






## Investigating the Role of Pessimism about Marriage as a Mediator in the Relationship between Insecure Attachment and Age at Marriage in Young People after Divorce

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** The significance of marriage and the anticipation of it in impacting individuals' lives and the quality of relationships is indisputable. Various factors, including attachment styles and personality traits, shape one's view of marriage. This study aims to examine how pessimism about marriage serves as a mediator in the connection between insecure attachment and the age at which young people marry after experiencing divorce.

**Methods and Materials:** This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design and utilized the cross-sectional research method and structural equation modeling (SEM). The statistical population for this study comprised all young males and females in Tehran, specifically between July and November of 2023. A sample of 252 young individuals with divorced parents was selected using purposive sampling. The instruments used to assess the variables included the Revised Adult Attachment scale (RAAS) by Collins (1996) and the optimism questionnaire developed by Shier and Carver (1985). The data collected from the study were analyzed using SPSS version 27 and SmartPLS version 4 software. Statistical significance was determined at the 0.05 level.

**Findings:** According to the research findings, having pessimism about marriage has a significant impact on delaying the marriage age of young individuals ( $\beta=0.318$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Similarly, having an avoidant attachment style also contributes to an increase in the marriage age of young people ( $\beta=0.673$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Additionally, both avoidant and anxious attachments are positively associated with pessimism about marriage. Furthermore, feeling anxious about marriage due to pessimism leads to a higher marriage age among young people ( $\beta=0.195$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Similarly, having an avoidant attachment due to pessimism about marriage also leads to a delay in the marriage age of young individuals ( $\beta=0.095$ ,  $p=0.001$ ).

**Conclusion:** The results of the current research indicate that pessimism about marriage and a tendency to avoid attachment lead to a delay in marriage among young individuals following divorce. Additionally, both avoidant and anxious attachment styles contribute to pessimism, which in turn has a positive impact on prolonging the age at which young people get married.

**Keywords:** Insecure attachment, Pessimism about marriage, Marriage age, Children of divorce.

## 1. Introduction

The family has a significant influence on the overall health and wellness of children, which includes their physical, mental, and social well-being. However, there has been a concerning rise in divorce rates in recent years, resulting in an increasing number of children from divorce (Godarzi & Khojaste, 2020; Khorasaniyan, 2022; van Berkel et al., 2024). In Iran, the rate of divorce has been consistently rising for the last twenty years, with a yearly increase of 6.2% and an average length of marriage before divorce occurring at 7.7% in the year 2016 (Abedi et al., 2024; Ammari et al., 2023; Ardakhani & Seadatee Shamir, 2022; Bagi & Hosseini, 2021). Children of divorced parents often have to navigate through parental conflicts, anger, distress, and significant life changes like relocating to a new school or home, leading to feelings of resentment, sadness, and anger (van der Wal et al., 2024). Studies have shown that events like parental divorce during childhood can have long-lasting effects, impacting an individual's future academic success, emotional well-being, physical health, growth, and socioeconomic status (Torche et al., 2024).

People's first encounters in relationships have a crucial effect on their assumptions about marriage, and the bond with their primary caregivers is essential in this regard (Roshan Chesli et al., 2023). Attachment styles are developed based on psychological growth and mental well-being, influencing trust bonds in romantic relationships. Securely attached individuals are more at ease in the early stages of relationships, while anxious individuals fear rejection and avoidant individuals distance themselves from others (Yilmaz et al., 2023). Attachment theory suggests that people unconsciously apply early acquired behaviors to future relationships (El Frenn et al., 2022). Research has shown that individuals with secure, anxious/ambivalent, and avoidant attachment styles have varying attitudes toward marriage (Park & Harris, 2023). Studies have also found that adults with a history of divorce or parental separation are likely to exhibit anxious and avoidant attachment styles (D'Rozario & Pilkington, 2022). Additionally, research has indicated that avoidant and anxious attachment styles are negatively associated with the likelihood of marriage (Yacovson et al., 2022).

