



Impact of Peer Attachment on Problem Solving among Adolescents

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.55248/gengpi.4.623.44619>

ABSTRACT

Adolescence is a critical developmental period characterized by various challenges and opportunities for personal growth. Among the many factors that influence adolescent development, peer relationships have gained considerable attention.

This study employs a quantitative research design to investigate the impact of peer attachment on problem-solving skills—a sample of 121 adolescents aged 13-18 years from different schools participated in the study. Peer attachment will be measured Inventory of parent and peer attachment (IPPA) questionnaires. In addition, problem-solving skills will be assessed using a standardized tool, Problem Solving/Decision making. This study examines the impact of peer attachment on problem-solving abilities among adolescents. Data analysis will involve statistical techniques, including correlation analysis and regression modelling. The findings of this study can contribute to our understanding of the role of peer attachment in adolescent development. It is hypothesized that peer attachments have a moderate positive correlation with problem-solving skills among adolescents.

KEY WORD-ATTACHMENT, PEER ATTACHMENT, PROBLEM SOLVING

INTRODUCTION

Human beings form various types of bonds throughout their lives, some of which are more significant and meaningful than others. The concept of "attachment" pertains to a powerful emotional bond that develops between individuals, influencing their self-perception, relationships, and overall sense of comfort and security (Bowlby, 1969).

Peer attachment refers to the emotional connection children and teenagers develop with their peers, similar to the attachment they have with their parents or primary caregivers. This bond primarily focuses on peer interactions and plays a significant role in shaping their social and emotional development. Positive peer relationships provide a sense of community, support, and validation, while negative peer relationships can hinder development, leading to social withdrawal, anxiety, and other emotional issues. Peer attachment is crucial for influencing youngsters' social and emotional experiences.

During early and middle childhood, peers play a significant role in children's social development. Empathy and prosocial behavior towards peers contribute to building friendships and popularity (Eisenberg et al., 2006). Attachment theory focuses on the early relationships between children and their caregivers, and research indicates that teenagers who feel connected to their caregivers experience better emotional and social growth (Shaver et al., 2016). As youth transition into adolescence, parents and other adults remain sources of support and safety, while peers become increasingly influential in socialization. Attachment experiences in childhood continue to impact an adolescent's personal development, emphasizing the importance of understanding how teenagers connect with friends and how these connections affect their emotions and behaviors. A secure peer attachment is built on mutual understanding, trust, and the expectation of being heard and understood when discussing one's feelings. Conversely, teenagers with weak attachments may feel lonelier and tend to distance themselves from their classmates.

Problem-solving is the skill of recognizing, analyzing, and finding practical solutions to issues or barriers. It involves cognitive processes and steps to resolve problems or achieve desired outcomes. This ability is crucial in personal, academic, and professional settings, as life often presents challenges that require flexible and composed responses. Problem-solving has been shown to be beneficial in various physical and mental conditions through problem-solving therapy (Malouff et al., 2007). Gestalt psychology, specifically insight learning, highlights the importance of reorganizing and shifting perspectives in the problem-solving process. It emphasizes the occurrence of "Aha!" moments where individuals gain new understandings and find solutions. Overall, problem-solving is a fundamental skill that helps individuals adapt and make decisions based on their circumstances.

Peer attachment has a tremendous impact on people's problem-solving abilities. According to research, having a solid emotional relationship and connection with their peers improves their problem-solving skills. A stable peer attachment fosters a sense of support, trust, and understanding among peers, fostering an environment conducive to practical problem-solving. It encourages teamwork, clear communication, and a willingness to seek assistance and examine alternative options. Peer connection also promotes a sense of belonging and acceptance, which increases individuals' confidence and self-esteem in problem-solving situations. Interacting with peers with different viewpoints and experiences enriches the problem-solving process and

improves individuals' abilities to manage problems and develop creative solutions. However, individual differences and the quality of peer interactions must be considered since insecure or negative attachments can stymie effective problem-solving. A strong and supportive peer attachment favourably impacts individuals' problem-solving abilities.

METHODOLOGY

AIM : To study the Impact of peer attachment on problem solving among adolescents.

