

Article Review KEY

I. Reference

Davis, D., Shaver, P. R., & Vernon, M. L. (2004). Attachment style and subjective motivations for sex. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 30, 1076-1090.

II. Study Design --

- a. State the type of study: **CORRELATIONAL**
- b. Also include a short explanation as to why the study design is correlational, experimental, or another design: **Correlational because: 1) researcher did not manipulate any independent variables, and 2) did not randomly assign participants to different conditions of an independent variable**
- c. Include a brief overview of the purpose of the study. In other words, why did the researchers conduct this study? **The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between attachment style and subjective motivations for sex. More specifically, the researchers were interested in examining how attachment anxiety and avoidance would be related to overall sexual motivation and to the specific motives for emotional closeness, reassurance, self-esteem enhancement, stress reduction, partner manipulation, protection from partner's negative affect and behavior, power exertion, physical pleasure, nurturing one's partner, and procreation.**

III. Variables -- Independent variables are the conditions participants are assigned to in an experimental study. Predictor variables are similar, except they typically cannot be manipulated (e.g., self-esteem or education level), and they are used in correlational or longitudinal designs. Dependent or criterion variables are outcome variables. The term "dependent variable" refers specifically to outcomes in experimental studies whereas the term "criterion variable" refers to outcomes in correlational studies.

- a. Specify whether it was an independent/predictor variable and/or a dependent/criterion variable in the study: **Predictor/Criterion**
- b. Identify the independent/predictor and dependent/criterion variables in the study:
PREDICTOR VARIABLE: attachment style (attachment related anxiety, attachment related avoidance); CRITERION VARIABLE: subjective motivations for sex (emotional closeness, reassurance, self-esteem enhancement, stress reduction, partner manipulation, protection from partner's negative affect and behavior, power exertion, physical pleasure, nurturing one's partner, and procreation)

IV. Conceptual Definitions of Variables -- These involve defining any terms or concepts that are central variables in the study. Do not confuse this with the operational definition of a variable which asks how variables are measured. Instead, you should provide the conceptual/theoretical definition for each of the primary variables in the study. A conceptual definition is the answer a researcher would provide if any of you were to ask "How would you define your attachment style variable?"

- a. Conceptual definition of independent/predictor variable(s):

- a. **ATTACHMENT STYLE:** the characteristic ways that individuals form attachments to others.
 - i. **Attachment anxiety:** the tendency to display a high need for closeness, reassurance, and interdependence as a result of an attachment figure who is inconsistent and unreliable in responding to individual needs
 - ii. **Attachment avoidance:** the tendency to avoid emotional closeness and the expectation not to receive reassurance in response to distress as a result of an attachment figure who is consistently negative to the needs of an individual
- b. Conceptual definition of dependent/criterion variable(s):
 - a. **Motivations for Sex:** the reasons individuals report for engaging in sexual activity
 - i. Would be appropriate to list out the individual motivations of sex and provide a very brief definition of each

V. Participants -- In this section you need to tell me a little bit about who participated in this study. This section doesn't have to be very long; just provide enough information that your reader will know something about who participated in this study.

- a. How were the participants selected? Were there exclusion criteria? Were participants actively recruited? Survey was posted on the internet with the title "The dating survey VII: Sex in Our Relationships". Participants voluntarily followed links to the survey located in three subcategories of the Yahoo search engine. Invitations were phrased as follows: "Dating survey-Participants in the first study of Internet singles". Categories with links to the survey included dating, tests and experiments, and surveys. No active solicitation occurred.
 - a. **Exclusion criteria:** must be 15 or older AND been in a relationship in which regular sexual intercourse was involved
- b. Demographic Information: (For example, how many people were in the study? Were they all from the same university? How many of them were men? How many were women? What was the distribution of ages, ethnicities, and any other information?)
 - a. 1999 people (1,241 women, 757 men)
 - b. Age:
 - i. Average age was 25.25 years
 - ii. Age distribution from 15-78
 - 1. 84% younger than 30
 - 2. 12.7% in their 30s
 - 3. 4.5% in their 40s
 - 4. 1.2% in their 50s
 - 5. .2% older than 60s
 - c. Ethnic make-up
 - i. 5.4% African Americans
 - ii. 4.9% Hispanics/Latinos
 - iii. 3.8% Asians
 - iv. 1.0% Native Americans
 - v. 77.4% Caucasian
 - vi. 6.8% Other
 - d. Sexual orientation
 - i. 85.5% heterosexual
 - ii. 3.1% homosexual