Children of divorce are more prone to developing disorders like avoidant attachment, anxious attachment, and acute stress, which can lead to them being cautious about entering romantic relationships or believing that all divorces are distressing, possibly causing them to delay marriage or

avoid it altogether (Abbaspour et al., 2021). In recent years, the average age at marriage has risen for both men and women globally, with over half of marriages occurring after the age of 30 in many developed nations (Gündoğdu & Bulut, 2022). Misunderstandings about marriage and the fear of divorce may lead to a postponement of marriage. (Barati, 2022). Research has shown that adolescents whose parents are separated may experience more social anxiety than those from intact families, potentially impacting their timing of marriage (Obeid et al., 2021). Additionally, divorce can lead to decreased educational attainment, weakened peer relationships, lack of commitment in relationships, and a higher risk of divorce in children (Damota, 2019).

Children who go through parental divorce may receive less attention from their parents, have lower satisfaction in relationships, and experience distress in relationships, potentially impacting their views on marriage (Roper et al., 2020). Having a positive attitude towards marriage indicates a belief that marriage can be successful and bring happiness, while a negative and pessimistic attitude sees marriage as merely a legal agreement like any other contract (Gholami et al., 2020). Individuals with a pessimistic attitude towards marriage are more likely to have unsuccessful marriages and hold less positive expectations for their marriage (Dardashti et al., 2023). Studies have indicated that parental divorce is connected to Pessimism about marriage, including seeing it as less significant, less long-lasting, and less essential (Willoughby et al., 2020). Studies have found that caregiver divorce is associated with expectations of divorce, and it is one of the factors that can predict divorce in young adults (Arocho & Purtell, 2020).

Parental divorce is seen as a loss of the security blanket for children, leading to potential negative impacts on their social and psychological well-being. Research has shown that children of divorce may experience long-term consequences such as mental health issues, behavioral problems, low self-esteem, and difficulties in forming relationships (van Berkel et al., 2024). It is crucial to consider factors like attachment style and Marriage age when studying the effects of divorce on children. However, there is a lack of research directly exploring the connection between the Marriage age, insecure attachment due to divorce, and pessimism about marriage. This study aims to investigate how pessimism about marriage plays a role in the relationship between insecure attachment and the Marriage age in young people from divorced families.

## 2. Methods and Materials

## 2.1. Study Design and Participants

This study falls within the realm of descriptive-correlational research and utilized the cross-sectional research method along with structural equation modeling (SEM). The statistical population for this study was all young boys and girls in Tehran from July to November 2023. The research sample consisted of 252 young boys and girls whose parents were divorced or separated, selected through purposive sampling. The adequacy of the sample size was determined using Cohen's formula, taking into account the number of observed and latent variables in the model, the anticipated effect size, and the levels of probability and statistical power. Based on this calculation method, the sample size was estimated as follows: Predicted effect size: 0.3, Desired statistical power level: 0.8, Number of hidden variables: 4, Number of observed variables: 31, Probability level: 0.01.

The researcher calculated that 237 individuals met the specified criteria. To account for potential attrition in the research sample, the researcher decided on a sample size of 300 individuals to prevent any loss of participants. To participate in the study, individuals needed to have a record of psychological counseling, give informed consent, answer questionnaires accurately, and possess sufficient literacy and understanding. On the other hand, individuals could be disqualified from the research if they did not wish to continue, had a physical or mental condition that impeded their ability to answer, or failed to complete more than 8 questionnaire items, leading to their removal from the study. The research methodology involved obtaining necessary permits from the university where the researchers were affiliated. Following this, they visited five counseling centers in Tehran, chosen based on their availability and willingness to cooperate. The researchers sought collaboration with the centers after making initial contact. Subsequently, an announcement about the research was posted online and on social media on behalf of the counseling centers, targeting young individuals with divorced parents and counseling records. "Participants were selected from those who replied to the first message." The process of sending messages and selecting participants occurred over five months, facing challenges in reaching the required sample size due to non-cooperation. Afterward, the young participants who agreed to participate received thorough information about the research through social media platforms. This information covered the research goals, required permits, and ethical guidelines. They were

assured that their personal information would remain confidential in the research documents, and they had the option to withdraw from the research at any point. A total of 281 individuals were purposefully selected, falling short of the desired sample size of 300 due to difficulties in cooperation. The process of filling out the questionnaire was carried out online to cater to the needs of all participants. The analysis included a total of 252 out of 281 completed questionnaires. The remaining 29 questionnaires were not considered due to incomplete responses or intentional errors. The study assessed variables such as age, pessimism about marriage, avoidant attachment, and anxious attachment among the online participants. On average, it took 20 minutes for each individual to finish the questionnaires during the five-month research period. To follow ethical guidelines, participants had to give online consent before starting the questionnaires. Participation in the research was voluntary, and individuals had the right to withdraw at any point. They were given reassurance that the tests did not include any personal details.

