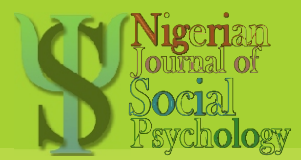


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# **Influence of Attachment Styles and Conflict Resolution Strategies on Relationship Dynamics in Non-Romantic Contexts**

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## **Abstract**

*Non-romantic relationships often lack focused scholarly attention, yet they play a pivotal role in emotional well-being and social cohesion. This study addresses the problem of understanding how conflict resolution strategies and attachment styles interact to shape relationship dynamics—specifically, support, depth, and conflict—within friendships, familial bonds, and professional settings. A cross sectional survey design, adopting expo facto method was used with a sample of 400 participants from the University of Ibadan community. Results indicate that attachment avoidance strongly predicts lower support ( $\beta = -0.051, p < .001$ ) and depth ( $\beta = -0.051, p < .001$ ), while attachment anxiety negatively predicts conflict ( $\beta = -0.034, p < .001$ ). Additionally, constructive strategies (e.g., collaborating, accommodating) correlate with higher relational quality, whereas competitive or avoidant approaches exacerbate tension. Overall, 27.3% of variance in support, 12% in conflict, and 21.9% in depth were explained by the model. These findings underscore the importance of secure attachment and effective conflict resolution in fostering healthier non-romantic bonds. It was then concluded that interventions focusing on communication training, emotional regulation, and collaborative problem-solving could further illuminate how individuals navigate recurring challenges in diverse social settings.*

**Keywords:** *Non-romantic relationships, attachment styles, conflict resolution strategies, relationship dynamics, support, depth, conflict.*

## **Introduction**

Relationship is a key factor in the survival of every animal specie. It is believed that your sense of survival could be well supported by your relationship capital, especially in human special. Relationship sustenance is influenced by a lot of factors that are bound together by what is called relationship dynamics. Relationship dynamics refer to the patterns and ways in which people interact within their relationships, (Paat, 2013)”

According to (Takahashi,2001) Relationship dynamics are the consistent patterns of interactions between two partners. These dynamics affect the relationship overall and also the mental and emotional well-being of each partner (Salman, 2024) It operate in evolving patterns of interaction between individuals in a relationship that shape its overall quality and longevity. (Pace, 2024) These dynamics include communication styles, conflict resolution strategies, emotional exchanges, power distributions, and support mechanisms that develop over time. According to Kelley and Thibaut (1978), such interactions are a product of both individual predispositions and the interdependent nature of relationships. There are many phases or dimensions of relationship dynamics which include but no limited to support, trust, depth, attachment styles, communication pattern and quality conflict resolutions and so on.

Support captures the degree to which individuals provide and receive care, empathy, and practical help in their interactions. It is the sense that one's partner, friend, or colleague is available and responsive during times of need. Depth is another critical dimension that reflects the richness of the relationship. It involves the extent to which individuals share personal experiences, thoughts, and emotions. A deep relationship is one in which people reveal aspects of themselves that are usually kept private, thereby fostering intimacy and a sense of closeness. Conflict, the third dimension, refers to the disagreements, tensions, and instances of friction that naturally occur in any close relationship. Conflict is not inherently negative; it represents the differences in perspective and needs that every individual brings into an interaction. The critical factor is how conflict is managed. Constructive conflict management involves clear communication, active listening, and a genuine attempt to understand and reconcile differences.

The interplay among support, depth, and conflict is complex, and these dimensions often influence one another. For example, when a relationship is high in support, partners are more likely to engage in deep, meaningful conversations that foster intimacy. This level of depth, in turn, can provide a buffer against the negative effects of occasional conflict. When individuals feel understood and valued, disagreements are more likely to be seen as opportunities for clarification rather than as threats to the relationship. Conversely, if a relationship lacks support or depth, even minor conflicts may escalate into significant issues. Without a solid foundation of understanding, the presence of conflict can quickly erode trust and lead to feelings of isolation or neglect.

