

Fractured Bonds and Lingering Wounds: Attachment Anxiety as a Predictor of Suicidal Ideation following Long-Term Relationship Dissolution

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation following long-term relationship dissolution among Pakistani university students, with a focus on gender differences and the sociocultural context of collectivism. Grounded in attachment theory, the research tested four hypotheses regarding the predictive role of attachment anxiety in suicidality. Descriptive statistics indicated elevated mean levels of attachment anxiety ($M = 119.56$, $SD = 42.63$) and moderate suicidal ideation ($M = 28.08$, $SD = 9.27$). Correlation analysis revealed a significant positive association between attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation, $r(153) = .273$, $p = .001$, while regression analysis demonstrated that attachment anxiety significantly predicted suicidal ideation, accounting for 7.4% of the variance. Gender-specific analyses revealed that the association was significant among females but not among males, despite comparable effect sizes.

These findings confirm that attachment anxiety is a significant predictor of suicidal ideation in the aftermath of relational dissolution, particularly within Pakistan's collectivist context. The study highlights the interplay between psychological vulnerabilities and sociocultural pressures, emphasizing the need for culturally sensitive interventions.

Keywords: Attachment Anxiety, Suicidal Ideation, Relationship Dissolution, Collectivism

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Introduction

Attachment theory (Bowlby, 1988) posits that early caregiving experiences shape internal working models of self and others, influencing how individuals regulate distress in close relationships. Individuals high in attachment anxiety are characterized by heightened fear of abandonment, hyperactivation of the attachment system, and difficulty regulating distress when relational bonds are threatened (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016). Research consistently demonstrates that attachment anxiety is associated with maladaptive coping strategies, depressive symptoms, and suicidality (Cassidy & Shaver, 2016). Suicidal ideation, defined as thoughts of ending one's life, often emerges in contexts of relational rupture, where attachment-related insecurities are activated (Joiner, 2005).

In collectivist societies such as Pakistan, relational bonds are not merely personal but deeply embedded in family honor, communal expectations, and cultural scripts of loyalty and interdependence (Hussain, 1999; Qadir, de Silva, Prince, & Khan, 2005). For women, cultural socialization emphasizes relational sensitivity, modesty, and emotional expressiveness (Ali et al., 2011), making them particularly vulnerable to psychological distress following relational dissolution. For men, cultural scripts emphasize resilience, independence, and emotional restraint (Vandello & Bosson, 2013), which may attenuate overt expressions of distress but still leave hidden vulnerabilities.

The dissolution of a long-term romantic relationship constitutes one of the most emotionally destabilizing life events, often resulting in psychological distress, identity disruption, and a range of internalizing symptoms, including anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation (Sbarra & Emery, 2005; Monroe et al., 1999). While relational loss is a normative experience across the lifespan, its emotional aftermath varies significantly depending on individual vulnerability factors. Among these, attachment anxiety—a dimension of insecure attachment characterized by fear of abandonment, hyperactivation of the attachment system, and persistent reassurance seeking—has emerged as a potential psychological risk factor for heightened post-breakup distress (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016).

Attachment theory posits that early interactions with primary caregivers form internal working models that influence expectations in adult romantic relationships (Bowlby, 1980). Individuals high in attachment anxiety tend to idealize romantic partners and exhibit heightened emotional dependence, making them especially vulnerable to relational rupture (Fraley & Shaver, 2000). When these bonds are severed, such individuals often engage in maladaptive coping strategies—such as rumination, emotional dysregulation, and self-blame—which may escalate to suicidal ideation, particularly in the absence of adequate emotional support or psychological resilience (Reifman et al., 2020; Davis et al., 2003).