## 2.2. Measures

### 2.2.1. Attachment Style

Revised Adult Attachment Scale (RAAS): Collins developed an 18-item questionnaire in 1990 to assess an individual's intimate communication skills and style using a Likert scale (Collins, 1996). The questionnaire uses a rating scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing strong disagreement and 5 representing strong agreement for each question. It groups attachment styles into secure, avoidant, and anxious, assigning specific questions to each style. Test results determine the attachment type based on the scores obtained, with higher scores indicating stronger attachment. A study in Iran found Cronbach's alpha values for secure, avoidant, and anxious attachment in students to be 0.81, 0.78, and 0.85, respectively (Seyed Hashemi, Fathi Ahmadabadi, Yaghoubi, Hosseinzadeh Khanmiri & Shokrani, 2022). Likewise, the reliability of the questionnaire by Collins was obtained between 0.69 and 0.7 from the retest method. In Iran, the validity of the questionnaire was checked and the factor loading of all questions was higher than 0.4. Likewise, criterion validity for secure, anxious, and avoidant attachment was obtained as -0.54, 0.22, and 0.43, respectively (Asl, Khanzadeh, Hasani, Edrisi, 2012). In the current study, the researcher obtained Cronbach's alpha values of 0.912 for avoidant attachment and 0.981 for anxious attachment. Likewise, the AVE values for avoidant

attachment and anxious attachment were equal to 0.88 and 0.77 respectively. The validity of the scale was also confirmed by the Fornell-Larker method.

### 2.2.2. Pessimism

The optimism questionnaire, also known as the life orientation test, was created by Scheier and Carver in 1985 as a self-report tool to measure levels of optimism and pessimism in individuals (Scheier & Carver, 1985). Originally consisting of 12 questions, the test was later revised in 1994 to a 6-item format with two dimensions: optimism and pessimism. This modified version was named the modified life orientation test. Scores on this scale range from 0 to 4, with three questions dedicated to optimism and three to pessimism, resulting in a total score range of 0 to 24. Only the negative outlook questions from this survey were used in the present research. In Iran, the scale demonstrated a retest reliability of 0.7 (Mousavinasab & Taghavi, 2007), whereas the Cronbach's alpha calculated by the investigators was 0.793. Likewise, the AVE values for the questionnaire were equal to 0.66. The validity of the scale was also confirmed by the Fornell-Larker method.

### 2.3. Data Analysis

The information collected from the study was analyzed utilizing SPSS version 27 software and SmartPLS software version 4, employing the structural equation model approach. Statistical results were deemed significant at the 0.05 level of significance. The investigator utilized SPSS

software to verify the descriptive statistics for this study. Simultaneously, the structural equation model approach with the partial least squares method was applied to analyze the path coefficients and mediating variables. In this research, SmartPLS version 4 software was used to check the model. Additionally, the researcher employed the bootstrap method to assess the significance of the model. The Sobel test was used to assess the importance of mediating variables.

## 3. Findings and Results

Initially, the researcher examined the descriptive statistics related to the research variables. The participants were categorized into four groups based on their age: 1 to 5 years (17.5%), 5 to 10 years (2.8%), 10 to 15 years (21.0%), and 15 to 20 years (58.7%). The participants were also divided into two groups by gender, with boys making up 64.3% and girls 35.7%. When considering the type of guardian responsible for them during their parents' divorce, the participants were divided into four categories: under the father's supervision (25.4%), under the mother's supervision (17.9%), under the supervision of young relatives and family members (35.7%), and under the care of an orphaned children's care center (21.0%). Furthermore, the participants were divided into two categories based on the marital status of their parents: those whose parents were married (50.4%) and those whose parents were unmarried (49.6%), depending on whether their parents had remarried.