VARIABLES

Independent Variable	Peer Attachment
Dependent Variable	Problem Solving Skills

OBJECTIVES

To study the relationship of peer attachment and Problem-Solving among adolescents

To assess the impact of peer attachment on Problem-Solving among adolescents

SAMPLE & SELECTION

Data was collected from 121 respondents, including both males and females, aged 13 to 18 years, using convenient sampling methods. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and the purpose of the study and their role in it were explained. The sample was limited to adolescents to ensure homogeneity.

DESCRIPTION OF THE TOOL

In the current research the IPPA(INVENTORY OF PARENT AND PEER ATTACHMENT)by

Armsden and Greenberg (1987) was used to assess the Peer attachment and PROBLEM SOLVING / DECISION MAKING was developed by C. A. Darden, E. J. Ginter, and G. M. Gazda in 1996 to measure the problem solving skills among the adolescents .

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The data was analyzed using Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS Statistics 21. Excel was used for tallying the responses, while SPSS was used to investigate the data. Descriptive statistics, such as measures of central tendency and standard deviation, were performed for quantitative data. Pearson correlation was used to determine the impact of peer attachment on problem solving among adolescents. Linear regression analysis was used to verify the research hypotheses.

RESULT & ANALYSIS

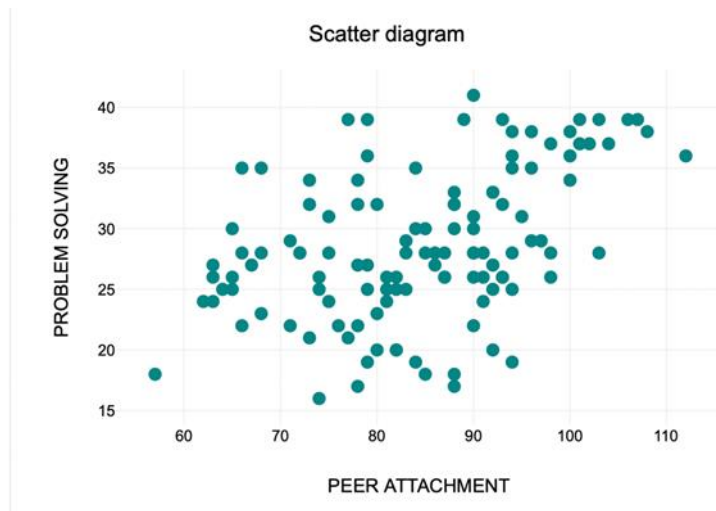
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
PEER ATTACHMENT	121	84.54	11.767
PROBLEM SOLVING	121	23.58	6.043

Table 1

The table 1 provides descriptive statistics for variables: PEER ATTACHMENT& PROBLEM SOLVING

CORRELATION ANALYSIS - PEER ATTACHMET & PROBLEM SOLVING



Graph 1

Correlations

		PEER ATTACHMENT	PROBLEM SOLVING
PEER ATTACHMENT	Pearson Correlation	1	.439**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	121	121
PROBLEM SOLVING	Pearson Correlation	.439**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	121	121

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2

A Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between PEER ATTACHMENT and PROBLEM SOLVING. The results indicated a moderate, positive correlation ($r=0.43$) between the two variables in the sample of 121 participants ($p<.001$).

REGRESSION

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	RStd. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.439a	.193	.186	5.452	.193	28.421	1	119	<.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), PEER ATTACHMENT

b. Dependent Variable: PROBLEM SOLVING

Table 3.1

The linear regression analysis shows that PROBLEM SOLVING and PEER ATTACHMENT have a moderately good relationship (correlation coefficient = 0.439). The predictors explain around 19.3% of the variance in the dependent variable (R Square). The inclusion of predictors significantly improves the model's fit compared to the null model, with an F Change value of 28.421 and a p-value < 0.001. In summary, PEER ATTACHMENT accounts for 19.3% of the variance in PROBLEM-SOLVING.

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	844.693	1	844.693	28.421	<.001b
	Residual	3536.811	119	29.721		
	Total	4381.504	120			

a. Dependent Variable: PROBLEM SOLVING

b. Predictors: (Constant), PEER ATTACHMENT

Table 3.2

The regression model with "PEER ATTACHMENT" as the predictor variable has a significant F-value of 28.421, indicating that the relationship between "PEER ATTACHMENT" and the dependent variable "PROBLEM SOLVING" is not due to chance.