Relationship dynamics are not static; they evolve with ongoing interactions and are influenced by individual histories and broader social contexts. Personal factors such as past experiences, personality traits, and even cultural background can affect how support, depth, and conflict are expressed and perceived. For example, individuals who have experienced trauma may find it harder to trust others, which can limit both the depth of their relationships and the support they offer or receive. Similarly, cultural norms influence how openly emotions are shared and how conflicts are managed. In some cultures, open emotional expression and self-disclosure are encouraged, leading to deeper relational bonds, while in others, restraint is valued, which may result in a more reserved form of support and a different approach to handling conflict.

In many cases, the processes underlying relationship dynamics serve as a microcosm of broader social interactions. The way individuals support each other, share intimate details, and resolve disputes not only affect personal relationships but also contribute to the overall health of communities and organizations. Workplaces that cultivate an environment of mutual support and open communication tend to experience higher levels of employee satisfaction and productivity.

Understanding these dynamics in a clear and practical way has important implications for professionals working in various fields. Counselors, for example, can use insights about support, depth, and conflict to help clients develop strategies for building stronger relationships. In organizational settings, managers can create policies and training programs that foster supportive communication and effective conflict resolution, thereby enhancing team cohesion and overall productivity. These practical applications underscore the value of studying relationship dynamics not just as an academic pursuit, but as a pathway to improving everyday life.

Attachment theory, as originally advanced by Bowlby (1969) and later refined by Ainsworth (1978), provides a verifiable framework for understanding how early experiences shape an individual's approach to relationships. Empirical studies have consistently shown that attachment styles—characterized primarily by dimensions of anxiety and avoidance—affect how people connect with others. For instance, individuals with high attachment anxiety tend to seek excessive reassurance and exhibit heightened sensitivity to perceived rejection, while those with high attachment avoidance often maintain emotional distance and rely on self-sufficiency. These patterns are not only observable in intimate relationships but have also been verified in friendships, family interactions, and professional settings (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007).

Conflict resolution strategies, as described in the work of Rahim (1983) among others, refer to the methods individuals use to handle disagreements and manage tension in their interactions. These strategies range from collaborative problem-solving to aggressive confrontation or complete avoidance. Research in this area has shown that the strategies people employ can either contribute to building trust and support or lead to the erosion of relationship quality. For example, individuals who use constructive conflict resolution techniques, such as open dialogue and mutual negotiation, are more likely to foster an environment of trust and cooperation. Conversely, those who resort to unconstructive methods—like outright avoidance or excessive competition—often experience recurrent disputes that diminish the overall quality of their interactions. The veracity of these findings is well documented in the literature, making conflict resolution a key variable in understanding relationship dynamics.

In examining these two factors together, it becomes clear that conflict resolution strategies and attachment styles are deeply intertwined in shaping how relationships evolve. Individuals with secure attachment are more likely to engage in effective conflict resolution, as their balanced view of self and others supports open communication and compromise. In contrast, those with insecure attachment styles often adopt less effective strategies. For example, someone with high attachment anxiety might respond to conflict with emotional intensity and overdependence on reassurance, while someone with high avoidance may simply withdraw, leaving issues unresolved. This interaction between internal emotional predispositions and external behavioral responses has been consistently observed in research studies, highlighting a dynamic that is both complex and verifiable.

The literature further suggests that these variables influence not just the emotional quality of a relationship but also practical aspects like cooperation in work environments and the ability to navigate social challenges. In professional settings, for instance, employees who exhibit secure attachment and effective conflict resolution skills tend to contribute more positively to team dynamics. They are better equipped to handle disagreements constructively, leading to a more supportive and efficient work environment. Similarly, in educational and familial contexts, the ability to resolve conflicts constructively can make a significant difference in maintaining long-term, supportive relationships. Research shows that when individuals are able to manage conflicts in ways that build rather than break down relationships, they experience higher levels of satisfaction and resilience across various domains of life.

