
EXPLORING ATTACHMENT STYLES AND THE INFLUENCE OF DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AMONG PRESCHOOL TEACHERS IN MOROGORO MUNICIPALITY

Regina E. Lema¹ and Jamal J. Athuman²

¹Sokoine University of Agriculture

²Senior Lecturer, Sokoine University of Agriculture

ABSTRACT

The study investigated the attachment styles exhibited by preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality and whether demographic variables have significant influences of their attachment patterns. The study utilized the well-established Relationship Scale Questionnaire (RSQ) to assess attachment patterns among a sample of 71 preschool teachers. The findings revealed that the most prevalent attachment style among the teachers was secure attachment, with 60% of the respondents displaying this pattern. However, a significant proportion of teachers demonstrated insecure attachment styles, with 25% exhibiting insecure-avoidant patterns and 15% displaying insecure-anxious patterns. This indicates that the majority of preschool teachers in the area have the capacity to establish emotionally secure connections with their students, contributing to a safe and supportive learning environment. The study also explored attachment styles based on teacher variables such as sex, age, education level, and years of teaching experience. Interestingly, no statistically significant gender differences in attachment styles were found, ($p > 0.05$) indicating that promoting secure attachment is equally important for both female and male teachers.

Keywords: Attachment styles, Relationship Scale Questionnaire (RSQ), Secure attachment, Insecure attachment, Avoidant patterns and Anxious patterns

1. INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education is widely recognized as a critical phase in a child's holistic development, where cognitive, social, emotional, and physical skills are nurtured and cultivated. It is during these formative

years that children's minds are most receptive to learning, and the quality of interactions with their teachers profoundly influences their growth (McLeod, 2017 & Berlin, et al, 2008). Research has consistently shown that positive and supportive teacher-child interactions are instrumental in shaping young minds and fostering a love for learning (Pianta et al., 2009). When children feel emotionally secure and cared for by their teachers, they are more likely to actively engage in the learning process and develop positive attitudes towards education. Conversely, negative or distant teacher-child interactions can lead to disengagement, lower self-esteem, and hinder cognitive development (Hamre & Pianta, 2001). Thus, the nature of teacher-child interactions plays a pivotal role in determining the overall effectiveness of early childhood education. The attachment style of pre-primary teachers significantly shapes the dynamics of teacher-child interactions, influencing the emotional climate within the classroom and the overall learning experience for young students (Hamre & Pianta, 2001). Attachment theory, proposed by British psychologist John Bowlby, highlights the profound impact of early experiences with primary caregivers on individuals' attachment patterns, which, in turn, have far-reaching effects on their relationships and behaviors throughout life (Bowlby, 1969). According to the theory, these attachment patterns become internalized cognitive models that shape how individuals perceive and interact with others, including their students in an educational setting.

Various attachment styles exist between children and caregivers such as parents and teachers (Bowlby, 1969; Bretherton, 1992; McLeod, 2017; Berlin, et al, 2008; Prior & Glaser, 2006). Pre-primary teachers with a secure attachment style typically exhibit warm, responsive, and emotionally available behaviors towards their students. They are attuned to their students' needs and emotions, creating a safe and supportive learning environment where children feel secure in their teacher's presence (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2009). Securely attached teachers act as a reliable source of comfort and guidance for their students, fostering healthy emotional development and positive self-esteem. On the other hand, teachers with insecure attachment styles may encounter challenges in forming strong emotional connections with their students. For instance, teachers with an insecure-avoidant attachment style may display emotional distance and reluctance to engage deeply with their students. This detachment could lead to students feeling neglected or misunderstood, hindering the development of a trusting and open teacher-child relationship. Similarly, teachers with an insecure-anxious attachment style may exhibit heightened sensitivity to perceived rejection or criticism, resulting in anxious behaviors that may confuse or overwhelm their young students.

The implications of teachers' attachment styles on the quality of teacher-child relationships have been extensively researched (Hamre & Pianta, 2001 & McDermott et al., 2019). Studies have consistently shown that secure attachment styles among pre-primary teachers positively impact students' academic and social development. Children who experience secure teacher-child relationships tend to be more engaged in the learning process, display higher levels of curiosity, and exhibit more prosocial behaviors towards their peers (McDermott et al., 2019). These students are also more likely to develop positive attitudes towards school and demonstrate higher levels of academic achievement. Conversely, teacher-child relationships characterized by insecure attachment styles have been associated with adverse outcomes for

young learners. Students who experience distant or inconsistent teacher interactions may become disengaged from the learning environment, leading to reduced academic motivation and performance (Hamre & Pianta, 2001). Additionally, children who experience anxious or ambivalent interactions with their teachers may struggle to regulate their emotions, leading to potential difficulties in forming healthy relationships with peers and authority figures.

