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# PREDICTION OF LOVE AFFAIR FAILURE BASED ON STYLES OF ATTACHMENTS AND EMOTIONAL BLACKMAIL

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**ABSTRACT**
This study aims at predicting the love trauma based on the emotional blackmail and attachment styles in university students. Therefore, 304 female and male students are evaluated according to a correlative descriptive project and by the research tools based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria at universities of Tehran. The research tools include the demographic questionnaire, Collins and Read adult attachment Scale (RASS), Love Trauma Inventory (LTI), and emotional blackmail questionnaire (researcher-made). The first two tools are among the common tools with the approved validity and reliability in several studies. The validity and reliability of researcher-made questionnaire is also approved by confirmatory factor analysis and Cronbach's alpha. The research data is analyzed according to both descriptive and inferential aspects. The multiple-regression is utilized for inferential analysis. The results of data analysis indicate that there is a significant positive correlation between the ambivalent and avoidant attachment style and the Love Trauma, but the secure attachment style has no significant correlation with love trauma in students. Furthermore, the components of emotional blackmail predict the love trauma in students.

*Keywords: Love Trauma, Attachment Styles, Emotional Blackmail*

**INTRODUCTION**
The love is a very special human feeling which can be experienced in all people, but on the contrary to the common public idea, it requires the attention, responsibility, respect and full knowledge about the subject of love and if this knowledge is not acquired and this art not learned and the real meaning of true love is not received, it will lead to the utter failure to achieve this aim and it is called the love failure or love trauma syndrome in psychology (Quoted by Dehghani, 2010).
John (1979) claims that the attachment behavior specifies the human existence from the cradle to grave, and the quality of relationship with the first love objects clarifies the quality of future love relations and the way of returning and resolution of separation process after any important loss.
According to the theory of attachment, the secure relationship with others is the best thing for human in dealing with the risk and loss, but the lack of this relationship not only makes the human defenseless in life storms, but also affects the way of dealing with these storms and can be annoying and traumatic. In fact, the theory of attachment can be described as the theory of damage which emphasizes on the physical separation, threat to separation, or real separation and the maximum degree of emotional problem (Atkinson, 1997).
The immature defense mechanisms for not facing with the great fear of being alone lead to the blackmail behavior, being blackmailed or extreme hunger for affection. When the emotional blackmail or hunger for affection is created in relationship, a change is felt in the surrounding space, the relationship reaches a dead end and the pressure and intimidation become as the parts of daily life. The relationship becomes cold and the relationship partners lose their flexibility and fail to lead the life at critical stages or consult with each other about the life daily details (Forward, 1997; translated by Javadi, 2013). In general it can be concluded that a few studies are conducted on the process of love trauma and filed emotional relationship and its possible reasons. There are a few researches on the literature of grief, mourning and bereavement after the collapse of relationship with a love object, and its relationship with the baby's sense of belonging and attachment to mother in the first years of life and its correlation with strong emotional anxiety reactions and complaints (Dehghani, 2010).

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There is a lack of rich, consistent and testable theory about the love and attachment in family and couple therapy, and at least the attachment theory can fill this gap (Johnson and Whiffen, 2003; translated by Bahrami, 2013). Since the late 1980s, the attachment theory has been utilized in communication between adults. This was a revolutionary movement in emotional and close relationship (Hazan and Shaver, 1987). In recent years, the ideas are indicate that the adult romantic relationships are the mirrors of their last communications with parents and even a person actively recreates the negative components of these communications to solve his internal conflicts (Johnson and Whiffen, 2003; translated by Bahrami, 1392). According to the human need to be loved and have an enduring Love, not just falling in love, but remaining in love, we should overcome the failure of love. It also requires the accurate study of trauma and understanding the real meaning of love (Fromm, 2006; translated by Soltani, 2014).

According to researcher, it seems that the bitter experience of love trauma for every human being can be created with a variety of attachment styles, and also the type of his behavior for seeking the affection may appear as the in appropriate and agonizing emotional blackmail.

Therefore, despite the importance of this issue and its high prevalence among the young people, a few studies are conducted on this issue and there is need for conducting an academic study in this case.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research is non-experimental and has the correlative type. The statistical population of this study consists of all students' at universities of Tehran city in academic year of 2014-15. 304 of above-mentioned population are selected by cluster sampling, so that the Unit 34 of University of Applied Science and Technology is randomly selected from all universities of Tehran, and 10 classes are randomly selected from this university and its all students are sampled in those classes.