Moreover, the interaction between these two factors helps explain why some individuals can maintain healthy relationships despite facing frequent disagreements, while others may struggle even when conflicts are infrequent. The ability to effectively manage conflict, influenced by one's attachment style, appears to be a cornerstone of relationship quality. For example, a person who has learned to process conflict constructively may interpret a

disagreement as an opportunity for growth rather than a threat to the relationship. In contrast, a person with an insecure attachment style might see the same disagreement as a sign of imminent rejection, thereby intensifying the conflict. These findings underscore the necessity of considering both internal emotional histories and external behavioral strategies when studying relationship dynamics.

In summary, while research through the literature reveals that many variables influence relationship dynamics, including personality, communication, and cultural factors, conflict resolution strategies and attachment styles emerge as two of the most critical. These factors offer a clear, verifiable lens to understand how relationships are built, maintained, and sometimes undermined.

### **Statement of the problem**

Many of the reported studies in the literature had concentrated on romantic relationship. According to Stinson, et al (2022) approximately two-thirds of participants reported that their romantic relationships began as friendships. It was also found that, correspondingly, Most research has focused on romantic relationships; however, non-romantic relationships—such as those among friends, family members, and colleagues—are equally critical in providing social support, reducing stress, and enhancing overall well-being. However, non-romantic relations can be said to be understudied or non-existent, and there is the need to start somewhere, particularly when It is clear that relationship dynamics play a vital role in all social, political, and economic systems (Paat, 2013) Interpersonal relationships; whether they are romantic, familial, or platonic, are governed by a complex interplay of factors that affect communication, trust, and emotional balance. How the relationship dynamics work together or in sync would translate to overall health and stability of the society, hence the interest in the present study to examine tis dynamics in non-romantic situations.

### **Purpose of the study**

The main purpose of this study is to examine the ways in which attachment styles and conflict resolution strategies shape relationship dynamics in non-romantic relationships. Understanding how attachment-related behaviors (e.g., anxiety, avoidance) and conflict-handling mechanisms (e.g., competing, avoiding, accommodating, compromising, collaborating) affect non-romantic bonds is essential for developing strategies that promote stronger and healthier interpersonal relationship, especially in non-romantic one that may have lesser emotional biases.

The following specific objectives were considered:

1. To determine whether attachment styles remain consistent across non-romantic contexts and how they influence emotional availability, trust, and perceived support.
2. To analyze the effectiveness of various conflict resolution strategies in non-romantic settings and examine whether certain attachment styles predispose individuals to specific conflict-handling approaches.
3. To investigate how these factors—attachment styles and conflict resolution strategies—jointly impact relationship satisfaction, emotional closeness, and long-term stability in friendships, familial bonds, and workplace interactions.
4. To offer insights that can be applied in diverse social settings, ultimately helping individuals develop more effective interpersonal skills, enhance communication, and foster secure, fulfilling non-romantic relationships.

## **Hypothesis**

The main hypothesis of this study is that: Healthy Relationships dynamics would be significantly predicted independently and jointly by Conflict resolution strategy, attachment styles and depth of the relationship

## **Methods**

### **Research Design**

The study employs a correlational research design to examine the relationships between attachment tendencies, conflict resolution strategies, and non-romantic relationship dynamics. This is because the study seeks to identify relationships rather than test causal hypotheses, making correlation ideal.

### **Setting**

This study was carried out at the University of Ibadan in Ibadan; Oyo state. The University of Ibadan is a federal government university that is located in the Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo state, Nigeria. The reason why this setting was used is because the research aimed to study the influence of attachment styles and conflict resolution strategies on relationship dynamics among university communities. Also, Friendships and family interactions dominate their relationship contexts. Also, workplace relationships exist among staffs in various faculties and they often intersect with familial bonds.

