

# Compare the attachment styles and early maladaptive schemas of monogamous and polygamous men

Safieh Abdolahi<sup>1</sup>, Soroor Arshi<sup>2</sup>, Samira Shakeri<sup>3</sup>, Rafieh Abdolahi<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of clinical psychology, kish international branch, islamic azad university, kish island, Iran

<sup>2</sup>Department of clinical psychology, Specialist mental health university of medical science, Isfahan, Iran.

<sup>3</sup>Department of clinical psychology, the Ministry of Education, Bushehr, Iran,

<sup>4</sup>Department of counseling, expert services work of imam khomeini relief foundation of dashti, bushehr, Iran

**Abstract:** This study aimed to compare the attachment styles and early maladaptive schemas of monogamous and polygamous men. The subjects were 100 patients (50 monogamous men and 50 polygamous men) which were selected by available sampling method. The subjects responded to attachment styles and early maladaptive schemas questionnaires. Data analysis by using *t*-test showed that in this study, in terms of review of attachment styles, between secure attachment styles, there was no significant difference among avoidant and ambivalent monogamous and polygamous men. In early maladaptive schema variable, in terms of involvement, dedication, inhibition, unrelenting standards and entitlements there was no significant difference among avoidant and ambivalent monogamous and polygamous men. But the polygamous men experience mistreatment / distrust, social isolation / alienation, defectiveness / shame, failure, dependence / incompetence, vulnerability and loving obedience more than monogamous men. As well as polygamous men in terms of restraint are lower in the hierarchy than monogamous men.

**Keywords:** attachment styles, early maladaptive schemas, monogamous and polygamous, men

## INTRODUCTION

The growth of scheme often goes back to childhood. Some people due to negative childhood experiences make early maladaptive schemas that will effect in the way of thinking, feeling and behavior in the next intimate relationship and other aspects of their lives. Young believes that Schema created because of unfulfilled of childhood basic emotional needs. These requirements are the secure attachment to others, autonomy, competence, identity, freedom of expression needs and healthy emotions, spontaneity and fun, realistic limits and restraint (Young et al, 2003). There are three styles of attachment: secure attachment, insecure and avoidance attachment, insecure and anxious / ambivalent attachment. Adults tend to have a secure attachment style to describe their romantic relationships as happy and trusted. They are able to close easily and tend to support their partner. Avoidant attachment is associated with patterns activation of others in relationships and Adults with avoidant attachment styles tend to afraid of intimacy and emotional ups and downs (Rafiei et al, 2011). Anxious attachment is associated with patterns activation of itself in relationships and adults with style anxious / ambivalent described to love as an obsession and tend to experience romantic relationships that be specified by the emotional ups and downs, excessive jealousy and strong desire for emotional connection (Platts, et al, 2005). In the case of polygamy and sexual relationships, results are very diverse and contradictory (Schultz, 1990). Therefore additional research could resolve some of the ambiguities. Early experiences of attachment have shown to parents

that well-being psychological affected the next life. The Jeffrey Young and the researchers of schema theory believe that early childhood experiences especially the relationship between child and caregiver creates a specific cognitive schema that affected next psychological functions (Young et al, 2003). According to studies on the reasons for polygamy and research related to attachment styles and early maladaptive schemas, this study seeks to answer this question: Is there a significant difference between attachment style and early maladaptive schemas? Is there a difference between attachment style and early maladaptive schemas of monogamous and polygamous men?

### Methodology

The current study in terms of goal, is functional and in terms of the method used, is after events (causal-comparative) which a non-experimental research is. The statistical population included all of the married men in Bushehr Province. The sample it's been chosen among all married men of Bushehr Province by multi-stage cluster sampling method. The number of Province counties (9 County), 3 counties were selected then among 3 counties, 5 cities were randomly selected and finally from any city were randomly selected 20 married men (10 monogamous and 10 polygamous) from 35 to 60 years old. But due to lack of necessary and sufficient information about polygamous men, the researcher was forced to choose from every city 10 married men between 35 and 60 years old by available sampling method.

### Research Tools:

- Attachment Style Questionnaire by Collins and Reed RAAS: The scale includes a self-assessment of building relationships and Self-descriptive skills, forming method of attachment relationships close to the attachment figure and is comprised of 18 data that is measured by the mark on a five-point scale (Likert type).
- Schema Questionnaire (SQ): In this study, Schema Questionnaire-Short Form (SQ-SF) is used in order to shorter evaluate (EMS). Early maladaptive Schema Questionnaire-Short Form by Yang (1998) made to assess early maladaptive schemas and is a self-descriptive tool which including 6 options 75 questions. The reliability and validity of Cronbach's alpha scale for total 0/96 and for all subscales were higher than 0/80. The validation of this questionnaire in Iran by Ahi (2005), was conducted at Tehran University. The internal consistency obtained by using Cronbach's alpha in the female population 0/97 and in the male population 0/98. Each item is scored on 6 points scale. In this questionnaire, every 5 questions measure a scheme. If the average score for each subscale is above 3, it would be an inefficient scheme.