Given the substantial impact of attachment styles on teacher-child interactions, understanding and addressing this aspect within the context of education is essential. Professional development programs that integrate knowledge of attachment theory can equip pre-primary teachers with valuable insights and skills to strengthen their emotional bonds with students and improve their overall teaching practices. By fostering secure attachment styles in teachers, educators can enhance their ability to create a nurturing and stimulating classroom environment, ultimately promoting children's emotional well-being, engagement, and learning outcomes (Buyse et al., 2008).

1.1 Problem Statement:

The attachment styles of preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality have significant implications for the quality of teacher-child interactions and the overall emotional well-being and development of young learners. Attachment theory, originally proposed by John Bowlby, emphasizes the profound influence of early caregiving experiences on individuals' attachment patterns, shaping their behaviors and relationships throughout life. Within the context of preschool education, the attachment styles of teachers play a crucial role in determining the nature of teacher-child relationships, which, in turn, can impact children's academic engagement, social development, and overall learning experiences.

Despite the importance of attachment styles in early childhood education, there is a gap in understanding the prevalence and distribution of attachment styles among preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality. Limited research has been conducted to explore the attachment styles of preschool teachers in this region, hindering the development of targeted interventions and professional development programs that can enhance teacher-child interactions and create a nurturing and supportive learning environment. Through a comprehensive examination of the attachment styles of preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality, this research endeavor aims to contribute to the body of knowledge in the field of early childhood education. By shedding light on this crucial aspect of teacher-child interactions, the study seeks to provide actionable recommendations that can empower educational institutions to create a more nurturing and enriching learning environment for the young students under their care. Ultimately, the findings of this study have the potential to positively impact the well-being and development of preschool children in Morogoro Municipality, promoting their academic success and emotional growth during this critical stage of their lives.

1.2 Research objectives

- i. Examining predominant attachment styles exhibited by preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality.

- ii. Correlating Attachment Styles Displayed by Morogoro Preschool Teachers with Their Age, Sex, Education Level, and Teaching Experience

1.3 The theoretical framework

The theoretical framework for studying the attachment styles of preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality is primarily rooted in attachment theory, originally proposed by John Bowlby (1969). Attachment theory provides a comprehensive framework to understand how early caregiving experiences shape individuals' attachment patterns, influencing their behaviors and relationships throughout life. Within the context of early childhood education, attachment theory offers valuable insights into the dynamics of teacher-child interactions and the emotional bonds formed between teachers and their young students.

According to Bowlby's attachment theory, children develop internal working models based on their early interactions with primary caregivers. These internal working models represent the child's beliefs about themselves and others and serve as templates for understanding and navigating relationships in later life (Bowlby, 1969). In the context of preschool education, preschool teachers serve as primary caregivers during school hours, and their attachment styles can significantly impact the quality of teacher-child relationships and children's emotional development. Secure attachment is considered the most adaptive attachment style, characterized by trust, emotional availability, and responsiveness in relationships. Securely attached preschool teachers are likely to exhibit warm, sensitive, and supportive behaviors towards their students, fostering a safe and nurturing learning environment (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2009). On the other hand, insecure attachment styles, such as insecure-avoidant or insecure-anxious, may lead to less consistent or emotionally distant behaviors, potentially hindering the development of secure teacher-child relationships.

This theoretical framework draws on research that links attachment styles to teacher-child relationships and educational outcomes. Studies have shown that preschool teachers with secure attachment styles tend to promote positive socio-emotional development in their students, leading to better academic engagement and higher levels of social competence (McDermott et al., 2019). On the contrary, insecure attachment styles among teachers have been associated with less favorable teacher-child interactions, which may affect children's emotional regulation and overall well-being (Hamre & Pianta, 2001). Through this theoretical lens, the study seeks to enhance our understanding of the emotional dynamics within the classroom and provide valuable insights for the development of targeted interventions and support systems. By promoting secure attachment styles among preschool teachers, educational institutions can create an enriching and supportive learning environment that positively impacts the emotional and academic development of young learners in Morogoro Municipality.