### Data Collection Tools

The applied questionnaires in this study are as follows: 1-Collins and Read adult attachment Scale (RASS) (1990). The validity of this questionnaire is obtained equal to 0.90 by Cronbach's alpha. 2- Love Trauma Inventory (LTI) (1999): The validity of this questionnaire is obtained equal to 0.74 by Cronbach's alpha. 3- Emotional blackmail questionnaire (researcher-made): The validity of this questionnaire is reported equal to 0.96which indicates the high internal consistency of items with each other. Data analysis is done by SPSS 21 software and the research data is analyzed at both descriptive and inferential levels:

A) The descriptive level utilizes the tables of frequency distribution, the percentages associated with the demographic characteristics, and the indices, namely, the central tendency (mean) and dispersion (standard deviation); and B) the inferential level uses the multiple regression analysis in order to predict the criterion variables from the predictive variables considering the assumptions of prediction (normal distribution, the lack of co linearity and correlation).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

### First Hypothesis Test

"Attachment styles predict the love trauma in students".

**Table 1: Estimating the model parameters in regression analysis forlove trauma based on the attachment styles**

| Model | Sum of squares | Degree of freedom | Mean square | F | Multiple coefficient | Coefficient of determination | Adjusted coefficient of determination | Significance level |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Regression | 1900.87 | 3 | 633.62 | 13.36 | 0.36 | 0.13 | 0.12 | 0.001 |
| Residual | 12573.91 | 265 | 47.44 | | | | | |
| Sum | 14474.79 | 268 | | | | | | |

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As shown in the table, the significance level is lower than 0.05 indicating the significance of regression model; in other words, at least one of the predictive variables has a significant effect on the criterion variable. In this research, the coefficient of determination is equal to 0.13 indicating that three factors constituting the attachment styles can predict 13 percent of love trauma, and the remaining 87 percent is related to the prediction error.

**Table 2: Standardized, non-standardized and t statistic for variables included in regression equation**

| Predictive variable | Regression coefficients | | t statistic | Significance level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Non-standardized | Standardized | | |
| Constant value | 24.14 | | 7.16 | 0.001 |
| Secure attachment | -0.13 | -0.04 | -0.63 | 0.53 |
| Avoidant attachment | 0.82 | 0.27 | 4.56 | 0.001 |
| Ambivalent attachment | 0.25 | 0.18 | 3.01 | 0.003 |

According to the results of table, all attachment styles, except for the secure attachment style, have significant effects on the love trauma at the level of 5% and the positive coefficients indicate that the increased ambivalent and avoidant attachment styles will lead to the enhanced love trauma.

*Second Hypothesis Test*

"The components of emotional blackmail predict the love trauma in students".

**Table 3: Estimating the model parameters in regression analysis for love trauma based on the emotional blackmail**

| Model | Sum of squares | Degree of freedom | Mean square | F | Multiple coefficient | Coefficient of determination | Adjusted coefficient of determination | Significance level |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Regression | 5730.85 | 3 | 1910.28 | 56.16 | 0.60 | 0.36 | 0.35 | 0.001 |
| Residual | 10169.55 | 299 | 34.01 | | | | | |
| Sum | 15900.44 | 302 | | | | | | |

As shown in the table, the significance level is lower than 0.05 indicating the significance of regression model; in other words, at least one of the predictive variables has a significant effect on the criterion variable. In this research, the coefficient of determination is equal to 0.36 indicating that three factors constituting the emotional blackmail can predict 36 percent of love trauma, and the remaining 64 percent is related to the prediction error.

**Table 4: Standardized, non-standardized and t statistic for variables included in regression equation**

| Predictive variable | Regression coefficients | | t statistic | Significance level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Non-standardized | Standardized | | |
| Constant value | 2.19 | | 1.69 | 0.09 |
| Feeling of fear | 0.17 | 0.55 | 7.02 | 0.001 |
| Feeling of commitment | -0.13 | -0.29 | -3.86 | 0.001 |
| Feeling of guilt | 0.12 | 0.31 | 4.13 | 0.001 |

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According to the results of table, all factors of emotional blackmail, except for the feeling of commitment, have significant effects on the love trauma at the level of 5% and the positive coefficients indicate that the increased feelings of fear and guilt will lead to the enhanced love trauma, but the negative feeling of commitment indicates that the increase in this factor reduces the love trauma.

*Third Hypothesis Test*
"The components of attachment styles predict the emotional blackmail in students".