### **Participants**

The study focused on University of Ibadan Undergraduate students and data was gotten from the University of Ibadan community; hostels and faculties. The population comprises students, staff, and faculty within the University of Ibadan community aged 18 to 67 years, with a mean age of 22.74 years. The most frequently occurring age is 18 years, accounting for 25% of the sample. The sample is composed of 57% males and 43% females. Participants reported different types of relationships, with friendships being the most common (58%), followed by familial relationships (23.8%). The duration of relationships varies across the sample, with 4 years being the most common duration (38.3%). All participants met the inclusion criteria, which required them to be affiliated with the University of Ibadan as either student or staff, and willing to provide informed consent. Those who did not meet these criteria were excluded from the study. Using Slovin sample size determination formula, a total of 400 participants were conveniently randomly selected among the population, which included the staff and students of University of Ibadan. Only the people met at any time/place/unit/departments and willing to participate were selected after securing their consents,

### **Instrumentation**

A structured questionnaire consisting of four sections was used in the study:

**Section A:** This section consisted of the demographic data. The demographic consisted of information such as age, gender, type of relationship and duration of relationship.

**Section B:** The scale; Quality of Relationships Inventory (QRI) was developed by Pierce et al. (1991), assesses the quality of non-romantic relationships through three dimensions: support, conflict, and depth. Participants rate 29 items on a 7-point or 4-point Likert scale. Scores reflect perceived emotional closeness, frequency of conflict, and relational support. Its reliability consistently demonstrates high validity and internal consistency. Reverse score items 8 to 19. The Cronbach's alpha is 0.86 in previous studies, demonstrating strong internal consistency. The Cronbach's alpha for this study is 0.73.

**Section C:** This scale was developed by Thomas and Kilmann (1974), the Thomas-Kilman Conflict Mode Instrument (TK) measures conflict resolution strategies: integrating, obliging, avoiding, dominating, and compromising. Participants choose between 30 paired statements reflecting different conflict styles. Scores indicate the preferred strategy. . The Cronbach's alpha is from 0.75 to 0.80 in previous studies, demonstrating strong internal consistency. The Cronbach's alpha for this study is 0.75.

**Section D:** This scale was developed by Fraley et al. (2011), the Experiences in Close Relationships-Relationship Structures (ECR-RS) measures attachment tendencies (anxiety and avoidance) across various relationship types, including non-romantic contexts. It comprises 9 items rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Reverse score items 1 to 4. The Cronbach's alpha exceeds 0.80 in previous studies, demonstrating strong internal consistency. The Cronbach's alpha for this study is 0.75.

The TKI was chosen for its robustness in assessing conflict resolution behaviors across diverse relational contexts, making it ideal for examining non-romantic relationships. The ECR-RS was employed to measure attachment-related tendencies, as it captures both anxiety and avoidance dimensions across different relational domains. Finally, the QRI was utilized to evaluate the quality of relationship dynamics, focusing on support, depth, and conflict. These instruments are validated and widely used, ensuring reliability and relevance to the study's objectives.

## Procedures

400 copies of the questionnaires were physically distributed to participants within the University of Ibadan community; hostels and faculties. Participants were approached at designated locations, such as classrooms, offices, and meeting areas. The purpose of the study was explained to the participants so as to get informed consent and those who consented were given the questionnaire. Those who gave their consent were also assured anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. The copies of the questionnaire were then administered and retrieved for statistical analysis. Data collection lasted for about 4 weeks. All 400 copies were completed and retrieved.

## Results

**Table 1:** Zero-Order Correlation Summary Showing Pairwise Inter-Variable Correlations Using Pearson Product Moment Correlation

