

**Examining the Relationship
between Adult Attachment
Styles, Self-esteem, Jealousy
and Satisfaction with Life**

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the BA Hons in
Psychology at Dublin Business School, School of Arts, Dublin.

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May 2014

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Acknowledgements

Many thanks go to several people. Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Margaret Walsh, my supervisor, for her efforts and support in completing this thesis. Her professionalism and enthusiasm has enabled me to maintain perspective and confidence throughout this venture. I would also like to thank my friends for their encouragement and support which helped me to remain steadfast to my goal. Finally, heartfelt thanks go to my study buddy and dear friend, Jo. I'll never be able to thank her enough for her support along the way and extra care when times were tough.

Abstract

The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between adult attachment styles, self-esteem, jealousy and satisfaction with life. Participants ($N = 107$), were administered a self-report questionnaire to assess whether secure or insecure attachment styles will have a different effect on levels of self-esteem, jealousy and satisfaction with life. It was also examined if there will be a relationship between self-esteem, jealousy and satisfaction with life. The analyses showed that individuals with secure attachment style are higher on self-esteem levels and satisfaction with life than insecure attachment style and a positive relationship was found between the levels of self-esteem and satisfaction with life. However, secure and insecure attachment styles did not show any difference on feelings of jealousy and it was found that satisfaction with life increases when levels of jealousy decrease.

Examining the Relationship between Adult Attachment Styles, Self-esteem, Jealousy and Satisfaction with Life.

Despite theoretical links between attachment styles, self esteem, jealousy and satisfaction with life, research has not yielded consistent results in this regard. The purpose of this study is to contribute to previous research by summarising and integrating existing research and looking at the differences between adult attachment styles, self-esteem, jealousy, life satisfaction, and their relationship with each other.

Attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) explains human bonding behaviour, which develops in infancy and is evolutionarily advantageous. The attachment that develops within the infant-caregiver relationship is thought to form the basis of future relationship dynamics and have life-long effects on one's relationships and quality of life. They influence self-worth and self-esteem, as well as one's expectations of others with regard to their reliability and trustworthiness. Bowlby (1969) emphasised the importance of relational bonds with people who are available, sensitive, and supportive in times of need. Having these relational bonds allows a person of any age to maintain self-esteem and emotional stability and cope constructively with stressful events.

Bowlby (1969) suggested that attachment relationships in infancy lead to the formation of internal working models (“IWM”) of self-worth and trust in others, which influence emotional and social responses to the world. IWM’s of attachment are specific set of mental representations about the self in interactions with others. These working models are believed to be relatively stable over time and are thought to be the mechanisms by which the influence of childhood experience is sustained into adulthood.

Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters and Wall (1978) continued to expand Bowlby’s (1969) theory further with the “strange situation” study, where she observed children between the ages of 12 to 18 months responding to a situation in which they were briefly left alone and then reunited with their mothers. Based on these observations, Ainsworth et al. (1978) classified three major styles of attachment: secure attachment, ambivalent-insecure attachment, and avoidant-insecure attachment. These types represent the individual’s organisation of the expectations of others in response to comfort and reassurance seeking, where caregivers’ approval or disapproval shape the child’s beliefs and behaviours. Securely

attached infants use their caregivers as a secure base while exploring surroundings. After separation, they seek contact and are comforted by caregivers. Infants described as ambivalent-insecure seek and then resist contact with caregivers after separation and have difficulty using them as a secure base. Finally, infants with an avoidant-insecure attachment style do not show distress upon separation and do not seek contact after the caregiver's return. A fourth attachment style - known as disorganised-insecure attachment - was added by Main and Solomon (1986), suggesting that a contributing factor might be the inconsistent behaviour from caregivers. Researchers Main and Hesse (1990) argued that caregivers who show fear and reassurance to a child at the same time cause confusion; as a result, the child feels both comforted and frightened, which contributes to a disorganised attachment style. For instance, a mother's behaviour toward the infants predicts what styles of attachment the child will have when older (Isabella, 1998). In fact, it is possible to predict with 75% accuracy which attachment style a child will have by assessing the mother's style before her baby is even born (Fonagy, Steele, & Steele, 1991).

In adolescence, there is generally a shift from attachment relationships with caregivers to attachment relationships with peers (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Friends, other family members (Doherty & Feeney, 2004), therapists (Parish & Eagle, 2003), adult children (Cicirelli, 1993), and religious deities (Kirkpatrick, 1998) may all function as attachment figures in adult attachment relationships. Hazan & Shaver (1987) were first to present theoretical and empirical evidence for the relevance of infant attachment styles to adult relationships. Among adults, the primary attachment figure is likely to be one's romantic partner. Hazan and Shaver (1987) provided empirical support for this notion by demonstrating striking parallels between attachment behaviour during infancy and attachment to romantic/sexual partners during adulthood. They noted that romantic relationships serve as a secure base for partners in challenging times by expressing desire of closeness to one another, feeling anxious when the partner is absent, and comforted when the partner is present. According to their adult attachment theory much can be explained by the innate need for closeness, protection, and emotional support. Hazan and Shaver (1987) created a categorical measure of what has come to be called "attachment style." The three relational styles assessed by that measure – avoidant, anxious, and secure – were modelled after the three major patterns of infant-mother attachment described by Ainsworth et al. (1978).

Brennan, Clark, and Shaver (1998) examined various frameworks for describing individual differences of attachment in adulthood and found two dimensions. The first dimension, anxiety - the worry about being rejected or about not being able to get support from others – leads to the adoption of “hyperactivating” attachment strategies and energetic, insistent attempts to obtain support, and love from relationship partners as a means of regulating distress. The second dimension - avoidance - indicates the extent to which the individuals tend to distrust a partner, rely on suppression of attachment-related thoughts and emotions and strive to maintain behavioural independence and emotional distance from partners (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2003). People who score low on both dimensions are said to have a secure attachment style.