**Table 1**

*Descriptive statistics of research variables and Correlation matrix between research variables*

Variables	N	mean±SD	MIN	MAX	Kurtosis	Skewness	Correlation			
							1	2	3	4
1.Marriage age	252	23.36±3.33	18	30	0.026	-0.726	-			
2.Avoidant attachment	252	14.48±5.63	7	27	0.843	-0.525	•.767***	-		
3.Anxious attachment	252	15.19±5.9	7	27	0.865	-0.617	•.704***	•.704***	-	
4.Pessimism about marriage	252	7.85±2.44	3	12	0.165	-0.675	•.717***	•.656***	•.786***	-

\* p < .05, \*\* p < .01, \*\*\* p < .001

Before examining the variables, the researcher checked the outliers and missing values in the data. A box plot was drawn to check outlier data. In the same way, the Z score was also calculated and corrected if the items in the remaining standard column were above 3 or below -3. Table 1 shows the average scores of marriage age, avoidant

attachment, anxious attachment, and pessimism about marriage respectively.

The researcher examined the correlation matrix of the identified research variables. Table 1 indicates a significant relationship between the research variables (p<0.001). As per the Pearson correlation coefficient, there was a strong

positive relationship between the Marriage age variable and the variables of avoidant attachment, anxious attachment, and pessimism about marriage ( $p < 0.001$ ). Similarly, there was a significant positive relationship between pessimism about marriage and anxious attachment, as well as avoidant attachment variables ( $p < 0.001$ ).

The researcher then analyzed the assumptions of the test. The normality of the distribution of the research variables was checked using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The results showed that the research variables did not have a normal distribution ( $p < 0.001$ ), leading to the decision to use SmartPLS software for the structural equation model. The

random sampling method used by the researcher was appropriate, respecting the assumption of random sampling. The sample size of 252 people was deemed sufficient for running the structural equation model using the partial least squares method. Tolerance factor and variance inflation factor (VIF) statistics were used to check the data collinearity. If the VIF value is smaller than 1 or larger than 5, it is considered a violation of the multicollinearity assumption of the model. The results of tolerance coefficient and variance inflation factor statistics showed that this hypothesis was confirmed. The researcher assessed the model's reliability and validity in [Table 2](#).

**Table 2**

*Checking the reliability and validity of the research model*

Variables	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
Avoidant attachment	0.912	0.938	0.88
Anxious attachment	0.981	0.987	0.77
Pessimism about marriage	0.793	0.882	0.66
Validity by Fornell-Larker method			
variables	1	2	3
Avoidant attachment	• .938		
Anxious attachment	• .704	• .877	
Pessimism about marriage	• .656	• .786	0.812

According to [Table 2](#), the variables showed Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability exceeding 0.7. The average variance index (AVE) extracted was above 0.5, confirming the model's convergent validity. Therefore, the model's reliability and validity have been established. Likewise, the validity of the scale was checked with the Fornell-Larker method. In this method, the square root of the AVE value is placed in the diameter of the correlation matrix between the variables. Based on the review, the validity of the research

was confirmed. Additionally, the SRMR index yielded a value of 0.034, indicating a good model fit as it was below 0.8. The researcher also utilized blindfolding to assess the model's predictive ability for the research variable, with  $Q^2$  values above zero signifying a good fit. Specifically, the  $Q^2$  value for the Marriage age variable was 0.77, and for the pessimism about marriage variable, it was 0.795, confirming the model's fit. [Table 3](#) displays the path and significance coefficients of the realization model.