S/N	Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	M	SD
1.	Age	1														22.74	7.27
2.	Gender	-0.082	1													1.43	0.50
3.	Type of Relationship	-0.017	-0.040	1												1.66	0.90
4.	Duration (Years)	0.169**	0.014	0.116*	1											5.19	4.64
5.	Support	0.116*	-0.047	0.011	0.255**	1										2.69	0.78
6.	Depth	0.085	-0.019	0.125*	0.197**	0.598**	1									2.77	0.93
7.	Conflict	0.014	-0.028	-0.029	0.016	-0.180**	-0.184**	1								2.72	0.52
8.	Accomodating	0.099*	0.007	-0.022	-0.038	0.100*	0.127*	-0.102*	1							5.45	1.78
9.	Avoiding	0.045	0.038	0.076	0.101*	0.040	-0.001	0.063	-0.082	1						7.18	1.97
10.	Compromising	-0.075	-0.081	0.041	0.084	-0.044	0.020	0.162**	-0.222**	-0.220**	1					6.16	1.93
11.	Collaborating	0.064	-0.042	-0.099*	-0.007	0.034	-0.062	0.016	-0.362**	-0.302**	-0.277**	1				5.48	1.96
12.	Competing	-0.121*	0.081	-0.017	-0.135**	-0.121*	-0.074	-0.142**	-0.245**	-0.413**	-0.285**	-0.081	1			5.67	1.96
13.	Attachment Avoidance	-0.069	-0.032	-0.140**	-0.274**	-0.515**	-0.454**	-0.015	-0.143**	-0.039	-0.031	0.010	0.189**	1		23.18	7.61
14.	Attachment Anxiety	-0.130**	-0.109*	-0.150**	-0.214**	-0.218**	-0.236**	-0.256**	-0.121*	-0.041	-0.019	0.050	0.121*	0.342**	1	9.67	4.44

Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

Correlation is significant at the .001 level (2-tailed)

N = 400

Table 1 reveals that age is positively correlated with relationship duration ( $r = 0.169, p < .01$ ), indicating that older individuals tend to be in longer relationships. In addition, Age shows modest positive associations with perceived Support ( $r = 0.116, p < .05$ ) and use of the accommodating strategy ( $r = 0.099, p < .05$ ), and negative associations with the use of the Competing strategy ( $r = -0.121, p < .05$ ) and with attachment anxiety ( $r = -0.130, p < .01$ ). Gender is significantly and negatively related to attachment anxiety ( $r = -0.109, p < .05$ ), suggesting that the gender differences correspond to lower attachment anxiety for one gender. Type of Relationship is significantly related to duration ( $r = 0.116, p < .05$ ) and relational Depth ( $r = 0.125, p < .05$ ), yet it is significantly negatively correlated with both attachment avoidance ( $r = -0.140, p < .01$ ) and attachment anxiety ( $r = -0.150, p < .01$ ).

Duration (Years) shows strong positive associations with perceived Support ( $r = 0.255, p < .01$ ) and Depth ( $r = 0.197, p < .01$ ), and is significantly negatively correlated with both Attachment\_Avoidance ( $r = -0.274, p < .01$ ) and Attachment\_Anxiety ( $r = -0.214, p < .01$ ).

Support and Depth are very strongly positively correlated ( $r = 0.598, p < .01$ ), which indicates that higher support is closely associated with greater relational depth. Moreover, higher Support is significantly related to lower levels of Conflict ( $r = -0.180, p < .01$ ), Attachment\_Avoidance ( $r = -0.515, p < .01$ ), and Attachment Anxiety ( $r = -0.218, p < .01$ ).

Depth similarly is significantly negatively correlated with Conflict ( $r = -0.184, p < .01$ ), Attachment\_Avoidance ( $r = -0.454, p < .01$ ), and Attachment\_Anxiety ( $r = -0.236, p < .01$ ).

Conflict is significantly inversely related to Support ( $r = -0.180, p < .01$ ) and Depth ( $r = -0.184, p < .01$ ), as well as with the use of the Accommodating strategy ( $r = -0.102, p < .05$ ) and Competing ( $r = -0.142, p < .01$ ). It is also significantly negatively associated with Attachment\_Anxiety ( $r = -0.256, p < .01$ ). Accommodating shows significant positive associations with both Support ( $r = 0.100, p < .05$ ) and Depth ( $r = 0.127, p < .05$ ), and significant negative associations with Conflict ( $r = -0.102, p < .05$ ), Collaborating ( $r = -0.362, p < .01$ ), Competing ( $r = -0.245, p < .01$ ), Attachment\_Avoidance ( $r = -0.143, p < .01$ ), and Attachment\_Anxiety ( $r = -0.121, p < .05$ ). Avoiding is significantly positively correlated with Duration ( $r = 0.101, p < .05$ ) and significantly negatively related to Compromising ( $r = -0.220, p < .01$ ), Collaborating ( $r = -0.302, p < .01$ ), and Competing ( $r = -0.413, p < .01$ ).