There is now extensive evidence that lower scores on measures of attachment anxiety and avoidance are associated with more adaptive responses to threats and stressors and more satisfying and stable romantic or marital relationships (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Moreover, dispositional attachment security is associated with fewer interpersonal problems (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991), greater willingness to help others (Collins & Feeney, 2000), greater empathy and compassion (Gillath, Shaver, & Mikulincer, 2005), higher levels of curiosity, cognitive openness, and exploratory behaviour (Feeney, 2007), and lower risk of developing emotional difficulties and psychopathology (Mikulincer, Florian, & Weller, 1993).

Bartholomew & Horowitz (1991) combined these two dimensions into four prototypes of adult attachment styles, where an individual’s image is dichotomised with the image of others as being positive or negative: one secure (positive self-positive others) and three insecure subtypes: anxious-preoccupied (negative self - positive others), dismissive-avoidant (positive self - negative others) and fearful-avoidant (negative self - negative others). Conceptually, this four-category model affirms Bowlby's (1969) IWM indicating the degree to which individuals have incorporated a sense of self-worth, and a model of others, indicating the degree to which others are expected to be available and supportive (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991).

Adults with a secure attachment style find it relatively easy to trust others, open up emotionally, feel confident about their partner’s goodwill and feel comfortable both with intimacy and with independence. More secure people describe themselves in more positive terms, perceive others as available and respond to stressors with less distress and more

problem-focused strategies. Conversely, those with insecure attachment have been found to engage in more negative relationships that provide less support and more conflict (Gallo, Smith, & Ruiz, 2003). People with secure attachment style tend to be more satisfied with their close partnerships than avoidant or ambivalent people (Feeney, 1999). For example, Doherty and Feeney (2004) found that secure adults were more likely to turn to family members in times of severe distress and to friends for everyday support and companionship.

Those with an anxious-preoccupied style are uncertain about being loved, and this causes them to be unusually worried, vigilant, dependent, intrusive and excitable. Compared to securely attached people, anxious-preoccupied individuals tend to have less positive views about themselves. They often doubt their worth as a partner and for this reason they seek high levels of intimacy, approval and responsiveness from their partners. One study found that adults with an anxious – preoccupied attachment style experienced more grief and depression following the death of an attachment figure than adults with a secure attachment style (Wayment & Vierthaler, 2002).

Those with a dismissive-avoidant attachment style have learned to rely heavily on themselves and desire a high level of independence. They often deny needing close relationships and some may even view close relationships as relatively unimportant. They tend to suppress and hide their feelings and seek less intimacy with partners, whom they often view less positively than they view themselves. Investigators commonly note the defensive character of this attachment style. In adulthood, this “compulsively self-reliant” stance (Bowlby, 1969) is often strengthened by self-glorification and disregarding of others’ neediness and weaknesses. Avoidant people have a lack of faith in others that leads them to avoid interdependent intimacy, whereas ambivalent people seek out such closeness but nervously worry that it won't last (Feeney, 1998).

People with a fearful–avoidant attachment style have mixed feelings about close relationships. They desire to have emotionally close relationships, but at the same time tend to feel uncomfortable with emotional closeness. These mixed feelings are combined with sometimes unconscious, negative views about themselves and their partners. They commonly view themselves as unworthy, and they don't trust the intentions of their partners. Similar to the dismissive–avoidant attachment style, these individuals seek less intimacy from partners

and frequently suppress and deny their feelings. Instead, they are much less comfortable expressing affection.

It is now well established by the research that attachment styles influence thoughts, feelings and behaviour in close relationships. Wide-ranging surveys have shown that about 60% of the population are securely attached, 15% are ambivalently attached, and 25% are avoidantly attached (Mickelson, Kessler & Shaver, 1997). It is presumed that secure and insecure attached adults would report different experiences during childhood. This notion is supported with research conducted by Diehl, Elnick, Bourbeau, and Labouvie-Vief (1998). They found that secure people describe their family of origin as more positive than insecure individuals. This supports the attachment theory and importance of the relationship with caregiver. In addition to family context, adverse childhood events have been found to be associated with insecure attachment (Luecken, 2000). Perris and Andersson (2000) investigated the association between recollected experiences of parental rearing and patterns of attachment in adulthood. The recollection of parental support was found to be associated with attachment security, while dysfunctional parenting was associated with insecure attachment. Similarly, Heinonen et al. (2004) showed that attachment anxiety was positively associated with family context, overprotection and inconsistent parental care. Mickelson, Kessler, and Shaver (1997) showed that parental divorce, poor quality of the parental relationship (violence between parents), the presence of parental psychopathology (depression, alcohol abuse) and interpersonal traumas (sexual and physical abuse, neglect) were positively related to attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance.

According to attachment theory, the quality of relationships with parental figures plays a key role in the way young people perceive themselves and others, contributing to self-esteem development. The child associates approval from a care giver with love, security and the positive view of the self and disapproval with withdrawal of love and thus potential vulnerability and a negative view of the self. Therefore, personal worth is built up as a reflection of the love and support given by caregiver, so that self-esteem is predicated on attachment experiences early in life. Research shows that securely attached individuals embrace positive self-esteem and trust others, but insecurely attached individuals may lack this sense of confidence in oneself (anxiety) or, alternatively, in others (avoidance). Theorists, such as Maslow (1968) and Rogers (1959) believed that people with high self-esteem should experience more satisfying relationships and of loving others than those with low self-esteem.

It follows the assumption that one must love oneself before being able to love another person (Dion & Dion, 1973). Research indicates that secure attachment is associated with higher self-esteem than insecure attachment styles (Collins & Read, 1990). Mikulincer and Shaver (2005) suggest that secure attachment is perhaps the most important determinant of authentic, stable self-worth. Foster, Kernis and Goldman (2007) found that higher attachment anxiety was associated with lower self-esteem for both men and women. Lowered self-esteem and dysfunctional attitudes have been hypothesised to associate with insecure attachment (Hankin et al., 2005).