**Table 3**

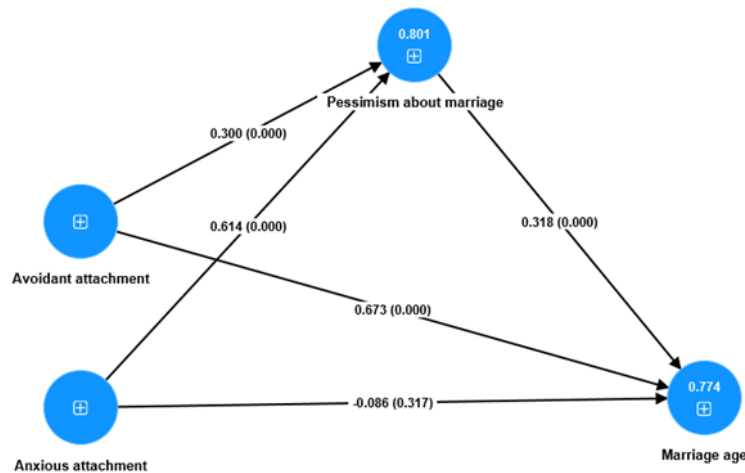
*Direct and indirect coefficients between research variables and significance*

Path between variables	Path	Standard error	P-value	T-value	Result
Pessimism about marriage -> marriage age	0.318	0.066	$p < 0.001$	4.786	confirmation
Avoidant attachment -> pessimism about marriage	0.300	0.070	$p < 0.001$	4.301	confirmation
Avoidant attachment -> marriage age	0.673	0.068	$p < 0.001$	9.918	confirmation

Anxious attachment -> pessimism about marriage	0.614	0.068	p < 0.001	9.077	confirmation
Anxious attachment -> marriage age	-0.086	0.086	0.317	1.000	rejection
Anxious attachment -> pessimism about marriage -> marriage age	0.195	0.049	p < 0.001	4.009	confirmation
Avoidant attachment -> Pessimism about marriage -> Marriage age	0.095	0.028	0.001	3.354	confirmation

Figure 1

Path coefficients between variables and significance level



According to the data presented in Table 3 and Figure 1, pessimism about marriage has a substantial and positive impact on delaying the marriage age of young individuals ( $\beta=0.318$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Similarly, having an avoidant attachment style also plays a significant role in prolonging the age at which young people get married ( $\beta=0.673$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). However, having an anxious attachment style directly does not significantly influence the age at which young people marry ( $\beta=-0.086$ ,  $p=0.317$ ). On the other hand, both avoidant and anxious attachment styles have a positive and notable impact on pessimism about marriage. Additionally, the findings from the bootstrap test suggest that anxious attachment due to pessimism about marriage has a positive and increasing effect on delaying the marriage age of young individuals ( $\beta=0.195$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Likewise, avoidant attachment due to pessimism about marriage also has a favorable and increasing effect on extending the marriage age of young people ( $\beta=0.095$ ,  $p=0.001$ ). As a result, the mediating role of pessimism about marriage was supported by the bootstrap test. The researcher utilized the Sobel test to assess the significance of the mediating variable in the study. In the Sobel test, if the Z value exceeds 1.96, it indicates that the mediating effect of a variable is statistically significant at a 95% confidence level. The Z score for avoidant attachment was 8.677. Based on the Sobel test results, it can be inferred that the mediator variable in the study is significant. The Z score for the path between

avoidant attachment and marriage age due to pessimism about marriage was 3.2022. Similarly, for anxious attachment, it was 4.25084. As per the Sobel test results, the mediating variable in the research is deemed significant.

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

The primary objective of this study was to examine how pessimism about marriage acts as a mediator in the relationship between insecure attachment and marriage age in young individuals following divorce. The results of the study indicated that pessimism about marriage has a significant impact on delaying the marriage age of young people. Additionally, avoidant attachment was found to also contribute to a later marriage age, while anxious attachment did not show a direct effect on marriage age. Both avoidant and anxious attachment were connected to increased pessimism about marriage. The study found that pessimism about marriage, influenced by anxious and avoidant attachment, plays a role in delaying marriage for young individuals.

The results of this study align with previous research by Yasmin, Firdous, Saqib, and Khatoon (2020) and Barati (2022), which also found that pessimism about marriage is associated with delayed marriage age among young people. Moreover, the study found that there is a positive correlation between fear of judgment, feelings of isolation, and being single, while there is a negative correlation with having a

positive outlook on life. (Yasmin et al, 2020). Another study suggested that factors such as misconceptions about marriage and fear of divorce can contribute to a delay in marriage age (Barati, 2022; Yasmin et al., 2020).