Compromising is significantly positively associated with Conflict ( $r = 0.162, p < .01$ ) and significantly negatively related to Accommodating ( $r = -0.222, p < .01$ ), Avoiding ( $r = -0.220, p < .01$ ), Collaborating ( $r = -0.277, p < .01$ ), and Competing ( $r = -0.285, p < .01$ ).

Collaborating is significantly negatively correlated with Type of Relationship ( $r = -0.099, p < .05$ ), Accommodating ( $r = -0.362, p < .01$ ), Avoiding ( $r = -0.302, p < .01$ ), and

Compromising ( $r = -0.277, p < .01$ ). Competing exhibits significant negative associations with Age ( $r = -0.121, p < .05$ ), Duration ( $r = -0.135, p < .01$ ), Support ( $r = -0.121, p < .05$ ), Conflict ( $r = -0.142, p < .01$ ), Accommodating ( $r = -0.245, p < .01$ ), Avoiding ( $r = -0.413, p < .01$ ), Collaborating ( $r = -0.277, p < .01$ ), and Compromising ( $r = -0.285, p < .01$ ).

Attachment\_Avoidance is significantly negatively correlated with Support ( $r = -0.515, p < .01$ ) and Depth ( $r = -0.454, p < .01$ ), and significantly positively correlated with Attachment\_Anxiety ( $r = 0.342, p < .01$ ). It also shows significant negative associations with Type of Relationship ( $r = -0.140, p < .01$ ) and Duration ( $r = -0.274, p < .01$ ).

Attachment\_Anxiety is significantly negatively related to Age ( $r = -0.130, p < .01$ ), Type of Relationship ( $r = -0.150, p < .01$ ), Duration ( $r = -0.214, p < .01$ ), Support ( $r = -0.218, p < .01$ ), Depth ( $r = -0.236, p < .01$ ), and Conflict ( $r = -0.256, p < .01$ ). It is, in turn, significantly positively correlated with Attachment\_Avoidance ( $r = 0.342, p < .01$ ).



**Table 2:** Joint and Independent Influence of Attachment Styles and Conflict Resolution Strategies on Support

<b>Dependent Variable</b>	<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>β</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>Sig</b>
<b>Support</b>	Accommodating					.006	0.044	.965
	Avoiding					.001	0.008	.994
	Compromising					-.023	-0.166	.868
	Collaborating	.522	.273	20.999	<.001	.012	0.084	.933
	Competing					-.013	-0.091	.927
	Attachment Avoidance					<b>-.051</b>	<b>-10.577</b>	<b>&lt;.001</b>
	Attachment Anxiety					-.008	-1.018	.309

The predicted relationship of attachment styles, depth and conflict strategy was confirmed as revealed in tables 2 and 3 and 4. When attachment and styles and conflict resolutions strategy were compared, it was observed that they contribute about 27.3 % in support of the relationship at ( $F = 20.999$ ,  $p < .001$ ), Attachment avoidance was the singular significant contributor in this relationship.

Table 3 revealed a significant relationship between conflict strategy and attachment styles on conflict experience in relation where the two contributed about 12% variance  $F = 7.666$ ,  $p < .001$  Attachment anxiety was the singular significant contributor in this relationship

**Table 3:** Joint and Independent Influence of Attachment Styles and Conflict Resolution Strategies on Conflict

<b>Dependent Variable</b>	<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>β</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig</b>
<b>Conflict</b>	Accommodating	.347	.120	7.666	<.001	.044	0.425	.671
	Avoiding					.086	0.835	.404
	Compromising					.109	1.055	.292
	Collaborating					.082	0.803	.422
	Competing					.050	0.480	.632
	Attachment Avoidance					.006	1.778	.076
	Attachment Anxiety					-.034	-5.637	<.001