Jealousy refers to the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that occur when a person believes a valued relationship is threatened by a rival. Given that attachment relates to anxiety regulation, support, and intimacy, as discussed above, it is not surprising that attachment also relates to jealousy. Most of the work on jealousy in adults has focused on jealousy in romantic relationships. However, several theorists have argued that the same basic process that produces jealous feelings in sexual relationships also leads to jealousy that arises in other relationships, such as friendships or between siblings (DeSteno, Valdesolo & Bartlett, 2006). Bowlby (1969) observed that attachment behaviours in children can be triggered by the presence of a rival. Recent studies have shown that jealousy can be provoked at very young age. A study by Hart (2002) showed that the presence of a rival can provoke jealousy in infants as young as six months old. Attachment and jealousy can be triggered by the same perceptual cues in adults. Research on romantic jealousy is consistent with the idea that jealousy is, at least in part, the result of threats to relationships.

Research has confirmed that people with different attachment styles experience and express jealousy in different ways, and it influences both the frequency and the pattern of jealous expressions (Guerro, 1998). Gard (1999) reports that jealousy is a reflection of a person's insecurities, and the more secure individual, the less jealous he or she tends to be. In an experimental study by Powers (2000) participants were assigned a partner and then shown video footage of their partner flirting with another person. Anxious individuals reported higher levels of jealousy than either secure or avoidant individuals. Similarly, a study conducted by Sharpsteen and Kirkpatrick (1997) revealed that anxious participants were more likely than others to resist expressing their anger, as they are afraid to lose a relationship; avoidant participants were especially likely to turn their anger and blame against

the rival in order not to hurt their partner; and securely attached participants were especially likely to express anger toward the partner and to maintain their relationship.

Empirical work on secure attachment style and jealousy has been contradictory and inconsistent. For example, Buunk (1979) found that secure attachment type individuals anticipate feeling less jealous than insecure type. However, other studies that ask participants to recall situations that made them feel jealous found little difference in jealousy between secure and insecure individuals (Sharpsteen & Kirkpatrick, 1997). It has led researchers to two contradictory hypothesis regarding jealousy amongst secure-type people. One theory explains that secure individuals feel less jealous, since they tend to have successful relationships and there is a little reason for them to feel a threat from possible rivals. By contrast, other theories suggest that securely attached individuals show similar or even greater jealousy compared to other attachment styles, as secure individuals especially value relationships, and they may be more prone to show jealousy to protect their relationships. Harris and Darby (2010) explain these findings by suggesting that jealousy may be caused depending on whether the threat is in the process of being appraised or is already certain. Securely attached individuals are likely to have a higher threshold for appraising potential threat, and are therefore likely to have less frequent bouts of jealousy. Secure individuals have a positive mental model of their partners and therefore do not expect betrayal. Across numerous dimensions of trust, including predictability, dependability, faith and security, secure individuals rate their partners higher than insecurely attached individuals (Simpson, 1990). However, after the threat is certain, secure individuals are more likely to react with jealous anger.

The link between jealousy and self-esteem is widely accepted. White and Mullen (1989) reported that self-esteem is linked to the experience of jealousy. DeSteno, Valdesolo and Bartlett (2006), in an experimental study, demonstrated that threatened self-esteem functions are a principal mediator of jealousy. Another experimental study using hypothetical jealousy-arousing situations has shown that jealousy causes loss of self-esteem (Mathes et al., 1985). Interestingly, a recent study by Barelds & Barelds-Dijkstra (2007) looked at the effects of relationship satisfaction and jealousy. Findings showed that the better the quality of relationships, the more jealousy one felt. This finding is consistent with the idea that jealousy can have protecting and preserving effects on relationships.

Subjective well-being is a term, also expressed as happiness or life satisfaction. Baumeister and Leary (1995) indicate that the need to belong is a universal human need based on interpersonal attachments and essential for self-worth and happiness. Most attachment research is aimed at explaining negative or problematic outcomes, such as psychopathology or relationship problems; less emphasis has been put on positive outcomes, such as life satisfaction (Mikulincer & Sheffi, 2000), which can be considered an important psychological resource when confronted with difficulties.

A few researchers have provided empirical evidence to support the idea that adult attachment contributes to a sense of well-being. For example, adult attachment security was positively related to positive affect (Torquati & Raffaelli, 2004) and well-being (La Guardia, Ryan, Couchman, & Deci, 2000). For example, some individuals experience high levels of subjective well-being despite their adverse living situations. Others, however, experience a low level of well-being despite having certain outward advantages such as wealth, education, and good health (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). People who have secure attachment styles usually express greater satisfaction with their relationships than people who have other attachment styles. Marital satisfaction has been found to be higher for securely attached spouses and for those whose partners reported more beneficial care-giving (Feeney, 1994). People who report more parental rejection and less parental support, less family warmth and harmony, and more adverse childhood events are more insecurely attached. Furthermore, research shows that insecurely attached adults are less satisfied about themselves, their current relationships and their life in general.

Although the psychological benefits of attachment security may seem well established the direction of causality is still open to research. Most studies assume that attachment security is a stable trait that has persisting effects on other aspects of psychosocial functioning. However, some studies have revealed variations in attachment security following major life transitions and stressful events (Davila & Sargent, 2003). Baldwin and Fehr (1995) demonstrated that 30 % of people change their self-rated attachment style over a period of months. Moreover, Mikulincer and Shaver (2007) have noted that although attachment security is conceptualised as a stable trait, it is rooted in a complex cognitive network that includes many different context-related, and relationship-specific attachment representations. In fact, research shows that a person's sense of attachment security can change (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2001). As attachment styles have been learned, they can be unlearned. Over time

attachment styles can and do change (Baldwin & Fehr, 1995), and they continue to be shaped by the experiences (Carnelley & Janoff-Bulman, 1992). A painful breakup of a relationship can make an earlier secure person insecure, and a happy relationship can make an avoidant person less so (Kirkpatrick & Hazen, 1994). As many as a third of us may encounter real change in our attachment styles over a two-year period (Fuller & Fincham, 1995), and it has been suggested that the avoidant and ambivalent styles are more likely to change than a secure style (Davila, Burge, & Hammen, 1997). A study by Waters, Merrick, Treboux, Crowell and Albersheim (2000) confirmed the notion that throughout childhood, attachment representations remain open to revision in light of real experience. Perhaps the most important conclusion to this review is that collaborations across disciplines in research on adult attachment are vital at this point and provide many exciting opportunities for research investigating methodological and theoretical issues, particularly developmental processes and mechanisms which connect basic processes.