The finding can be explained by noting that parental separation is a tumultuous transitional period marked by various disruptions in family life. These disruptions include increased conflict between parents, strained parent-child relationships, diminished quality of parenting, and decreased financial resources. When parents and children have limited communication post-divorce, children may experience feelings of loss, helplessness, and inadequacy (van Berkel et al., 2024). The experience of parents' divorce can strongly influence young people's attitudes towards marriage and divorce, as it shapes their views on romantic relationships and interpersonal connections. Children who witness conflict leading to divorce within their families may develop negative perceptions of marriage and divorce, leading to increased pessimism and uncertainty about marriage as they grow older (Abbaspour et al., 2021).

The present study found that anxious attachment does not significantly impact the marriage age, while avoidant attachment does lead to a delay in marriage. This result aligns with previous research by Roshan Chesli et al. (2023) and Busby, Hanna-Walker, & Yorgason (2020) which also showed a positive effect of avoidant attachment on marriage age (Busby et al., 2020; Roshan Chesli et al., 2023). Another study revealed that insecure attachment increases the likelihood of remaining single for both men and women (Busby et al., 2020). Additionally, research has suggested that different attachment styles can influence the desire to marry (Roshan Chesli et al., 2023). However, the lack of impact of anxious attachment on marriage age contradicts earlier studies by Yacovson et al. (2022) and Park & Harris (2023). Yacovson et al. (2022) also discovered that avoidant and anxious attachment styles are negatively related to the likelihood of marriage. Furthermore, studies have shown that individuals with secure, anxious/ambivalent, and avoidant attachment styles have differing attitudes about marriage (Park & Harris, 2023; Yacovson et al., 2022). These differences in findings may be due to variations in study populations, timeframes, locations, or sample sizes.

The increase in marriage age suggests a decrease in the inclination to wed, which is influenced by factors like emotional growth. Individuals undergo social, cognitive, and emotional development through interactions with specific individuals, and this development involves three attachment styles: secure, anxious/ambivalent, and avoidant. These

attachment styles have a long-lasting impact on an individual's life and influence various aspects such as intimate relationships, love, and the willingness to marry. People with insecure attachment styles are less likely to have the desire to marry compared to those with secure attachment styles (Roshan Chesli et al., 2023).

Insecure attachment is associated with a high level of alienation, which is shown through struggles in self-acceptance, resistance to accepting situations, feelings of being unwanted and unnecessary, and a fear of forming relationships with others. This type of attachment also influences the preferred type of personality in a partner within a relationship. Individuals with an avoidant attachment style may have difficulty committing to a relationship and may overlook their emotional connections, while those with an anxious attachment style may constantly worry about the availability of their attachment figure and seek excessive reassurance. Those with high levels of avoidant attachment may be cautious about forming close relationships due to a fear of rejection or emotional pain, leading them to delay entering into and getting married later in a relationship (Wharton & Marcano-Olivier, 2023).

The results of the current study also demonstrated that both avoidant attachment and anxious attachment contribute to pessimism about marriage, which aligns with previous research (Sommantico et al., 2019; Yilmaz et al., 2023). Prior studies have indicated that an individual's attachment style can influence their anticipations and convictions before starting a romantic relationship, and the degree of trust felt within that relationship (Yilmaz et al., 2023). Additionally, a study found that having a more positive attitude and engaging in fewer behaviors associated with an avoidant attachment style can improve the quality of romantic relationships (Sommantico et al., 2019).

Children's views on marriage and long-term relationships are influenced by observing their parents' relationship quality and their own romantic experiences. Those with insecure attachment styles, characterized by parental rejection and lack of family support, may struggle to see marriage positively due to a lack of intimacy and support. Individuals with avoidant attachment styles may find it challenging to get close to others and may have pessimism about marriage and cohabitation. This perspective stems from feeling uncomfortable with closeness and believing that others do not desire the same level of closeness (Dardashti et al, 2023).