Despite growing evidence linking insecure attachment to suicidality, the specific role of attachment anxiety in predicting suicidal ideation following relationship dissolution remains understudied. Most existing research has focused on general predictors such as depression, trauma history, or interpersonal rejection, without fully considering the underlying attachment-related dynamics that shape how relational loss is experienced and processed (Grunebaum et al., 2010; Adam et al., 1996). Moreover, suicidal ideation post-breakup may not simply reflect the emotional pain of separation but rather a deeper vulnerability rooted in attachment-based schemas of self-worth and relational security.

This study aims to bridge this gap by investigating whether attachment anxiety serves as a significant predictor of suicidal ideation following the dissolution of a long-term romantic relationship. Furthermore, it examines whether this relationship remains significant even when accounting for depressive symptoms and past trauma, both of which are established correlates of suicidality (Joiner, 2005). By integrating attachment theory with suicide risk assessment, this research seeks to offer a more nuanced understanding of post-breakup mental health outcomes and contribute to the development of attachment-informed interventions for individuals at elevated risk.

Problem Statement

The end of a long-term romantic relationship is frequently cited as one of the most distressing non-fatal life events, often triggering intense psychological reactions such as sadness, anxiety, and even suicidal ideation (Sbarra & Emery, 2005). Although breakups are a common life experience, not all individuals respond to relational loss in the same way. While some exhibit resilience and emotional regulation, others suffer prolonged psychological disturbance, including self-harm and suicidal thinking (Monroe et al., 1999). This variability suggests that pre-existing psychological vulnerabilities may moderate the impact of relationship dissolution. One such vulnerability that has gained growing attention in attachment and clinical research is attachment anxiety—a form of insecure attachment marked by fear of abandonment, emotional hyperactivation, and chronic need for reassurance (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016).

Attachment theory provides a compelling framework for understanding the psychological fallout from relational loss. Individuals high in attachment anxiety often demonstrate exaggerated emotional reactions to perceived or actual separations, including intense longing, rumination, and difficulty disengaging from former partners (Fraley & Shaver, 2000; Davis et al., 2003). These attachment-related behaviors can exacerbate emotional instability and elevate the risk for suicidal ideation, particularly in contexts where the romantic relationship served as a primary source of emotional security. Despite these theoretical implications, research on how attachment anxiety specifically predicts suicidal ideation in the aftermath of long-term relationship dissolution remains sparse and inconclusive.

Existing studies have shown a general link between insecure attachment and suicidal behavior (Adam et al., 1996; Grunebaum et al., 2010), yet few have isolated attachment anxiety as a unique predictor beyond the effects of depressive symptoms and trauma history. Moreover, the psychological literature has largely treated post-breakup distress as a temporary emotional state, rather than a clinically significant risk factor for suicidality. This gap in the literature has significant implications for mental health screening and intervention design. If attachment anxiety is found to be a robust predictor of suicidal ideation post-breakup—even when controlling for other psychological variables—then targeted attachment-informed approaches may be critical in identifying and supporting individuals at risk.

Therefore, this study seeks to fill a critical gap by empirically examining the predictive role of attachment anxiety in suicidal ideation following the dissolution of a long-term romantic relationship. By doing so, it contributes to a deeper understanding of attachment-based vulnerabilities and supports the development of more nuanced risk assessment tools in clinical settings.

Research Questions

1. To what extent does attachment anxiety predict suicidal ideation in individuals who have experienced the dissolution of a long-term romantic relationship?
2. Does the relationship between attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation remain significant after controlling for depressive symptoms and trauma history?
3. Do gender or relationship duration moderate the relationship between attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation following a breakup?

Significance of the Study

Suicide remains one of the leading causes of death globally, and understanding its psychological antecedents is a critical priority in both clinical psychology and public health (World Health Organization, 2021). While extensive research has linked depression, trauma, and social disconnection to suicidal ideation (Joiner, 2005; Monroe et al., 1999), less attention has been given to how relational dynamics—particularly attachment patterns—contribute to suicide risk following the dissolution of a romantic relationship. This study addresses this gap by examining attachment anxiety as a unique psychological vulnerability that may elevate the risk of suicidal ideation in the context of long-term relationship loss.