This research is conducted with the aim of enhancing existing knowledge relating to exploration and deeper understanding of individual attachment styles and their relationship with self esteem, jealousy and satisfaction with life. The majority of research on attachment now up has not placed much emphasis on the relationship with life satisfaction, and there are conflicting results in relation to self-esteem and jealousy. Therefore, following this discussion, a number of hypotheses have been devised:

1. Secure/insecure attachment styles will have a significantly different effect on the levels of self-esteem;
2. Secure/insecure attachment styles will have a significantly different effect on feelings of satisfaction with life;
3. Secure/insecure attachment styles will have a significantly different effect in terms of feelings of jealousy;
4. There will be a significant relationship between the levels of self-esteem, jealousy and satisfaction with life.

Method

Participants

Participants (N = 107) were cabin crew and office staff recruited via convenience sampling methodology in Ryanair Head Office at Dublin Airport. Out of these participants, a total of 66 were female (61.7%) and 41 were male (38.3%). All participants were aged 18 or above and ranged in age from 18-23 (N=18, 16.8%), 24-29 (N=44, 41.1%), 30-35 (N=23, 21.5%), 36-41 (N=12, 11.2%) and 42+ (N=10, 9.3%). They were informed that participation was voluntary and information provided by them would remain confidential. Participants were also informed about the sensitive nature of some of the questions and it was suggested for couples who work together not to participate in the survey. No incentive was offered.

Design

This study implemented a self-report survey. It had a mixed design with quantitative methodology. It was descriptive in nature and used a correlational design to measure the relationship between predictor variables (PV) and criterion variables (CV). The criterion variables were self-esteem, jealousy, satisfaction with life and the predictor variables were attachment styles, gender and age. There was also a comparative quasi-experimental part of the study which looked at attachment styles as the independent variable (IV) and self-esteem, jealousy and satisfaction with life as dependent variables (DV).

Materials

Participants were provided with a self-report questionnaire booklet comprising of four separate published questionnaires designed to measure jealousy, self-esteem, attachment styles and satisfaction with life. A section of demographic variables of age and gender was

also devised. Participants were provided with an information sheet with details of the study and the time required for completing the questionnaire required, which was approximately 15 minutes.

The Relationship Questionnaire (RQ) (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991) is a 4-item self-report measure designed to assess an individual's typical pattern of attachment in adult relationships (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Participants were asked to read four short paragraphs and indicate how well each paragraph described them. Based on Bowlby's (1969) theoretical model of attachment, this measure conceptualizes attachment in terms of internal working models of self and others. This integration of working models yields four adult attachment styles: secure, preoccupied, dismissive avoidant and fearfully avoidant. For example, individuals with secure attachment tend to agree with Q1 A of the RQ - "It is easy for me to become emotionally close to others. I am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don't worry about being alone or having others not accept me." (See Appendix). In the second part of the questionnaire the participants were asked to rate their degree of correspondence to each prototype on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The ratings provide a profile of an individual's attachment feelings and behaviour. The higher the scores, the more likely the relationship meet the corresponding attachment style. Scharfe and Bartholomew (1994) provided evidence for the reliability of the RQ, reporting internal reliabilities ranging from a low of 0.49 to a high of 0.71 and acceptable levels of validity, reliability and stability were found by Sumer and Gungor (1999). Griffin and Bartholomew (1994) conducted three different studies, using five different methods of assessment and they found strong support for the construct validity of the four attachment dimensions. Cronbach's alpha for the attachment criteria in this study was 0.72.

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE) (Rosenberg, 1965) is a 10-item scale that measures global self-esteem. Five of the statements are worded negatively, for example, “I certainly feel useless at times” and five are worded positively, for example, “On the whole, I am satisfied with myself”. Positive and negative statements were alternated to control for response bias. All items were answered using a 4-point Likert scale format ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree with higher scores reflecting more positive self evaluation. Rosenberg (1989) obtained high test-retest reliability of 0.92 and a good overall reliability of 0.72. Research has supported the high reliability and the validity of the test. In this study, Cronbach’s Alpha was defined by 0.84.

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) by Diener et al. (1985) was used to identify individual differences concerning the cognitive evaluation of one’s own life. The scale allows individuals to evaluate their lives according to their subjective criteria. It consists of 5 questions, for example, “I am satisfied with my life” and each statement must be rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The higher the score, the more the individual is satisfied with life. Research have reported satisfactory internal consistencies in different studies of 0.86 and 0.82. Cronbach’s Alpha was 0.81.

Bringle et. al. (1969) developed the Self Report Jealousy Scale (SRJS), which is designed to measure the intensity to individual reaction differences to jealousy evoking situations. This questionnaire assesses jealousy in a general way, with a strong emphasis on romantic relationships. It does not measure romantic jealousy exclusively; ten of the items relate to non-romantic jealousy. For example, the statement related to romantic jealousy is - “Someone flirts with your partner” and the statement related to non-romantic jealousy is - “Your best friend suddenly shows interest in doing things with someone else”. People who score higher on this scale are described as jealous with low self-esteem and little control over their lives (Bringle et. al., 1969). The Scale comprises 25 statements, which must be rated on

a 5-point Likert scale, from pleased to extremely upset. Authors reported internal consistency 0.90 and test retest reliability 0.73. Cronbach's Alpha was defined at 0.79.

Procedure

The questionnaires were distributed in Ryanair Head Office, which was arranged beforehand through emails and permission was sought from management. The Questionnaires were distributed on three separate occasions between early and late shifts during the day in order to gain access to more people. At the front of each questionnaire booklet, the information sheet was attached containing the relevant information regarding anonymity, confidentiality and the voluntary nature of participation in this study and, prior to completing the questionnaires, they were invited to read it. They were also reminded of their right to withdraw at any time before collection of the questionnaires. Contact details for support services were listed on the cover letter if anybody felt affected and required support for any difficult feelings raised. The researcher's contact details were also provided on the front of the questionnaire booklet should participants have any questions about the study. Participants were informed that the nature of the study was an examination of the relationship between adult attachment styles, self-esteem, jealousy and satisfaction with life. It was also suggested for couples who work together not to participate in this survey, due to the sensitive nature of some questions. Each questionnaire took approximately 10-15 minutes to complete, with each participant returning them on completion. After all questionnaires were collected, a data-set was created in SPSS. However, the very specific working environment of flying, stressful working conditions and working long and unusual hours before taking part in this survey was not considered. Also, limited personal time before working shift or after, not enough privacy in the Ryanair Head Office and many foreign people not having English as

their native language might be considered as an obstacle to complete questionnaires precisely and honestly.