In contrast, individuals with insecure attachment styles exhibit traits of self-doubt and mistrust towards themselves

and others, along with unreasonable expectations of themselves. They tend to terminate relationships abruptly and seek new ones hastily. There is a persistent sense of unworthiness and a constant presence of doubts and fears, leading to feelings of suspicion and insecurity. Additionally, past negative experiences and attachment wounds trigger pessimistic beliefs about marriage in these individuals (Hosseini et al., 2022).

The results of the current study also suggested that feelings of anxiety and avoidance in relationships due to pessimism about marriage have a favorable impact on delaying the age at which young individuals get married. Although there is no direct empirical evidence addressing this issue in the literature, this finding aligns with similar studies that have examined the influence of attachment styles on relationship dynamics such as marriage (Harris & Park, 2022), (Kiani Chelmari et al., 2021). Research has revealed that individuals with secure, anxious/ambivalent, and avoidant attachment styles tend to approach marriage with varying attitudes (Harris & Park, 2022). Additionally, a study found a negative correlation between avoidant attachment and marital satisfaction (Kiani Chelmari et al., 2021).

The insecure attachment style can have a negative impact on the timing of marriage, leading individuals to consider settling down at a later age and altering their perceptions of marriage. This shift in mindset also results in distancing from traditional marriage patterns. People with insecure attachment styles often struggle to confront life's challenges and tend to have more pessimism about marriage. Their difficulties in connecting with others and fear of rejection or failure can contribute to feelings of anxiety (El Frenn et al., 2022). Individuals who have experienced parental divorce or separation are more likely to exhibit anxious and avoidant attachment styles in adulthood. This tendency may stem from a fear of abandonment due to past experiences. Consequently, those with insecure attachment styles may delay marriage due to their cynical view fueled by unpleasant childhood memories (D'Rozario & Pilkington, 2022).

Several limitations exist in the present study, which need to be considered while interpreting the relevance of the findings. In a nation like Iran, known for being a conservative Islamic country with a culture rooted in the East, discussing divorce is not a simple matter and is deeply embedded in societal norms. It should be kept in mind that there are distinctions between divorce in Eastern and Western cultures, and as such, caution should be exercised

when applying the findings to other communities. Confidentiality and voluntary participation are assured, but there might be a lack of reporting data because of the sensitive topic. Additionally, the study experienced reluctance from some teenagers to take part in the research due to the sensitive topic of being a child of divorced parents. Besides these constraints, it is crucial to take into account cohort effects. Earlier studies may have yielded different results compared to recent ones, as societal attitudes towards divorce and single parenthood may have evolved. This study attempted to minimize this limitation by incorporating newer research conducted in the past few years. Due to budget and time constraints, it was not possible to control for cultural, social, ideological, and belief differences that could impact the study variables. Additionally, marriage trends are not static, so future research should explore changes in attitudes toward marriage to fully assess adult relationships. Additionally, one of the other cases we plan to utilize in future studies for a more comprehensive understanding is to explore the connection between emotional schemas and fear of marriage across both genders, with a focus on different age groups for comparison. This will enhance our understanding of how the research topic impacts individuals' beliefs. It is also recommended to explore the impact of parental divorce on teenagers with severe symptoms of chronic illnesses, and future studies should emphasize positive factors within parental relationships to investigate the effects of successful marriages on teenagers. This approach will allow for the sharing of successful experiences from individuals in stable marriages with others.

The present study's findings indicated that being pessimistic about marriage and having an avoidant attachment style are factors that contribute to the delayed marriage age among young people following divorce. Furthermore, individuals with avoidant and anxious attachment styles tend to have increased pessimism, which in turn has a positive impact on prolonging the marriage age among young individuals. These research findings hold significance for organizations involved in youth education and marriage. Implementing educational programs on these topics within the youth and student communities could prove beneficial. Additionally, recognizing the crucial role of attachment patterns in fostering a healthy attitude towards marriage, group therapy aimed at promoting secure attachment in individuals may be a valuable approach. It is recommended that family therapists, counselors, psychologists, and individuals working with young people consider incorporating the insights from this study to



enhance attachment styles and alter young people's perspectives on marriage.

### Authors' Contributions

Authors equally contributed to this article.

### Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

### Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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### Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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### Ethical Considerations

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were under the ethical standards of the institutional and, or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

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