Coefficient

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Coefficients		
1	(Constant)	9.518	3.610		2.637	.009
	PEER ATTACHMENT	.225	.042	.439	5.331	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: PROBLEM SOLVING

Table 6.3

$$\text{PROBLEM SOLVING} = 9.51 + 0.22 \cdot \text{PEER ATTACHMENT}$$

PROBLEM SOLVING initially has a value of 9.52 when other variables are 0. It changes by 0.23 for each unit change in PEER ATTACHMENT. The standardized coefficients beta range from -1 to 1 and remain constant. PEER ATTACHMENT has the greatest impact on PROBLEM SOLVING among the variables.

DISCUSSION ANALYSIS

The aim of this study was to investigate the impact of peer attachment on problem-solving skills among adolescents. The study used the Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA) by Armsden and Greenberg (1987) to assess peer attachment and the Problem Solving/Decision Making questionnaire by Darden, Ginter, and Gazda (1996) to measure problem-solving abilities. A convenient sample of 121 respondents, including both men and women aged 13 to 18 years, was used for data collection. The results supported previous research showing a positive relationship between peer attachment and problem-solving skills in adolescents.

A study by Pinheiro & Matos (2013) explored the influence of peer attachment on active coping and self-esteem in 109 institutionalized youths. The study also examined the role of social skills in mediating the relationship between peer attachment, coping, and self-esteem. The data indicated that positive peer attachments were associated with the development of active coping and higher-quality peer relationships. This suggests that institutionalized youths with positive peer connections are more likely to express their thoughts and feelings, develop constructive interactions, and enhance their self-esteem through having a source of personal support to discuss their issues with.

HYPOTHESIS 1 - There will be a significant relationship between Peer Attachment & Problem Solving among Adolescents

Hypothesis 1, which proposed a connection between peer attachment and problem-solving in adolescents, was supported by strong evidence from Pearson correlation analysis ($r(119) = 0.43$, $p < .001$). The findings suggest a positive correlation between peer attachment and problem-solving abilities in adolescents, indicating that peers can be a valuable resource for problem-solving by offering diverse perspectives, guidance, and strategies.

Hypothesis 2 - There will be significant impact of peer attachment on the problem solving among young adults

The results indicate that the predictor variable "PEER ATTACHMENT" in the linear regression model accounts for 19.3% of the variance in "PROBLEM SOLVING" (Table 6.1). The model is statistically significant with a low p-value ($p = .001$) and a high F-value ($F = 28.42$) obtained from the ANOVA. The regression coefficient for "PEER ATTACHMENT" is 0.22 (Table 6.3). This means that, on average, a one-unit increase in peer attachment corresponds to a 0.22 unit increase in problem-solving scores.

Based on these results, we can conclude that Hypothesis 2 is accepted. The analysis demonstrates a significant impact of peer attachment on problem-solving in young adults. Previous studies have consistently shown that peer attachment influences adolescents' problem-solving abilities. Securely attached individuals tend to have better problem-solving skills, while those with insecure attachments struggle more. Secure attachments provide trust, support, and acceptance within peer relationships, fostering a positive problem-solving environment. Securely attached individuals are more likely to seek help, collaborate effectively, and consider different perspectives when facing challenges. In contrast, those with insecure attachments may experience difficulties in seeking assistance, lack confidence, and exhibit limited communication and collaboration skills.

CONCLUSION

This study supports the idea that peer attachment is linked to problem-solving in adolescents. These findings are relevant for interventions and programs that aim to enhance peer support and develop effective problem-solving skills in teenagers, benefiting their cognitive and social development.

LIMITATIONS

While studying the impact of peer attachment on problem-solving skills and emotional regulation among adolescents, it's important to acknowledge limitations. These may include sample selection bias, cross-sectional design, reliance on self-report assessments, and the potential influence of

unmeasured factors such as family dynamics and cognitive capacities. Despite these limitations, understanding the effects of peer attachment on teenagers' problem-solving offers valuable insights into their social and emotional development, and future research can address these limitations for a more comprehensive understanding.

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