Results

Gender

All data collected for this research was analysed using SPSS Statistics 21. The descriptive statistics for the gender of participants showed that 38.3% were male participants (N=41), while 61.7% were female (N=66).

Age

The descriptive statistics for five age groups showed that the highest number of participants, 41.1%, are in the age category of 24-29 (N=44), with 21.5% of participants falling into the age category of 30-35 (N=23), followed by 16.8% in the age category of 18-23 (N=18), 11.2% in the age category of 36-41 (N=12) and the smallest number of participants, 9.3%, in the age category of 42+ (N=10).

Attachment Styles

Descriptive statistics were also carried out for four attachment styles and results showed that the highest number of participants, 43.9%, match category A - secure attachment style (N= 47). The next highest number of participants, 28%, fall in with category D - dismissive-avoidant style (N=30), followed by 17.8% in category B - fearful-avoidant style (N=19) and the smallest number of participants, 10.3%, matching the category C - anxious-preoccupied (N=11). (See Figure 1 below).

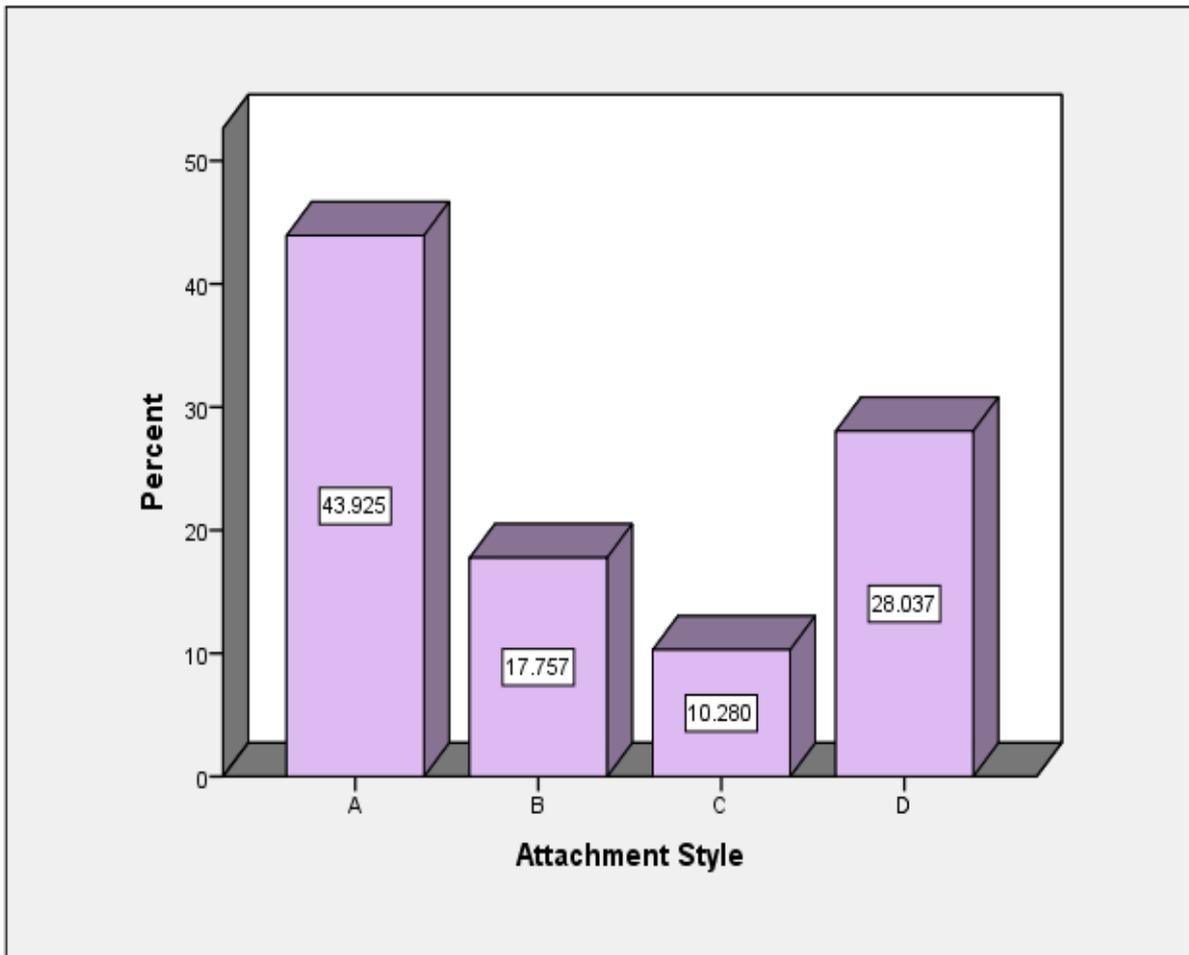


Figure 1- Attachment styles

Self-esteem, Jealousy and Satisfaction with Life.

Normality was examined for self-esteem, jealousy and satisfaction with life and normal distribution was found. Descriptive statistics were conducted to obtain the means, standard deviations and minimum and maximum scores for self-esteem, jealousy and satisfaction with life. Results showed that jealousy ($M=78.04$, $SD=17.22$) had a minimum of 42.00 and maximum of 124.00, satisfaction with life ($M=22.50$, $SD=6.31$) had a minimum of

8.00 and maximum of 34.00 and self-esteem showed a minimum of 17.00 and a maximum of 40.00.