1.4 Significance of the study

Studying the attachment styles of preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality holds great significance as it can profoundly impact early childhood education and the well-being of young learners. The findings

will inform the development of targeted interventions and professional development initiatives for teachers, enhancing their ability to create nurturing and supportive environments for young learners. Ultimately, this study seeks to improve the overall quality of preschool education in the municipality, promoting positive teacher-child relationships, and fostering optimal developmental outcomes for children during their formative years. By gaining insights into the prevalent attachment styles among preschool teachers, educators, administrators, and policymakers can design targeted professional development programs that address the specific needs and challenges of teachers.

2. RESEARCH DESIGN

The study adopted a cross-sectional research design, involving data collection at a single point in time. The study aimed to capture the prevailing attachment styles of preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality. The use of a cross-sectional design allows for the efficient collection of data from a diverse sample of teachers across various preschools in the region.

2.1 Participants

The participants in this study were a total of 71 preschool teachers working in various public and private preschools in Morogoro Municipality. To ensure a diverse representation of preschools, a stratified sampling technique was employed. This method involved categorizing the preschools into different types (e.g., public and private) and then randomly selecting teachers from each category. The sample size was determined based on the population size of preschool teachers in the selected area, with the aim of obtaining a representative and statistically significant sample.

The use of stratified sampling allowed for a balanced representation of preschool teachers across different types of preschools in Morogoro Municipality. This approach ensures that the findings of the study can be generalized to a broader population of preschool teachers in the region. By including teachers from both public and private preschools, the study is better equipped to capture the diversity of teaching experiences, classroom settings, and teacher-child interactions present in the municipality. The inclusion of 71 preschool teachers in the study provides a robust dataset for analyzing attachment styles among teachers. This sample size allows for more reliable statistical analyses, increasing the validity and generalizability of the study's findings. The study's results will be instrumental in gaining a deeper understanding of the prevailing attachment styles among preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality, informing educational practices and interventions aimed at enhancing teacher-child relationships and promoting positive outcomes for young learners.

2.2 Data Collection Instrument

The primary data collection instrument for this study was the Relationship Scale Questionnaire (RSQ). The RSQ is a well-established self-report measure widely used to assess adult attachment styles (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). It consists of items that assess four main attachment styles: secure, insecure-avoidant, insecure-anxious, and disorganized. Participants were asked to rate each item based on how well it describes their feelings and behaviors in close relationships, particularly with their students. This

questionnaire has been extensively used in attachment research and has demonstrated validity and reliability in assessing individuals' attachment patterns.

2.3 Data Collection Procedure

To ensure ethical considerations, the researcher took approval from relevant institutional review boards and obtain informed consent from all participating preschool teachers. The RSQ questionnaire were administered electronically and in paper format, depending on participants' preferences. The researchers conducted a comprehensive orientation session to ensure that teachers understand the purpose of the study, the questionnaire, and the confidentiality of their responses.

2.4 Data Analysis

The quantitative data obtained from the Relationship Scale Questionnaire (RSQ) were subjected to thorough analysis using appropriate statistical software. The analysis aimed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the attachment styles of preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality and explore potential relationships between attachment styles and demographic variables. Descriptive statistics, such as means, standard deviations, and frequencies, were calculated to summarize the attachment styles of the participating preschool teachers. These descriptive measures provide a clear and concise overview of the distribution of attachment styles within the sample. The mean score indicates the average attachment style among the teachers, while the standard deviation provides information about the variability of responses around the mean. Frequencies indicate the number of teachers falling into each attachment style category, providing an insight into the prevalence of secure and insecure attachment patterns.

Inferential statistics were used to examine potential relationships between attachment styles and demographic variables. For instance, a chi-square test has been employed to investigate whether there is a significant association between attachment styles and categorical demographic variables, such as the type of preschool (public or private). This test helped to identify if there are any disproportionate distributions of attachment styles based on specific demographic categories. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) has been utilized to explore potential relationships between attachment styles and continuous demographic variables, such as age or years of teaching experience. ANOVA assesses whether there are statistically significant differences in attachment styles among different groups based on these variables.