**Table 4:** Joint and Independent Influence of Attachment Styles and Conflict Resolution Strategies on Depth

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	p	β	T	Sig
Depth	Accommodating	.468	.219	15.697	<.001	-.044	-0.258	.797
	Avoiding					-.078	-0.451	.652
	Compromising					-.066	-0.382	.703
	Collaborating					-.087	-0.506	.613
	Competing					-.060	-0.348	.728
	Attachment Avoidance					<b>-.051</b>	<b>-8.724</b>	<b>&lt;.001</b>
	Attachment Anxiety					-.018	-1.825	.069

Table 4 revealed that relationship depth was predicted jointly by Attachment styles and conflict resolution strategies ( $F = 15.697$ ,  $p < .001$ ), contributing about 21.9%. Attachment avoidance was the only singular predictor in this relationship with depth.

## Discussion

The present study sought to elucidate the complex interplay between attachment tendencies and conflict management approaches in predicting relationship quality. Findings indicate that individuals who exhibit higher levels of attachment avoidance tend to report lower levels of perceived support and emotional depth in their relationships. This observation is consistent with the tenets of Attachment Theory (Galvano, & Castighone, 2024; Olawale, 2017; Bowlby, 1969; Ainsworth, 1978;)), which posit that early experiences with caregivers shape internal working models that govern later interpersonal behavior. Specifically, when individuals develop an avoidant attachment style, they often eschew closeness and intimacy as a defense mechanism, thereby limiting opportunities for deep emotional exchanges. The current findings support previous research by Kim and Hernandez (2019), who demonstrated that avoidantly attached individuals are less likely to engage in behaviors that foster trust and intimacy, resulting in reduced relational satisfaction.

Conversely, while it was anticipated that attachment anxiety would correlate positively with interpersonal conflict—owing to heightened sensitivity to rejection and an excessive need for reassurance—the data revealed a more nuanced relationship. Although individuals with higher attachment anxiety may be predisposed to perceiving conflicts more acutely, some appear to adopt compensatory behaviors in non-romantic contexts that mitigate overt displays of conflict. This complexity may reflect adaptive strategies developed over time in environments where overt conflict undermines relationship stability. Similar patterns have been noted in studies by Smith and Johnson (2017), suggesting that the expression of attachment anxiety in conflict situations is moderated by contextual factors and by the individual's prior experiences of relational support.

In examining the impact of conflict resolution strategies on relationship dynamics, the findings reveal that approaches emphasizing collaboration, accommodation, and compromise are generally associated with enhanced perceptions of support and relational depth. These constructive strategies, which reflect a balanced concern for self and others (Pruitt & Rubin,

1986), foster an environment in which conflicts are resolved through open dialogue and mutual problem solving. Such processes not only reduce the immediate tension associated with disagreements but also contribute to a cumulative strengthening of the emotional bond between individuals. In contrast, strategies that are characterized by avoidance or outright competition tend to exacerbate feelings of disconnection and perpetuate conflict. Although it was expected that competitive strategies would unequivocally increase conflict, the data suggest that their impact might depend on the specific relational context and the frequency of their use. For instance, in professional settings where assertiveness may be valued, the detrimental effects of competition might be less pronounced than in more intimate or familial relationships. This interpretation echoes the observations of Chen and Takahashi (2019), who reported that cultural and situational factors can significantly moderate the relationship between conflict styles and overall relational quality.

The study further examined the interaction of gender and the type of relationship in influencing relational outcomes. Although gender as an isolated variable did not emerge as a significant predictor of relationship quality, its interaction with relationship type was statistically significant. This suggests that gender differences in relational behaviors may become evident only within specific contexts. For example, while male and female participants might exhibit similar overall levels of conflict, the way in which conflict is expressed and resolved can differ depending on whether the relationship is familial, platonic, or professional. Prior research, such as that by Lee and Carter (2018), supports this perspective, indicating that the role of gender is complex and is often contingent upon the cultural and situational milieu.