T-Test

Independent sample t-tests were carried out to look at the differences between secure/insecure attachment styles and levels of self-esteem, jealousy and satisfaction with life. A significant difference was found on levels of self-esteem between those with secure attachment style and insecure attachment style. The 95% confidence limits show that the mean difference between secure and insecure attachment style lies somewhere between 1.39 and 5.09. Those with secure attachment style were found to have higher self-esteem ($M=31.78$, $SD=4.26$) than those with insecure attachment style ($M=28.55$, $SD=5.16$). An independent samples t-test found that there was a statistically significant difference on levels of self-esteem between secure and insecure attachment styles ($t(105)= 3.47$, $p< .001$). Therefore the null can be rejected.

A significant difference was found on levels of satisfaction with life between those with secure and insecure attachment styles. The 95% confidence limits show that the mean difference between secure and insecure attachment style lies somewhere between 1.39 and 5.91. Those with secure attachment style were found to have higher levels of satisfaction with life ($M=24.55$, $SD=5.03$) than those with insecure attachment style ($M=20.90$, $SD=6.76$). An independent sample t-test found that there was a statistically significant difference on levels of satisfaction with life between secure and insecure attachment styles ($t(104.74)=3.20$, $p< .002$). Therefore the null can be rejected.

However, there was no statistically significant difference found on levels of jealousy between those with secure ($M=75.02$, $SD=16.99$) and insecure attachment styles ($M=80.59$, $SD=17.15$), ($t(101)= -1.64$, $p< .692$). It is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: An Independent Samples T-test table displaying the differences between Secure and Insecure attachment styles for Self-esteem, Satisfaction with Life and Jealousy.

Variables	Secure/Insecure	Mean	SD	T	df	p
Self-esteem	1.00	31.78	4.26	3.47	105	.101
	2.00	28.55	5.16			
Satisfaction with life	1.00	24.55	5.03	3.20	104.74	.009
	2.00	20.90	6.76			
Jealousy	1.00	75.02	16.99	-1.65	101	.692
	2.00	80.59	17.15			

Pearson's r correlation.

To examine the relationship between three scale variables, Pearson's correlation coefficients were conducted.

The mean score for Self-Esteem was 29.97 (SD=5.03) and the mean score for Satisfaction with Life was 22.50 (SD=6.31). A Pearson's correlation coefficient found that there was a moderate positive significant relationship between Self-esteem and Satisfaction with Life ($r(107) = 0.47, p = .001$). Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected.

The mean score for Jealousy was 78.04 (SD= 17.22) and the mean score for Satisfaction with Life was 22.50 (SD=6.31). A Pearson's correlation coefficient found that there was a weak positive significant relationship between Jealousy and Satisfaction with Life ($r(103) = - 0.25, p= .012$). Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected.

However, the Pearson's correlation coefficient did not find a statistically significant relationship between Jealousy and Self-esteem ($r(103) = -.17, p=.093$).

Spearman's and Chi-square

Additional statistics were run looking separately at the participants' gender and three groupings and also at gender and attachment styles. Spearman's rho correlation found no significant correlations between age, self-esteem, jealousy and satisfaction with life. Similarly, the Chi-Square test for associations did not find statistically significant relationships between gender and the four attachment styles.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the differences between adult attachment styles, self-esteem, jealousy and life satisfaction and also their relationship with each other to contribute to previous research.

The sample size of the study was 107 participants (N=107). This sample consisted of 41 male (N=41, 38.3%) and 66 female (N=66, 61.7%) participants with ages ranging from 18-23 (N=18, 16.8%), 24-29 (N=44, 41.0%), 30-35 (N=23, 21.5%), 36-41 (N=12, 11.2%) and 42+ (N=10, 9.3%). I would consider leaving those few lines out altogether. Participants completed pen and paper questionnaires, which included a demographic section to get information on age and gender and also four additional questionnaires, the Relationship Questionnaire (RQ), the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE), the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) and Self Report Jealousy Scale (SRJS). Statistical analyses such as independent t-tests, Pearson's correlations, Spearman's rho correlations and chi-square tests were used to analyse the data collected from the sample.

As a result of this research, a few hypotheses were proposed. Specifically, the first hypothesis stated that there will be a significantly different effect on the levels of self-esteem between secure and insecure attachment styles. For the purpose of this study, three attachment styles, namely, fearful-avoidant, anxious-preoccupied and dismissive-avoidant, were grouped under a different variable name - "insecure". A t-test was run and a significant difference was found on levels of self-esteem between those with secure and insecure attachment styles. Secure attachment style was found to be associated with higher levels of self-esteem than insecure attachment style. First of all, it is important to mention Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) who suggested four prototypes of adult attachment styles,

where an individual's image is dichotomized with the image of others as being positive or negative. Respectively, individuals with secure attachment style see positive self and positive other and it would follow that these type of people have higher self-esteem than insecurely attached individuals. Individuals with insecure attachment style see the image of themselves and others as negative and they doubt their self-worth. Furthermore, this four category model affirms Bowlby's (1969) internal working model ("IWM"), indicating the degree to which an individual has incorporated a sense of self-worth or self-esteem, and a model of others. In addition, Colin and Read (1990) indicated that people with secure attachment are associated with higher self-esteem than with insecure attachment styles, which supports the findings of current research. Foster, Kernis and Goldman (2007) found that higher attachment anxiety was associated with lower self-esteem and lowered self-esteem and dysfunctional attitudes have been hypothesized to be associated with insecure attachment (Hankin et al., 2005). Bowlby (1969) suggests that self-esteem is founded on attachment experiences early in life and personal worth is built up as a reflection of love and support given by a caregiver.

The second hypothesis proposed that a significantly different effect will be found on feelings of satisfaction with life, when comparing secure and insecure attachment styles. The results obtained showed that significant difference was found between secure and insecure attachment styles in terms of feelings with life satisfaction. People with secure attachment style were found to have higher levels of satisfaction with life than insecure attachment style. These findings again can be supported by Bowlby's (1969) IWM, where family context has been described as a significant factor in the development of an individual's attachment style and well-being or satisfaction with life. Diehl et al. (1998) found that secure people describe their family of origin as more positive than insecure people. For example, adult attachment security was positively related to positive affect (Torquati & Raffaelli, 2004) and well-being (La Guardia, Ryan, Couchman, & Deci, 2000). Feeney (1999) indicates that people with

secure attachment style tend to be more satisfied with their close partnerships than individuals with insecure attachment styles. In comparison, individuals with insecure attachment style are less satisfied about themselves, their relationships and life in general. Previous research supports the findings of the current study, which found that people with secure attachment are satisfied with life more than individuals with insecure attachment.