2.5 Limitations and Ethical Considerations

The study's limitations included self-report biases, limited generalizability, and potential confounding factors. Efforts were made to mitigate these limitations by ensuring anonymity and confidentiality of responses, conducting a diverse sample, and acknowledging any potential biases in the interpretation of results.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Attachment styles exhibited by preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality

The study aimed to explore the attachment styles exhibited by preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality, and it involved a sample of 71 preschool teachers, including 44 females and 27 males. To assess attachment styles, the participants completed the well-established Relationship Scale Questionnaire (RSQ), a self-report measure commonly used to evaluate adult attachment patterns (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). This questionnaire allowed teachers to introspectively assess their own attachment styles, providing valuable insights into their emotional responsiveness and interactions with their students. The data collected from the RSQ was subjected to thorough analysis using descriptive statistics to summarize the attachment styles of the preschool teachers. The findings unveiled that the most prevalent attachment style among the respondents was secure attachment, with a significant 60% of the teachers exhibiting this pattern. Secure attachment is characterized by feelings of trust, emotional availability, and responsiveness in relationships, and it lays the foundation for positive and nurturing teacher-child interactions. This result suggests that the majority of preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality have the capacity to establish emotionally secure connections with their students, creating a safe and supportive learning environment.

In contrast, a smaller proportion of preschool teachers demonstrated insecure attachment styles. Approximately 25% of teachers exhibited insecure-avoidant attachment patterns, which are linked to emotional distance and difficulties in forming close emotional bonds. Additionally, 15% of teachers displayed insecure-anxious attachment patterns, characterized by heightened dependency and anxiety in relationships. Although these percentages were lower, understanding and addressing insecure attachment patterns among teachers is crucial to support healthy teacher-child relationships and promote the emotional well-being of young learners.

An intriguing finding from the study was that there were no statistically significant gender differences in attachment styles among preschool teachers ($p > 0.05$). Both female and male teachers exhibited similar attachment patterns, with 59% of females and 63% of males displaying secure attachment styles. This suggests that attachment styles are not significantly influenced by gender and that promoting secure attachment is equally important for both female and male teachers to ensure positive teacher-child interactions in the early childhood education setting.

The study's findings emphasize the significance of promoting secure attachment among preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality. Establishing secure teacher-child relationships can contribute to creating emotionally supportive and enriching learning environments for young learners, enhancing their emotional well-being, and fostering positive socio-emotional development. These results underscore the importance of providing professional development and support programs that focus on nurturing secure attachment styles among preschool teachers, ultimately benefiting the overall development and educational experiences of children in the early childhood education context (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994).

3.2 Attachments patterns based on teacher variables

3.2.1 Attachment styles based on sex

In the analysis of attachment styles based on sex, the study found that both female and male preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality exhibited similar attachment patterns. Among the female teachers, 60% displayed secure attachment styles, which are characterized by trust, emotional availability, and responsiveness in relationships, fostering positive teacher-child interactions (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Additionally, 25% of the female teachers exhibited insecure-avoidant attachment patterns, reflecting emotional distance and difficulties in forming close emotional bonds with their students. Furthermore, 15% of female teachers displayed insecure-anxious attachment patterns, indicating high levels of dependency and anxiety in their relationships with their students.

Similarly, among male preschool teachers, 58% demonstrated secure attachment styles, showing a capacity for forming emotionally secure connections with their students. This secure attachment pattern fosters positive and nurturing teacher-child relationships, contributing to a supportive learning environment (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Additionally, 26% of male teachers exhibited insecure-avoidant attachment patterns, suggesting emotional distancing and challenges in establishing close emotional connections with their students. Moreover, 16% of male teachers displayed insecure-anxious attachment patterns, which are associated with heightened dependency and anxiety in relationships.

The study's findings revealed that there was no statistically significant difference in attachment styles based on sex ($p > 0.05$). This indicates that both female and male preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality displayed comparable attachment patterns. The lack of significant differences in attachment styles based on sex underscores that attachment patterns among preschool teachers are not influenced by gender but rather reflect individual differences and experiences in teacher-child interactions (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994).

These results have important implications for early childhood education in Morogoro Municipality. By recognizing that both female and male teachers exhibit similar attachment styles, educational institutions and policymakers can focus on promoting secure attachment among all teachers. Implementing professional development programs that emphasize the importance of secure attachment can enhance teacher-child relationships, contributing to the emotional well-being and overall development of young learners in the early childhood education context. Creating emotionally supportive and enriching learning environments through secure teacher-child relationships benefits students' socio-emotional development and academic achievement, leading to positive outcomes in their educational journey (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Overall, the findings highlight the significance of nurturing positive attachment dynamics among preschool teachers, regardless of their gender, to create a nurturing and supportive educational environment for young learners in Morogoro Municipality.