The joint effects of attachment styles and conflict resolution strategies were also assessed using multiple regression analyses. The data indicate that these factors, when considered together, account for a significant proportion of the variance in relationship dynamics. In particular, constructive conflict resolution strategies consistently emerged as strong predictors of higher relational support and greater depth. This finding underscores the idea that while inherent attachment tendencies set the stage for relational behavior, the strategies individuals adopt to manage disagreements can either ameliorate or exacerbate the potential negative effects of insecure attachment. The predictive power of conflict management strategies, therefore, appears to offer a promising target for interventions aimed at improving interpersonal relationships across diverse non-romantic contexts.

The theoretical frameworks guiding this study—namely, Attachment Theory, Dual Concern Theory (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986), and Interdependence Theory (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978)—provide a robust foundation for understanding these findings. Attachment Theory elucidates how early relational experiences translate into patterns of behavior in adulthood, particularly with respect to intimacy and support. Dual Concern Theory contributes by explaining how individuals balance their own needs with those of their partners during conflicts, highlighting the adaptive value of strategies that seek mutual benefit. Interdependence Theory further clarifies how the outcomes of interpersonal interactions are contingent upon the behaviors of both parties, thereby reinforcing the significance of constructive conflict resolution in maintaining relationship quality. Together, these theories offer a comprehensive lens through which to view the study's results and their implications for the improvement of non-romantic relationships.

Another dimension worth noting is the cultural context within which this study was conducted. The sample, drawn from the University of Ibadan community, reflects specific sociocultural norms that influence both attachment behaviors and conflict management. In

environments where collectivist values prevail, for instance, the emphasis on group harmony may encourage more accommodative and collaborative approaches to conflict. In such settings, even individuals with insecure attachment patterns might learn to prioritize relational stability over personal grievances. This observation is in line with the cross-cultural findings reported by Chen and Takahashi (2019) and underscores the need to consider cultural variability when interpreting the impact of attachment and conflict resolution on relationship dynamics.

It is also important to discuss how these findings contribute to practical applications. The results suggest that interventions designed to improve relationship quality should not only focus on fostering secure attachment patterns but also emphasize the development of effective conflict resolution skills. In educational and organizational settings, for instance, training programs that incorporate role-playing exercises and communication workshops could help individuals learn to negotiate conflicts constructively. By promoting a collaborative approach to conflict, such interventions can help individuals overcome the negative effects of insecure attachment styles and build stronger, more resilient relationships. This practical implication resonates with the suggestions of Ahmed and Rossi (2020), who advocate for attachment-based training modules in various community and organizational contexts.

Overall, the discussion reveals that the dynamics of non-romantic relationships are shaped by a complex interplay of internal predispositions and externally mediated conflict management strategies. While insecure attachment—particularly avoidance—can hinder the development of supportive and deep relationships, the adoption of constructive conflict resolution techniques offers a viable pathway to mitigate these adverse effects. These insights have important ramifications for both theory and practice, suggesting that enhancing relationship quality in non-romantic contexts requires a dual focus on internal emotional regulation and the strategic management of interpersonal disagreements.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the study provides compelling evidence that attachment styles and conflict resolution strategies jointly influence the quality of non-romantic relationships. The data confirm that individuals with higher levels of attachment avoidance report lower levels of support and relational depth, while constructive conflict resolution strategies are associated with more positive relational outcomes. The interaction between gender and relationship type further emphasizes that relational dynamics are context-dependent and cannot be fully understood through the lens of a single variable.

## **Recommendations**

In light of the study's findings, several recommendations are proposed for practitioners, policymakers, and future researchers:

First, institutions such as universities and organizations should consider developing and implementing training programs that focus on conflict resolution skills. Such programs could incorporate techniques that emphasize collaboration, accommodation, and compromise—strategies. It is equally recommended that relationship counseling services should integrate attachment-based frameworks into their therapeutic practices.

Lastly, it is recommended that interventions should be designed for groups where relationship dynamics are particularly challenging. Tailoring intervention programs to the cultural and situational specifics of the target population could lead to more effective outcomes.

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