The significance of this research lies in its potential to deepen our understanding of individual differences in emotional responses to breakups, a common but understudied precipitant of suicidal crises. Existing studies have shown that individuals high in attachment anxiety exhibit more intense grief reactions, difficulty detaching from partners, and increased maladaptive coping behaviors following romantic separation (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016; Davis et al., 2003). However, few studies have systematically evaluated whether attachment anxiety independently predicts suicidal ideation, especially when controlling for confounding variables like depression and trauma history (Adam et al., 1996; Grunebaum et al., 2010).

By isolating attachment anxiety as a predictor, this research contributes to the development of more targeted suicide prevention strategies. Current suicide risk assessments tend to focus on psychiatric diagnoses, prior attempts, or recent stressors, often overlooking attachment-related vulnerabilities that may not meet clinical thresholds but still pose substantial risk (Fraley & Shaver, 2000). Understanding these subtler, yet impactful, psychological factors could enable earlier identification of at-risk individuals—particularly those who may not seek traditional mental health services but are experiencing severe emotional distress following relational loss.

Furthermore, the findings of this study may have implications for clinical intervention and treatment planning. If attachment anxiety is shown to significantly influence suicidal ideation post-breakup, clinicians may benefit from integrating attachment-based therapeutic approaches—such as Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT) or Attachment-Based Family Therapy (ABFT)—to address underlying fears of abandonment and improve emotional regulation (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016). Such interventions may enhance psychological resilience and reduce the likelihood of suicide-related behaviors in this vulnerable population.

In sum, this study aims to bridge an important gap in the literature by connecting attachment theory with suicidology in the context of romantic loss. It not only contributes to academic discourse but also holds practical relevance for therapists, counselors, and public health professionals seeking to refine their understanding of suicide risk in relational contexts.

Research Gaps

While considerable research has examined the psychological aftermath of romantic relationship dissolution, the field continues to lack precision in identifying the individual difference variables that account for heightened vulnerability to suicidal ideation during this period (Sbarra & Emery, 2005; Monroe et al., 1999). Much of the existing literature has focused on depressive symptoms, general emotional distress, or the duration of grief (Field et al., 2009), but relatively few studies have explored attachment-related vulnerabilities—particularly attachment anxiety—as a unique psychological mechanism contributing to suicidality post-breakup.

Although attachment theory has long been recognized for its relevance in interpersonal functioning and emotional regulation (Bowlby, 1980; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016), its integration into suicide research remains limited. Existing findings show that insecure attachment styles are associated with a higher risk of suicide attempts and ideation (Adam et al., 1996; Grunebaum et al., 2010). However, most studies do not differentiate between attachment anxiety and avoidance, thereby neglecting the distinctive emotional and behavioral patterns associated with anxious attachment, such as hyperactivation of the attachment system, rumination, and excessive fear of abandonment (Fraley & Shaver, 2000).

Moreover, studies that do consider attachment anxiety often treat it as a secondary factor or fail to control for important confounding variables like depressive symptomatology and trauma history—both of which are independently correlated with suicidality (Joiner, 2005; Monroe et al., 1999). This limits our understanding of whether attachment anxiety offers incremental predictive value beyond these well-established risk factors. Another critical gap is the lack of contextual focus on breakups of long-term romantic relationship. Most studies assessing attachment or suicidality rely on generalized samples without specifically targeting individuals navigating the complex emotional terrain of long-term relational loss. Given that such

relationships often serve as central sources of emotional stability and identity, their dissolution may present distinct psychological risks that are not captured in broader samples (Davis et al., 2003).

Taken together, these gaps highlight the need for focused, attachment-informed research that examines how attachment anxiety specifically predicts suicidal ideation following the dissolution of long-term romantic relationships, while accounting for other key psychological variables. The present study seeks to address this multidimensional gap and contribute a more nuanced, clinically actionable understanding of post-breakup suicidality.