**Table 5: Estimating the model parameters in regression analysis for emotional blackmail based on the attachment styles**

| Model | Sum of squares | Degree of freedom | Mean square | F | Multiple coefficient | Coefficient of determination | Adjusted coefficient of determination | Significance level |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Regression | 151594.94 | 3 | 50531.65 | 22.31 | 0.45 | 0.20 | 0.19 | 0.001 |
| Residual | 599991.38 | 265 | 2264.12 | | | | | |
| Sum | 751586.31 | 268 | | | | | | |

As shown in the table, the significance level is lower than 0.05 indicating the significance of regression model; in other words, at least one of the predictive variables has a significant effect on the criterion variable. In this research, the coefficient of determination is equal to 0.20 indicating that three factors of attachment styles can predict 20 percent of emotional blackmail, and the remaining 80 percent is related to the prediction error.

**Table 6: Standardized, non-standardized and t statistic for variables included in regression equation**

| Predictive variable | Regression coefficients | | t statistic | Significance level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Non-standardized | Standardized | | |
| Constant value | 232.53 | | | 0.001 |
| Secure attachment | -3.11 | -0.12 | 2.19 | 0.03 |
| Avoidant attachment | 3.34 | 0.15 | 2.70 | 0.007 |
| Ambivalent attachment | 3.60 | 0.35 | 6.19 | 0.001 |

According to the results of table, all factors of attachment style, except for the secure attachment, have significant effects on the emotional blackmail at the level of 5% and the positive coefficients of ambivalent and avoidant attachment styles indicate that the increased values of these factors will lead to the enhanced emotional blackmail, but the negative secure attachment style indicates that the increase in this factor reduces the emotional blackmail.

*Discussion*
According to the first hypothesis, under which the attachment styles predict the love trauma in students, the results indicate that the null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis approved, but the null hypothesis is confirmed for the secure attachment style. In other words, the ambivalent and avoidant attachment styles significantly predict the love trauma, but the secure attachment does not significantly predict the love trauma in students.

This result is consistent with the findings of research by Karkhaneh (2010), Naghavi (2011), Tardast (2014), Simpson (1990), and McDermott (2008). Naghavi (2011) has found that there is a significant positive correlation between the attachment styles and marital satisfaction, so that the ambivalent and

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avoidant attachment styles have significant direct correlation with low marital satisfaction, but the secure attachment style has significant direct correlation with high marital satisfaction. According to the explanation of these findings, it can be concluded that the attachment preserves the mutual close relationship between two individuals at all stages of life (Khanjani, 2005). In fact, the people with secure attachment styles are able to support, take the risks, look for different solutions to solve their own problems, hope for their future of practice, and show the intimacy; hence, these characteristics enhances their self-satisfaction in relationships with their partners, and thus reduce the possibility of divorce and separation.

Based on the second hypothesis, under which the components of emotional blackmail predict the love trauma in students, the results indicate that the null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis is confirmed. In other words, the components of emotional blackmail predict the love trauma in students. The positive coefficients for feelings of fear and guilt, in fact, indicate that the love trauma is enhanced by increasing these factors, but the negative feeling of commitment indicates that the increase in this factor will lead to the reduced love trauma. This finding is consistent with the research result by Bruno *et al.,* (2009).

Based on the third hypothesis, under which the components of attachment styles predict the emotional blackmail in students, the results indicate that the null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis is confirmed. In other words, the components of attachment styles predict the emotional blackmail in students. The positive coefficients of ambivalent and avoidant attachment styles, in fact, indicate that the emotional blackmail is enhanced by increasing these factors, but the negative secure attachment style indicates that the increase in this factor will lead to the reduced emotional blackmail. This finding is according to Bowlby's Attachment Theory. According to Bowlby's Theory (1982), the physical or psychological threats automatically activate the attachment system.

*Applied Suggestions of Research*

1. It is suggested emphasizing on educating the factors affecting the marital satisfaction in premarital education classes; the issues such as the individual attachment style in relations and its effective role in establishment of close relations in the future.

2. It is suggested emphasizing on the importance of love among the young people and adolescents in the media especially the television as the most popular medium.

3. It is suggested holding the educational workshops for couples with communication problems in order to increase the level of mental health and marital satisfaction according to the couples' attachment styles.

Considering that the attachment styles are created since the child's early ages, we cannot ignore the importance of parent-child relationship and its effect on all adulthood relationships, thus it is emphasized on the parents' needs for consulting service during their children development.

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