### Results

#### Demographic variables:

Table 1: Distribution of subjects by age (years)

Age group (years)	Groups					
	Monogamous men		Polygamous men		Total	
	frequency	percent	frequency	percent	Frequency	percent
Decade 30	8	16	7	14	15	15
Decade 40	16	32	16	32	32	32
Decade 50	11	22	12	24	23	23
Decade 60	15	30	15	30	30	30

Table 2: Comparison emotional deprivation in the two groups

Type of Relationship	Number	Average	standard deviation	standard error	t	Degrees of freedom	P
Polygamy	50	14/92	6/06	0/85	2/68	98	0/008
Monogamy	50	11/80	5/53	0/73			

Given the amount of t (68/2) with 98 degrees of freedom and its significance level (0.008) averages of two groups of men, polygamy (14/92) and monogamous (11/80), in terms of statistically had significant differences.

Table 3: Comparison abandonment in the two groups

Type of Relationship	Number	Average	standard deviation	standard error	t	Degrees of freedom	P
Polygamy	50	12/66	6/06	0/85	0/06	98	0/94
Monogamy	50	12/58	5/53	0/78			

Given the amount of t (0/06) with 98 degrees of freedom and its significance level (0/94) averages of two groups of men, polygamy (12/66) and monogamous (12/58), in terms of statistically had no significant differences.

Table 4: Comparison mistreatment / distrust in the two groups

Type of Relationship	Number	Average	standard deviation	standard error	t	Degrees of freedom	P
Polygamy	50	13/56	5/54	0/78	2/45	98	0/01
Monogamy	50	10/80	5/71	0/80			

Given the amount of t (2/45) with 98 degrees of freedom and its significance level (0/01) averages of two groups of men, polygamy (13/56) and monogamous (10/80), in terms of statistically had significant differences.

Table 5: Comparison social isolation / alienation in the two groups

Type of Relationship	Number	Average	standard deviation	standard error	t	Degrees of freedom	P
Polygamy	23	13/79	5/38	0/93	4/24	57/13	0/0001
Monogamy	23	8/94	3/74	0/65			

Given the amount of t (4/24) with 57/13 degrees of freedom and its significance level (0/0001) averages of two groups of men, polygamy (13/79) and monogamous (8/94), in terms of statistically had significant differences.

Table 6: Comparison defectiveness / shame in the two groups

Type of Relationship	Number	Average	standard deviation	standard error	t	Degrees of freedom	P
Polygamy	34	13/32	5/53	0/95	3/68	60/13	0/0001
Monogamy	34	9	4/008	0/69			

Given the amount of t (3/68) with 60/13 degrees of freedom and its significance level (0/0001) averages of two groups of men, polygamy (13/32) and monogamous (9), in terms of statistically had significant differences.

Table 7: Comparison failure in the two groups

Type of Relationship	Number	Average	standard deviation	standard error	t	Degrees of freedom	P
Polygamy	49	12/27	5/74	0/82	2/34	96	0/0001
Monogamy	49	9/80	4/61	0/65			

Given the amount of t (2/34) with 96 degrees of freedom and its significance level (0/0001) averages of two groups of men, polygamy (12/27) and monogamous (9/80), in terms of statistically had significant differences.

Table 8: Comparison dependence / incompetence in the two groups

Type of Relationship	Number	Average	standard deviation	standard error	t	Degrees of freedom	P
Polygamy	35	12/69	5/02	0/84	3/56	61/50	0/0001
Monogamy	35	8/97	3/58	0/60			

Given the amount of t (3/56) with 61/50 degrees of freedom and its significance level (0/0001) averages of two groups of men, polygamy (12/69) and monogamous (8/97), in terms of statistically had significant differences. Therefore polygamy men have feel of dependence / incompetence more than monogamous men.

Table 9: Comparison vulnerability to harm or illness in the two groups

Type of Relationship	Number	Average	standard deviation	standard error	T	Degrees of freedom	P
Polygamy	37	12/59	4/67	0/76	3/10	72	0/003
Monogamy	37	9/32	5/34	0/87			

Given the amount of t (3/10) with 72 degrees of freedom and its significance level (0/003) averages of two groups of men, polygamy (12/59) and monogamous (9/32), in terms of statistically had significant differences. Therefore polygamy men have feel vulnerability to harm or illness more than monogamous men.

