6	480.832	13.995	0.05
Residual	8864.005	263	34.357		
Total	11748.996	269			

It is evident from the table that the calculated F-value is statistically significant at the (0.05) level, indicating a strong regression equation. To determine the contribution of predictors to the dependent variable (negative psychological loneliness), standardized Beta coefficients were extracted as shown in the following table:

Table (10): Beta Coefficients for Independent Variable Contributions

Independent Variables	B-Coefficient	Standard Error	Standardized Beta Coefficient	t-Value	Significance Level
Constant	7.426	3.219	—	2.307	Significant at 0.02
Secure Attachment	-,1800	,0790	-,1220	2.269	Significant at 0.02
Avoidant Attachment	,3120	,0760	,2290	4.104	Significant at 0.05
Anxious Attachment	,3830	,0660	,3170	5.825	Significant at 0.05
Partial Psychological Absence	,0440	,1020	,0270	,4290	Not Significant
Total Psychological Absence	,0660	,0280	,1510	2.407	Significant at 0.01
Gender	1.951	,7650	,1420	2.550	Significant at 0.01

We observe from the table above the contribution of the secure attachment variable in predicting negative psychological loneliness with a standardized beta coefficient of (0.12) at the significance level of (0.02), accounting for 12%. This means that every one-standard-deviation increase in secure attachment is accompanied by a slight decrease in negative psychological loneliness not exceeding (0.12). There is also a contribution of avoidant attachment in predicting negative psychological loneliness with a standardized beta coefficient of (0.23)

at the significance level of (0.05), accounting for 23%, meaning that every one-standard-deviation increase in avoidant attachment is accompanied by a slight increase in negative psychological loneliness not exceeding (0.23). Furthermore, anxious attachment contributes to predicting negative psychological loneliness with a standardized beta coefficient of (0.317) at the significance level of (0.05), accounting for 31%, meaning that every one-standard-deviation increase in anxious attachment is accompanied by a slight increase in negative psychological loneliness not exceeding (0.31). Additionally, the gender variable contributed with a standardized beta value of (0.13), accounting for 13%- meaning that higher gender performance is associated with an increase in negative psychological loneliness, favouring females with a mean score of (26.49). Total paternal psychological absence also contributed with a beta value of (0.15), accounting for 15%, meaning that an increase in total psychological absence is accompanied by an increase in negative psychological loneliness. Meanwhile, partial paternal psychological absence showed no contribution in predicting negative psychological loneliness.

Accordingly, the regression equation can be formulated as follows:

Negative Psychological Loneliness= Constant (7.426) + (0.122 x Secure Attachment) + (0.229 x Avoidant Attachment) + (0.317 x Anxious Attachment) + (0.151 x Total Psychological Absence) + (0.142 x Gender)

Discussion of the Second Hypothesis:

The results of the multiple hierarchical regression analysis indicated a contribution of secure attachment in predicting negative psychological loneliness with a standardized beta value of (0.12), which is a relatively weak percentage. This can be attributed to the characteristics of secure attachment as a stable personality trait that may conflict with psychological loneliness; as this style increases by one standard deviation, it is accompanied by a decrease in positive psychological loneliness. This explains that individuals characterized by a confident, secure, and reassuring style know how to navigate hardships, solve problems, and adapt to external environment changes. Conversely, individuals experiencing anxiety and tension may test feelings of loneliness, even in its positive facet, encountering difficult periods where they fail and fall prey to this sense of loneliness. Moreover, the mother plays a crucial role in fostering secure attachment by providing psychological support, encouraging exploration of objects and people, and avoiding becoming a barrier to social connection. Here too, responsibility falls upon the father, who establishes the same secure base for the child, instilling a sense of belonging and reassurance, thereby securing a safe foundation for initiation and adjustment.

Furthermore, the study results indicated a contribution of anxious attachment in predicting psychological loneliness (positive/negative context) with a value of (0.31). This can be interpreted in light of John Bowlby’s assertion that: "Naturally, the cases falling under this category (anxious attachment) are numerous and vary in severity, ranging from the infant whose mother leaves them crying for hours to children completely rejected by their mothers. Due to this uncertainty regarding the mother's presence and responsiveness, the child becomes prone to separation anxiety: tending toward excessive clinging to the mother, feeling anxious about exploring the outside world." This style- where distress is clearly manifested- arises when the mother is present and cooperative only occasionally rather than consistently, or from separation and the threat of abandonment as a method of controlling the child. Consequently, the child grows up with a mixture of insecurity, fear, and sadness, coupled with a desire for mutual intimacy alongside occasional covert aggressiveness. They seek excessive attention and parental favour- perhaps by acting cute and charming- while remaining impulsive, tense, and easily frustrated, or passive, helpless, and resigned.

The same applies to avoidant attachment, which contributed to predicting loneliness with a value of (0.22). This can be attributed to the characteristics of avoidant attachment, where the individual acknowledges discomfort with staying close to others, finding it difficult to trust and rely on them, and preferring to stay away. They view themselves positively and others negatively, becoming absorbed in personal activities and games while ignoring any parental initiative. They may later develop into narcissistic personalities or what is termed the "false self," where disturbance remains concealed, originating from the mother's continuous rejection and rebuff when needed, leading to feelings of psychological loneliness.

Additionally, the results indicated a contribution of gender performance, with gender predicting psychological loneliness with a value of (0.14) favouring females, alongside a contribution of total paternal absence with a value of (0.15). The contribution of gender can be explained by females being more vulnerable to loneliness due to the father's absence from the home for extended hours. It is well known that the father's role impacts both genders, but in the current study sample, the impact felt by females suffering from the absence of the father and his role in

discipline, guidance, assistance, and psychological presence near his daughters is deemed paramount for their emotional development. Total paternal absence disrupts his role in transmitting gender typing to children; he teaches his adolescent son socially distinctive gender behaviours in society and plays a major role in gender typing, through which the son learns sexual behaviour patterns distinguishing males from females. A father committed to fulfilling his educational duty can help his children form a sense of satisfaction regarding their gender through his presence among them, positive role fulfilment, and the provision of a sound family environment fostering security and reassurance. This helps them develop a healthy gender identity and positively accept their roles as males and females. An adolescent can achieve this through observed interactions between the father and mother, the father's treatment of males and females, and demonstrating happiness upon the birth of his child, thereby protecting the adolescent from acquiring misconceptions and negative behaviours from unqualified adults whom they might otherwise emulate.

Conclusion

The objective of this study was to determine what extent the following variables- (Secure Attachment, Anxious Attachment, Avoidant Attachment, Gender, and Partial/Total Paternal Psychological Absence)- can contribute to predicting psychological loneliness among secondary school students, given that adolescence is a critical period for forming social relationships and acquiring coping strategies with the environment. Following the application of appropriate scales and statistical treatments using multiple regression analysis, the study concluded that anxious and secure attachment contribute to predicting positive psychological loneliness, whereas gender, total paternal absence, and all three attachment styles (secure, anxious, and avoidant) contribute to predicting negative psychological loneliness. The study findings were interpreted in light of theoretical literature and previous research.

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