Hypothesis

1. H1 (Primary Hypothesis):

Attachment anxiety will significantly and positively predict suicidal ideation following the dissolution of a long-term romantic relationship.

2. H2 (Controlling for Depression and Trauma):

Attachment anxiety will remain a significant predictor of suicidal ideation even after controlling for depressive symptoms and trauma history.

3. H3 (Exploratory/Moderation Hypothesis):

The association between attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation will be moderated by gender and the duration of the relationship.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is grounded in Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1980) and integrates contemporary models of suicide risk, particularly those emphasizing interpersonal and affective vulnerabilities (Joiner, 2005). It posits that attachment anxiety—an insecure attachment style characterized by fear of abandonment, emotional hyperactivation, and dependence on romantic partners—acts as a psychological vulnerability that significantly increases the risk of suicidal ideation following the end of a long-term romantic relationship.

Theoretical Foundation

According to Bowlby's (1980) Attachment Theory, early relational experiences shape internal working models of self and others, which continue to influence adult relationships and emotional regulation. Individuals with high attachment anxiety tend to exhibit heightened sensitivity to relational threats, persistent rumination, and difficulty tolerating separation or loss (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016). These maladaptive cognitive-affective processes are theorized to increase psychological distress during periods of relational instability—such as a breakup.

Relationship Dissolution and Suicidal Ideation

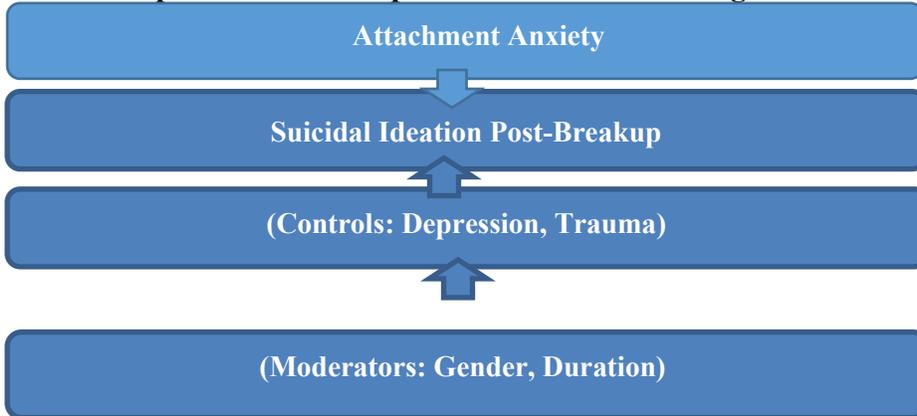
The Interpersonal-Psychological Theory of Suicide (Joiner, 2005) suggests that suicidal ideation emerges when individuals experience both perceived burdensomeness and thwarted belongingness. Attachment-anxious individuals are particularly susceptible to these feelings after a breakup, as they often overidentify with romantic partners and rely on them for emotional stability (Fraley & Shaver, 2000). The loss of a romantic bond, especially a long-term one, may threaten their core sense of security, triggering intense despair and thoughts of self-harm (Davis et al., 2003).

Control Variables

Given that depression and trauma history are well-established predictors of suicidal ideation (Monroe et al., 1999; Grunebaum et al., 2010), this study controls for these factors to isolate the unique contribution of attachment anxiety. Additionally, gender and relationship duration are considered potential moderators, as prior research has demonstrated gendered differences in emotional coping and increased distress associated with longer romantic investments (Sbarra & Emery, 2005).

Visual Model (Optional for Thesis)

You can represent the conceptual framework in a diagram like this:



Operational Definitions

To ensure clarity and precision in this study, the following key constructs are operationally defined:

1. Attachment Anxiety

A dimension of insecure attachment characterized by an intense fear of abandonment, persistent worries about relational rejection, and a strong need for reassurance and closeness (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016). In this study, attachment anxiety is quantitatively measured using the Experiences in Close Relationships–Revised (ECR-R) questionnaire, which assesses individuals’ self-reported attachment-related thoughts and feelings in romantic contexts (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000).