Table 10: Comparison involvement in the two groups

Type of Relationship	Number	Average	standard deviation	standard error	T	Degrees of freedom	P
Polygamy	41	12/41	5/92	0/92	0/82	80	0/41
Monogamy	41	11/27	6/59	1/02			

Given the amount of t (0/82) with 80 degrees of freedom and its significance level (0/41) averages of two groups of men, polygamy (12/41) and monogamous (11/27), in terms of statistically had no significant differences.

Table 11: Comparison obedience in the two groups

Type of Relationship	Number	Average	standard deviation	standard error	T	Degrees of freedom	P
Polygamy	29	14/55	5/44	1/01	2/12	53	0/03
Monogamy	29	11/58	4/86	0/95			

Given the amount of t (2/12) with 53 degrees of freedom and its significance level (0/03) averages of two groups of men, polygamy (14/55) and monogamous (11/58), in terms of statistically had significant differences. Therefore polygamy men have feel of obedience more than monogamous men.

Table 12: Comparison dedication in the two groups

Type of Relationship	Number	Average	standard deviation	standard error	T	Degrees of freedom	P
Polygamy	50	17/07	6/19	0/87	-0/01	98	0/98
Monogamy	50	17/06	6/35	0/89			

Given the amount of t (-0/01) with 98 degrees of freedom and its significance level (0/98) averages of two groups of men, polygamy (17/07) and monogamous (17/06), in terms of statistically had no significant differences.

Table 13: Comparison emotional inhibition in the two groups

Type of Relationship	Number	Average	standard deviation	standard error	T	Degrees of freedom	P
Polygamy	50	13/40	5/96	0/84	0/51	98	0/60
Monogamy	50	12/78	6/09	0/86			

Given the amount of t (0/51) with 98 degrees of freedom and its significance level (0/60) averages of two groups of men, polygamy (13/40) and monogamous (12/78), in terms of statistically had no significant differences.

Table 14: Comparison unrelenting standards in the two groups

Type of Relationship	Number	Average	standard deviation	standard error	T	Degrees of freedom	P
Polygamy	50	16/74	5/47	0/77	0/42	98	0/67
Monogamy	50	16/24	6/19	0/86			

Given the amount of t (0/42) with 98 degrees of freedom and its significance level (0/67) averages of two groups of men, polygamy (16/74) and monogamous (16/24), in terms of statistically had no significant differences.

Table 15: Comparison entitlements in the two groups

Type of Relationship	Number	Average	standard deviation	standard error	T	Degrees of freedom	P
Polygamy	50	15/40	5/68	0/80	0/97	98	0/33
Monogamy	50	14/32	5/44	0/77			

Given the amount of t (0/97) with 98 degrees of freedom and its significance level (0/33) averages of two groups of men, polygamy (15/40) and monogamous (14/32), in terms of statistically had no significant differences.

Table 16: Comparison continence / self-discipline in the two groups

Type of Relationship	Number	Average	standard deviation	standard error	T	Degrees of freedom	P
Polygamy	50	13/82	5/16	0/73	2/47	98	0/01
Monogamy	50	11/38	4/68	0/66			

Given the amount of t (2/47) with 98 degrees of freedom and its significance level (0/01) averages of two groups of men, polygamy (13/82) and monogamous (11/38), in terms of statistically had significant differences.

Table 17: Comparison secure attachment style in the two groups

Type of Relationship	Number	Average	standard deviation	standard error	T	Degrees of freedom	P
Polygamy	48	17/73	3/72	0/53	0/48	94	0/62
Monogamy	48	17/33	4/25	0/61			

Given the amount of t (0/48) with 94 degrees of freedom and its significance level (0/62) averages of two groups of men, polygamy (17/73) and monogamous (17/33), in terms of statistically had no significant differences.

Table 18: Comparison avoidant attachment style in the two groups

Type of Relationship	Number	Average	standard deviation	standard error	T	Degrees of freedom	P
Polygamy	50	16/74	3/26	0/46	0/26	94/37	0/24
Monogamy	50	16/82	4/49	0/63			

Given the amount of t (0/26) with 94/37 degrees of freedom and its significance level (0/24) averages of two groups of men, polygamy (16/74) and monogamous (16/82), in terms of statistically had no significant differences.

Table 19: Comparison ambivalent attachment style in the two groups

Type of Relationship	Number	Average	standard deviation	standard error	T	Degrees of freedom	P
Polygamy	50	15/80	4/01	0/56	0/26	98	0/79
Monogamy	50	15/56	4/89	0/69			

Given the amount of t (0/26) with 98 degrees of freedom and its significance level (0/79) averages of two groups of men, polygamy (15/80) and monogamous (15/56), in terms of statistically had no significant differences.