It was hypothesised that there will be a significantly different effect between secure and insecure attachment styles in terms of feelings of jealousy. Interestingly, the findings of the current study did not show a statistically significant difference on feelings of jealousy between individuals with secure and insecure attachment styles. These results are contradicting previous research on this subject. Research findings have confirmed that people with different attachment styles experience and express jealousy in different ways and it influences both the frequency and the pattern of jealous expressions (Guerro, 1998). For example, Gard (1999) reported that jealousy is a reflection of a person's insecurities and the more secure an individual is, the less jealous they tend to be. Powers (2000) in his study found that anxious individuals had higher levels of jealousy than either secure or avoidant individuals. However, the research on secure/insecure attachment styles and jealousy have yielded contradictory and inconsistent results, which could explain why there was no difference found on feelings of jealousy between people with secure and insecure attachment styles in the current study. For example, Buunk (1979) found that individuals with a secure attachment style anticipate feeling less jealous than the insecure type, but other studies found little difference in jealousy between secure and insecure individuals (Sharpsteen & Kirkpatrick, 1997). Two conflicting theories regarding jealousy of people with secure attachment provide very contradictory evidence, which possibly could explain why in the current research individuals with secure and insecure attachment styles did not show differences in levels of jealousy. One theory explains that secure individuals feel less jealous,

since they tend to have successful relationships and there is little reason for them to feel a threat from possible rivals. In contrast, another theory suggests that securely attached individuals show similar or even greater jealousy compared to other attachment styles, as secure individuals especially value relationships, and they may be more prone to show jealousy to protect their relationships.

It was hypothesised that there will be a significant relationship between levels of self-esteem, jealousy and satisfaction with life. A positive moderate significant relationship was found between levels of self-esteem and satisfaction with life. As self-esteem levels increase, levels of satisfaction with life increase too. There has not been much research done to support this finding. However, according to Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) people with secure attachment styles have a positive view of the self and others and they have higher self-esteem and self worth, which in turn could suggest that people with higher levels of self-esteem are individuals with secure attachment style. Mikulincer and Shaver (2007) reported that individuals with secure attachment have more stable romantic and marital relationships and hence, it could mean – a happier life.

The results showed a weak significant negative relationship between levels of satisfaction with life and jealousy, meaning that levels of jealousy decrease when levels of satisfaction with life increase. It might suggest that people who are happier with their lives are less jealous. Research has shown that satisfaction with life is positively correlated with secure attachment style. Securely attached individuals describe themselves and perceive others in more positive terms and respond to stressors with less distress. Therefore, attachment security is associated with fewer interpersonal problems (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991) and lower risk of developing emotional difficulties and psychopathology (Mikulincer, Florian & Weller, 1993). In support for these findings, Gard (1999) argues that

the more secure an individual is, the less jealous they tend to be. Research shows that secure individuals feel less jealous, since they tend to have successful relationships. In contrast, a recent study by Barelds and Barelds-Dijkstra (2007) looked at the effects of relationship satisfaction and jealousy. Findings showed that the better the quality of relationships, the more jealousy one felt. This finding is consistent with the hypothesis that jealousy can have protecting and preserving effects on relationships.

Finally, there was no significant relationship found between jealousy and self-esteem levels; however, the link between jealousy and self-esteem is widely accepted. Research has shown that self-esteem is linked to the experience of jealousy (White & Mullen, 1989) and that threatened self-esteem functions as a principal mediator of jealousy (DeSteno, Valdesolo & Bartlett, 2006). Mathes et al. (1985) reported that jealousy causes loss of self-esteem. According to research relationship between jealousy and self-esteem could be expected in the findings of the current study, as jealousy increases the self-esteem should decrease. Research shows that self-esteem and secure attachment style are positively correlated; therefore, secure individuals have higher self-esteem and feel less jealous since they tend to have successful relationships and there is little reason for them to feel a threat from possible rivals. Other research suggests that secure individuals are especially more prone to show jealousy to protect their relationships.

Statistics were run looking at the age of participants and groupings, but no significant correlations were found. Also, there was no association found between gender and the four attachment styles.

However, a number of limitations and weaknesses must be acknowledged for this study that may provide directions for future research. The limitations of self-report questionnaires must be considered. Participants may exaggerate answers, not willing to reveal

personal details. Social desirability bias and participants' emotional state may affect answers and demand characteristics could have been the reason for not reporting results honestly. Time limits and not enough privacy for participants when completing the questionnaires could affect the accuracy of the given responses. Some questions were found to be confusing for some participants due to not having English as their native language and this also could have affected the given answers.

So far there are no studies looking at the attachment styles and self-esteem, jealousy and satisfaction with life together. Studies on self-esteem and jealousy show conflicting results and satisfaction with life has not been explored much, but it is a very important quality when an individual is confronted with difficulties. Future research could benefit from replicating and extending the research to a larger sample.

In conclusion, this study set out to investigate and get a deeper understanding of individuals' attachment styles and their relationship with self-esteem, jealousy and satisfaction with life. To explore these ideas, questionnaires were completed by 107 volunteers- cabin crew and office staff from Ryanair Head Office. Attachment styles were measured by the Relationship Questionnaire (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991), self-esteem was measured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE; Rosenberg, 1965), jealousy was measured by the Self Report Jealousy Scale (SRJS; Bringle et al., 1969) and The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener et al., 1985) was used to identify individual differences concerning the cognitive evaluation of one's own life.

It was found that there was a significantly different effect on levels of self-esteem between those with secure and insecure attachment style. Secure attachment style was found to be associated with higher levels of self-esteem than insecure attachment style. A significantly different effect was found between secure and insecure attachment styles in

terms of feelings of life satisfaction. However, findings did not show a significantly different effect on feelings of jealousy between secure and insecure attachment styles. A positive moderate significant relationship was found between levels of self-esteem and feelings of satisfaction with life and there was a negative weak significant relationship between the feelings of satisfaction with life and feelings of jealousy. Finally, there was no significant relationship found between feelings of jealousy and self-esteem levels.