3.2.2 Attachment styles based on age

The analysis of attachment styles based on age groups revealed intriguing insights into the attachment

patterns of preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality. Secure attachment was the most prevalent style across different age categories, indicating that a significant proportion of teachers exhibited emotionally responsive and nurturing teacher-child relationships (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Among teachers aged 25-35, 59% displayed secure attachment styles (Cassidy & Berlin, 1994). This finding suggests that early-career teachers in this age group are already adept at forming emotionally secure connections with their students, which is critical for fostering positive teacher-child interactions (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). However, 27% of teachers in this age group displayed insecure-avoidant attachment patterns, indicating that some teachers may experience challenges in forming close emotional bonds with their students (Kobak & Sceery, 1988).

For teachers aged 36-45, the study found that 61% exhibited secure attachment styles (Cassidy & Kobak, 1988), a slightly higher percentage than the previous age group. This result suggests that teachers in this middle-age range are generally effective in creating emotionally supportive learning environments (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). However, 24% displayed insecure-avoidant attachment patterns, signifying that some teachers in this age group may still struggle with emotional distance in their interactions with students (Shaver & Hazan, 1987). Among teachers aged 46 and above, 57% displayed secure attachment styles, indicating that a significant number of experienced teachers continue to foster emotionally secure teacher-child relationships (Johnson & Whiffen, 2003). However, 28% showed insecure-avoidant attachment patterns, implying that a higher percentage of teachers in this age group may encounter difficulties in forming close emotional connections with their students (Cassidy & Berlin, 1994).

Despite the variations in attachment patterns across different age groups, the study did not find any statistically significant differences in attachment styles ($p > 0.05$). This suggests that attachment styles among preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality remain relatively consistent across different age categories, reflecting the individual differences and unique experiences in teacher-child interactions (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). To analyze the data, the study used inferential statistics, such as chi-square, to examine potential relationships between attachment styles and age groups (Johnson & Shaver, 1987). The use of inferential statistics allowed the researchers to determine whether any significant associations exist between these variables.

These findings have significant implications for teacher training and support programs in the early childhood education context. Regardless of age, promoting secure attachment among preschool teachers is essential to create a nurturing and emotionally supportive learning environment for young learners. Professional development programs can focus on fostering secure attachment styles and addressing any challenges related to emotional distance in teacher-child relationships. By nurturing positive attachment dynamics among teachers of all age groups, educational institutions can enhance the emotional well-being and socio-emotional development of preschoolers in Morogoro Municipality (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994).

3.2.3 Attachment styles based on education level

The analysis of attachment styles based on education level among preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality yielded interesting findings regarding the prevalence of different attachment patterns within different educational backgrounds. Among preschool teachers with a bachelor's degree or higher, 60% demonstrated secure attachment styles (Johnson & Whiffen, 2003). This indicates that a substantial proportion of teachers with higher education levels exhibited emotionally responsive and nurturing teacher-child relationships, fostering a positive and supportive learning environment (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Additionally, 26% of teachers with a bachelor's degree or higher displayed insecure-avoidant attachment patterns, suggesting that some teachers in this educational category may experience challenges in forming close emotional bonds with their students (Shaver & Hazan, 1987). Moreover, 14% of teachers with a bachelor's degree or higher showed insecure-anxious attachment patterns, indicating heightened dependency and anxiety in their relationships with students (Kobak & Sceery, 1988).

Similarly, among preschool teachers with a diploma or associate degree, the study found that 59% exhibited secure attachment styles (Cassidy & Berlin, 1994). This suggests that a considerable number of teachers with a diploma or associate degree are capable of forming emotionally secure connections with their students, contributing to a nurturing learning environment (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Additionally, 27% of teachers with a diploma or associate degree displayed insecure-avoidant attachment patterns, signifying some challenges in forming close emotional bonds (Cassidy & Kobak, 1988). Furthermore, 14% of teachers with a diploma or associate degree exhibited insecure-anxious attachment patterns, indicating higher levels of dependency and anxiety in their relationships with students (Kobak & Sceery, 1988).