iii. 9.8% bisexual

VI. Procedure

- a. Describe the procedures used in the study. Remember that a procedure should be so detailed that anyone else could look at your procedure and conduct the same study with very few questions. You should be VERY SPECIFIC and include the title of the study, the information described to participants, and information concerning anonymity.
 - a. A survey was posted on the internet with the title “The dating survey VII: Sex in Our Relationships”. Participants voluntarily followed links to the survey located in three subcategories of the Yahoo search engine. Invitations were phrased as follows: “Dating survey-Participants in the first study of Internet singles”. Categories with links to the survey included dating, tests and experiments, and surveys. IP addresses were read and surveys submitted from the same address for the second time were rejected. No active solicitation occurred.
 - b. Survey included assurance of anonymity and a warning that responses were not secure until transmitted
 - c. To ensure participants responded anonymously, the first question asked, “Are you alone at your computer?” Data from those who said no were deleted.
 - d. Survey was introduced with statement: The sex and relationships survey is one of a series designed to learn more about how our behavior in romantic relationships changes throughout life. Specifically, this survey is concerned with the role of sex at various points in a relationship and at various ages in life.

VII. Measures -- For this section, specify what types of questionnaires or other outcome measures were used. This section answers the question “How were the primary variables in this study measured or operationalized?”

- a. Identify the measures/questionnaires used the **independent/predictor variable**. Briefly describe each of the measures used in the study. [For example, what was the questionnaire/outcome designed to measure? How many items were on the questionnaire? How did people answer the items (e.g., participants rated items using a scale ranging from 1-5, where 1 = not at all and 5 = very much, or something like that)? If there is no information listed as to how the information was rated, you should say this.
 - a. ATTACHMENT STYLE: 10-item subsets of the two 18-item scales that comprise the Experiences in Close Relationships Measure.
 - b. No information given for rating scale
- b. Identify the measures/questionnaires used for the **dependent/criterion variable**. Briefly describe each of the measures used in the study. [For example, what was the questionnaire/outcome designed to measure? How many items were on the questionnaire? How did people answer the items (e.g., participants rated items using a scale ranging from 1-5, where 1 = not at all and 5 = very much, or something like that)? If there is no information listed as to how the information was rated, you should say this.
 - b. MOTIVATIONS FOR SEX:
 - i. 10 motives for sex were measured
 1. 8 were adapted from the AMORE measure of Hill and Preston (1996)
 - a. Scales assessed:

- i. Feeling valued by one's partner (Reassurance)
 - ii. Being close and affectionate (Emotional Closeness)
 - iii. Obtaining relief from stress (Stress Reduction)
 - iv. Providing nurturance to one's partner (Nurturance)
 - v. Enhancing feelings of personal power (Power Self)
 - vi. Experiencing the partner's power (Power Other)
 - vii. Fun and physical pleasure (Physical Pleasure)
 - viii. Procreation (Children)
- ii. No information given for rating scale

VIII. Hypotheses -- What did the researchers predict? What did they expect to happen? All studies have at least 1 hypothesis, and many have quite a few more than that.