In summary, humans are inherently social creatures who invest considerable energy into interpersonal relationships. The quality of relationships with others has important implications for human basic survival in addition to psychological functioning and well-being, including the security of feelings of self-worth. The present findings point to this interplay of attachment styles, self-esteem, jealousy and satisfaction with life. “An individual who has been fortunate in having grown up in an ordinary good home with ordinarily affectionate parents has always known people from whom he can seek support, comfort, and protection. [...] So deeply established are his expectations and so repeatedly have they been confirmed that, as an adult, he finds it difficult to imagine any other kind of world. [...] For many more the likelihood that a caretaking figure would respond in a supportive and protective way has been at best hazardous and at worst nil. [...] Through their eyes the world is seen as comfortless and unpredictable; and they respond either by shrinking from it or by doing battle with it.” (Bowlby, 1973, pp. 208-209).

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Appendix

My name is Viktorija Kaprale and I am conducting research for my Final Year Project that explores the relationship between adult attachment styles, self esteem, jealousy and satisfaction with life.

You are invited to take part in this study and participation involves completing and returning the attached questionnaire. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. While the questionnaire asks some questions that might cause some minor negative feelings, it has been used widely in research. If any of the questions do raise any negative feelings for you, contact information for support services are included on this page.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Should you consent to take part, any information you provide will be confidential and anonymous. No names should be included in the questionnaire.
- Participation in this study is on a voluntary basis only. As the information you provide will be anonymous, once you have submitted the survey you will not be able to withdraw from participation after the questionnaires have been collected.
- The information will be used to complete an undergraduate research dissertation which will be archived in college library. It may be used in a report or presented at a college symposium and if used, no individual questionnaires will be selected, but all questionnaires used together.
- Your data will be securely stored and destroyed a year after the research has been submitted. If you have any questions or are unclear about any of the information, please inform the survey distributor.
- Due to sensitive nature of some questions, it is suggested for couples who work together not to participate in this survey.

It is important that you understand that by completing and submitting the questionnaire you are consenting to participate in the study.

If you feel you may be affected by any of the questions in this survey, below are some useful support services :

- The Aware Helpline : 1890 303 302 or e-mail info@aware.ie
Available Monday – Sunday, 10am to 10pm.
- Samaritans Ireland : 1850 609 090 or e-mail jo@samaritans.ie
Available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Should you require any further information about the research, please contact Viktorija Kaprale,

My supervisor can be contacted at

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING TIME TO
COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE!**

Please detach front page and do not hand back

Please mark the relevant answer in relation to yourself.

Gender : Male [] Female []

Age : 18-23 [] 24-29 [] 30-35 [] 36-41 [] 42+ []

1. Following are descriptions of four general relationship styles that people often report. Please place a checkmark next to the letter corresponding to the style that best describes you or is closest to the way you generally are in your close relationships.

- A.** It is easy for me to become emotionally close to others. I am comfortable depending on them and having them depends on me. I don't worry about being alone or having others not accept me.
- B.** I am uncomfortable getting close to others. I want emotionally close relationships, but I find it difficult to trust others completely, or to depend on them. I worry that I will be hurt if I allow myself to become too close to others.
- C.** I want to be completely emotionally intimate with others, but I often find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I am uncomfortable being without close relationships, but I sometimes worry that others don't value me as much as I value them.
- D.** I am comfortable without close emotional relationships. It is very important to me to feel independent and self-sufficient, and I prefer not to depend on others or have others depend on me.

2. Please rate each of the following relationship styles according to the *extent* to which you think each description corresponds to your general relationship style.

A. It is easy for me to become emotionally close to others. I am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don't worry about being alone or having others not accept me.

B. I am uncomfortable getting close to others. I want emotionally close relationships, but I find it difficult to trust others completely, or to depend on them. I worry that I will be hurt if I allow myself to become too close to others.

C. I want to be completely emotionally intimate with others, but I often find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I am uncomfortable being without close relationships, but I sometimes worry that others don't value me as much as I value them.

D. I am comfortable without close emotional relationships, It is very important to me to feel independent and self-sufficient, and I prefer not to depend on others or have others depend on me.

	Not at all			Somewhat			Very
	like me			like me			much
							like me
Style A.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Style B.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Style C.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Style D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. Below are five statements that you may agree or disagree with. Using the 1 - 7 scale below each sentence, indicate your agreement with each item by circling the appropriate number. Please be open and honest in your responding.

- 7 - Strongly agree
- 6 - Agree
- 5 - Slightly agree
- 4 - Neither agree nor disagree
- 3 - Slightly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 1 - Strongly disagree

___ In most ways my life is close to my ideal.

___ The conditions of my life are excellent.

___ I am satisfied with my life.

___ So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.

___ If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

12	You and a co-worker worked very hard on an extremely important project. However, your boss gave your co-worker full credit for it.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Someone flirts with your partner.	1	2	3	4	5
14	At a party, your partner repeatedly kisses someone you do not know.	1	2	3	4	5
15	Your partner has sexual relations with someone else.	1	2	3	4	5
16	Your brother or sister is given more freedom, such as staying up later, or driving the car.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Your partner comments to you on how attractive another person is.	1	2	3	4	5
18	While at a social gathering of a group of friends, your partner spends little time talking to you, but engages the others in animated conversation.	1	2	3	4	5
19	Grandparents visit your family, and they seem to devote most of their attention to a brother or sister instead of you.	1	2	3	4	5
20	Your partner flirts with someone else.	1	2	3	4	5
21	Your brother or sister seems to be receiving more affection and/or attention from your parents.	1	2	3	4	5
22	You have just discovered your partner is having an affair with someone at work.	1	2	3	4	5
23	The person who has been your assistant for a number of years at work decides to take a similar position with someone else.	1	2	3	4	5
24	The group to which you belong appears to be leaving you out of plans, activities, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
25	Your best friend suddenly shows interest in doing things with someone else.	1	2	3	4	5