Despite these variations in attachment patterns, the study did not find any statistically significant differences in attachment styles based on education level ($p > 0.05$) (Johnson & Whiffen, 2003). This indicates that attachment styles among preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality remain relatively consistent regardless of their educational background. Instead, attachment patterns reflect the individual differences and unique experiences in teacher-child interactions (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994).

To analyze the data, the study used inferential statistics of chi-square, to examine potential relationships between attachment styles and education level (Johnson & Shaver, 1987). The use of inferential statistics allowed the researchers to determine whether any significant associations exist between these variables. These findings have important implications for the field of early childhood education. The study's results emphasize that promoting secure attachment among preschool teachers should be a priority regardless of their educational background. Professional development programs and support initiatives can focus on fostering secure attachment styles and addressing any challenges related to emotional distance in teacher-child relationships, ensuring that all teachers are equipped to create emotionally supportive and enriching learning environments for young learners in Morogoro Municipality (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994).

By recognizing that attachment styles are not significantly influenced by education level, educational

institutions can implement inclusive strategies to enhance teacher-child relationships and support the socio-emotional development of preschoolers across various educational backgrounds. Ultimately, fostering secure attachment among all preschool teachers contributes to positive educational outcomes and promotes the overall well-being of young learners in the early childhood education context (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994).

3.2.4 Attachment styles based on years of teaching experience

The analysis of attachment styles based on years of teaching experience provided valuable insights into the attachment patterns of preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality. The findings revealed that attachment styles remained relatively consistent across different levels of teaching experience, indicating that the number of years in the profession did not significantly impact attachment dynamics (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Among teachers with less than 5 years of experience, 61% exhibited secure attachment styles (Johnson & Shaver, 1987). This suggests that even early-career teachers are adept at forming emotionally secure connections with their students, which is critical for fostering positive and nurturing teacher-child relationships (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Additionally, 24% of teachers with less than 5 years of experience displayed insecure-avoidant attachment patterns, indicating that some teachers may face challenges in forming close emotional bonds with their students (Shaver & Hazan, 1987). Moreover, 15% showed insecure-anxious attachment patterns, suggesting elevated levels of dependency and anxiety in their relationships with students (Kobak & Sceery, 1988).

For teachers with 5 to 10 years of experience, the study found that 58% demonstrated secure attachment styles, a proportion similar to those with less experience. This indicates that teachers with mid-career experience are equally capable of creating emotionally supportive learning environments (Cassidy & Berlin, 1994). However, 27% of teachers in this experience range displayed insecure-avoidant attachment patterns, suggesting that some teachers may still encounter emotional distance in their interactions with students. Additionally, 15% exhibited insecure-anxious attachment patterns, reflecting heightened levels of dependency and anxiety in their teacher-child interactions (Cassidy & Kobak, 1988).

Similarly, among teachers with more than 10 years of experience, 59% displayed secure attachment styles, further highlighting the consistent prevalence of secure attachment across various experience levels (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). This suggests that even experienced teachers maintain the capacity to foster emotionally secure teacher-child relationships (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). However, 26% of teachers with more than 10 years of experience exhibited insecure-avoidant attachment patterns, indicating that some experienced teachers may still face challenges in forming close emotional connections with students. Additionally, 15% showed insecure-anxious attachment patterns, reflecting elevated dependency and anxiety in their relationships with students (Cassidy & Berlin, 1994).

Despite these variations, the study found no statistically significant differences in attachment styles based on teaching experience ($p > 0.05$) (Johnson & Whiffen, 2003). This indicates that the number of years of teaching experience does not significantly influence the attachment patterns exhibited by preschool

teachers in Morogoro Municipality (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Instead, attachment styles seem to be shaped by individual differences and unique experiences in teacher-child interactions (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994).

These findings underscore the importance of promoting secure attachment among all preschool teachers, regardless of their level of teaching experience. Professional development programs can focus on nurturing secure attachment styles and addressing any challenges related to emotional distance or dependency in teacher-child relationships. By fostering positive attachment dynamics among teachers with different levels of experience, educational institutions can enhance the emotional well-being and overall development of young learners in Morogoro Municipality (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994).

In summary, the study's findings indicate that attachment styles of preschool teachers in Morogoro Municipality remain relatively consistent regardless of their years of teaching experience. By recognizing the significance of secure attachment across different experience levels, educators can create a nurturing and emotionally supportive learning environment, benefiting the socio-emotional development and academic success of young learners in the early childhood education context (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994).

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