### Conclusion and Discussion

The first results showed between secure attachment style and early maladaptive schemas (its components) in monogamous and polygamous men there are differences. According to the findings between monogamous and polygamous men, there is no difference in terms of abandonment, emotional inhibition, unrelenting standards, and entitlements. But according to the findings, there are differences between monogamous and polygamous men in terms of mistreatment / distrust, social isolation / alienation, defectiveness / shame, failure, dependence / incompetence, vulnerability, obedience, and continence. These findings are consistent with the research of Mazaheri (2005). In explaining the above findings it can be said; insecure attachment style can cause polygamy in individuals. Polygamy is more relevant to secure attachment style. Polygamous men have the greater level of diversity than monogamous men. People with secure attachment styles show a deeper understanding of the relationship and higher share in their interpersonal relationships. These people have certain beliefs and convictions in life and strong and powerful personal identity and as a result, they experience less chronic anxiety, and under stressful conditions has less turmoil and do not show unhealthy behaviors such as alcohol and drugs, etc. (Beyrami et al 2012).

The second results showed between avoidant attachment style and early maladaptive schemas (its components) in monogamous and polygamous men there are differences. According to the findings between monogamous and polygamous men there is no difference in terms of avoidant attachment style. These findings is consistent with research of Abasian (2009) and Platts & Mason (2005). In explaining the above findings it can be said; Polygamous Men have more maladaptive schemas than monogamous men. In this context, there is no study but it seems the reason for this result is polygamous men have no handling opportunity to each of their wives and in overtime faced with numerous problems. So that these problems also can affect even their working life. It should be considered the scheme is created in childhood. On the other hand polygamous can return to cultural factors as well as the male-dominated. So it can be said a series of educational and cultural factors could be the cause of this difference in two groups (Hamidpour, 2005).

The third results showed between ambivalent / anxiety attachment style and early maladaptive schemas (its components) in monogamous and polygamous men there are differences. According to the findings between monogamous and polygamous men, there is no difference in terms of ambivalent / anxiety attachment style. These findings are consistent with the research of Mazaheri (2005), Feeny and Noller (1990), Allgeier (1995). In explaining the above findings it can be said; insecure attachment styles (avoidant / ambivalent) can't be the cause of polygamy in individuals. Perhaps the cause of polygamous men is more linked with cultural factors. Polygamous men have more maladaptive schemas than monogamous men. In this context, there is no study but it seems the reason for this result is polygamous men have no handling opportunity to each of their wives and in overtime faced with numerous problems. So that these problems also can affect even their working life. It should be considered the scheme is created in childhood. On the other hand, polygamous can return to cultural factors as well as the male-dominated. So it can be said a series of educational and cultural factors could be the cause of this difference in two groups (Yousefi, 2011). Men than women have more facilities for their relationship and the law defends of them in this context. People with insecure attachment styles – ambivalent usually have a fear of rejection in their relations (Beyrami et al, 2012).

## References

1. Abasian M. (2009). A Comparison between Maladaptive Schemas of Delinquent and Normal Adolescents and the Attachment Styles of their Parents. The thesis of psychology, AL Zahra University. [Persian].
2. Allgeier, A. R; Allgeier, E. R. (1995). Sexual Interaction, Heath and company, Lexington.
3. Hamidpur, H. (2005). [The study of the early schema, attachment, and marital satisfaction]. Proceeding of the 2nd Congress of Family Pathology; Tehran, Shahid Beheshti University; 165. (Persian).
4. Bamber, Martin. R. (2006). CBT for occupational stress in health professionals: introducing a schema-focused approach, Routledge.
5. Beyrami M, Esmaeili A. (2012). The structural relationship between attachment styles, parenting, coping and maladaptive schemas in the Young Schema Model. Modern psychological research. Tabriz University. Vol 2 (28) PP: 71-88 [Persian].
6. Feeny JA, Noller P. (1990). Attachment style as a predictor of adult romantic relationship. J Pers Soc Psychol. 58: 281-91.
7. Mazaheri M A. (2005) Attachment Styles of Iranian babies. Journal of psychology. Vol 4 (8). PP: 292-315. [Persian].
8. Platts, H; Mason. O; Tyson, M. (2005). Early Maladaptive schemas and adult attachment in a UK clinical sample Psychology and psychotherapy: Theory Research and practice. 75: 549-564.
9. Rafiei S, Hatami A, Foroughi A. (2011). The relationship between early maladaptive schemas and attachment in women with extramarital sex. Journal of Wife and Society. Vol 2. N 5:21-36 [Persian].
10. Schultz, Duane P and Schultz, Sydney Ellen (1990). Theories of personality, Cengage Learning.
11. Young, Jeffrey E; Klosko, Janet S; Weishaar, Marjorie E. (2003). Schema therapy: A practitioner's guide, Guilford Press. 123-218.
12. Yousefi, Naser. (2011). "Comparison of the effectiveness of family therapy based on schema therapy and Bowen's emotional system therapy on the early maladaptive schema among divorce applicant clients." Journal of Fundamentals of Mental Health 13(52): 73-356. [Persian].