- a. H1: Sexual behavior will be motivated by perceived threat to the relationship, particularly among those high in anxiety
- b. H2: Sexual behavior will serve the attachment functions of: a) emotional closeness, b) reassurance, c) enhancement of self-esteem, and d) stress reduction, particularly for those high in attachment anxiety, whereas avoidance will be negatively related to these motivations for sex
- c. H3: Sex will be used as a tool to: a) elicit caregiving from one's partner and b) protect oneself from one's partner's negative affect, anger, or violence, particularly among anxious individuals
- d. H4: The exertion of one's own power and the experience of a partner's power will serve as sexual goals, particularly for anxious individuals
- e. H5: Sex will function as caregiving, particularly for anxious individuals, who may be more inclined to report having children as a motive for sex
- f. H6: Overall, sexual motivation will be positively associated with attachment anxiety
- g. Lack of identity positively associated with attachment anxiety
- h. H7: Anxiety will be associated positively, and avoidance negatively, with both the overall level of sexual passion and the maintenance of sexual passion over time.

IX. Results -- What are the main findings? For each hypothesis, you should list a result. You also need to indicate whether the results support or disconfirm a hypothesis. You should list your answer in the following format: If a result supports a hypothesis, you may say "As expected, self-control was positively related to counterproductive work behaviors." If a result does not support a hypothesis, you might say "Contrary to expectations, self-control was not significantly related to counterproductive work behaviors"

- a. What were the results/main findings?
 - a. H1: As expected, anxiety was positively related to reports of interest in sex being higher when feeling insecure about the relationship.
 - b. H2: As expected, attachment anxiety was significantly related with all four attachment-related motives for sex. Also as expected, attachment avoidance was most strongly and negatively related to the attachment-related sexual motive of emotional closeness.
 - c. H3 & H4: As expected, attachment anxiety was related to all power/manipulation motives for sex.
 - d. H5: As expected, both nurturance and having children as motives for sex were positively related to anxiety but negatively related to avoidance.

- e. H6: As predicted, attachment anxiety was positively related to overall sexual motivation.
- f. H7: As expected, attachment anxiety was positively related and avoidance negatively related with overall level of sexual passion and the maintenance of sexual passion over time.
- b. In general, were these results consistent with past research?
 - a. YES. Two prior studies support predictions that sexual behavior can be motivated by motives associated with attachment styles. Current study supports hypothesis that sexual system can serve functions similar or identical to those of the attachment and caregiving systems and that these functions would fuel sexual behavior predictably as a function of attachment anxiety versus avoidance.

X. Conclusions -- A good place to look for conclusions is in the discussion section, usually toward the end of the article.

- a. Interpretation of the results – What do these results mean in a broader sense? What do the findings mean in the big picture? What do they imply about life in the real world?
 - a. There are relatively few studies that examine the sexual aspect of love as examined by attachment theorists. More specifically, the current study examines whether sexual behavior can serve attachment systems.
 - b. Found a link between attachment style and coercive strategies that was not found before
 - c. Results suggest that “attachment theory provides a useful framework for understanding a wide variety of sexual issues, including some yet to be addressed by mainstream sex researchers”.
 - d. You can be a bit creative with this one. The article doesn’t give too much here.
- b. Briefly describe future directions for the line of research studied in the article. (2 POINTS)
 - a. Should examine these measures in a longitudinal design to assess causality
 - b. Should continue to examine relationship of attachment styles to subjective motivations for sex but in older samples and those in relationships
 - c. You can be creative here too. Authors didn’t really list much.

XI. Critique -- Typically researchers acknowledge limitations to their own work (in the discussion section), but there may be some things that you notice that could be a problem for the study. For example, were the participants mostly women (so we don't know if men would respond the same way)?

- a. What are some of the limitations of the study identified by the researcher(s)? What could the researchers have done that would have made the study better?
 - a. Study sample was biased towards younger and single respondents
- b. What limitations did you find with the study? Identify and describe at least **1 limitation** that is not mentioned by the researchers. (2 POINTS)
 - a. Researchers could not guarantee that participants were of age to participate
 - b. Cross sectional design precludes inferences of causality
 - c. Didn’t have enough of a sample to examine generalizability with other sexual orientations beside heterosexuals
 - d. Ethnicity not generalizable