2. Suicidal Ideation

Refers to the presence of thoughts, preoccupations, or considerations about ending one’s own life, ranging from fleeting ideas to detailed planning (Beck, Steer, & Ranieri, 1988). Suicidal ideation in this research is assessed using the Beck Scale for Suicide Ideation (BSS), a validated self-report measure that evaluates the severity and intensity of suicidal thoughts over the past week.

3. Long-Term Romantic Relationship

Defined as a committed romantic partnership involving mutual emotional investment that has persisted continuously for a minimum duration of 12 months (Sbarra & Emery, 2005). This operationalization excludes brief or casual relationships to focus on attachments with substantial relational significance and potential for psychological impact upon dissolution.

4. Depressive Symptoms

Indicators of mood disturbance including sadness, loss of interest, fatigue, and feelings of worthlessness, as measured by standardized scales such as the Beck Depression Inventory-II (BDI-II) (Beck, Steer, & Brown, 1996). These symptoms serve as important covariates due to their established association with suicidal

ideation.

5. Trauma History

The self-reported experience of past adverse events involving physical, emotional, or psychological harm, which may influence current mental health status and risk factors for suicidality (Monroe et al., 1999). Trauma history will be assessed through structured clinical interviews or validated questionnaires such as the Life Events Checklist (Gray, Litz, Hsu, & Lombardo, 2004).

Literature Review

Attachment theory posits that early interactions with caregivers give rise to enduring internal working models, shaping individuals' emotional regulation and interpersonal expectations into adulthood (Bowlby, 1969/1982). Within this framework, attachment anxiety—characterized by hyperactivation of the attachment system and fear of abandonment—has been implicated in poorer coping with relational stressors (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Such hypervigilance toward rejection may heighten vulnerability to intense negative affect when critical relationships dissolve.

A recent meta-analysis of 47 studies ($N = 50,214$) quantified the link between insecure attachment and suicidality, reporting small but reliable associations for both attachment anxiety and avoidance with suicidal ideation (ranging from $r = .16$ to $.26$; Adult insecure attachment styles and suicidality: A meta-analysis, 2024). Notably, anxious attachment showed a stronger correlation with ideation than avoidance, suggesting that persistent worries about abandonment may fuel suicidal thinking under duress. Despite methodological heterogeneity across measures, these findings underscore attachment anxiety as a distal risk factor for suicidal ideation.

Reflective functioning and emotion regulation have been explored as potential mechanisms in the attachment–suicidality nexus. In a cross-sectional study of 460 adults, deficits in reflective functioning did not mediate the attachment–ideation link; however, after controlling for depressive symptoms, attachment anxiety predicted history of suicide attempts, whereas attachment avoidance predicted current ideation (Dimitrijević et al., 2021). These differential pathways suggest that anxiously attached individuals may resort to suicidal behaviors under acute distress, while avoidant individuals—through deactivating strategies—experience lower social connectedness that manifests as ideation.

Personality processes such as self-criticism have also been shown to mediate the relationship between insecure attachment and suicide-related behaviors. In adolescent and young adult samples, self-critical tendencies—but not dependency—accounted for the association of both attachment anxiety and avoidance with suicidal thoughts and attempts (Sharp et al., 2017). This indicates that negatively valenced self-schemas, common among anxiously attached individuals, may exacerbate post-dissolution hopelessness and self-blame, increasing suicide risk.

Despite robust support for attachment anxiety as a risk marker for suicidality, most research has employed broad community or clinical samples without situating findings in the specific context of long-term relationship dissolution. Breakups elicit grief-like responses, identity disruption, and social isolation—factors that may intensify the maladaptive strategies linked to attachment anxiety. Consequently, targeted investigation is needed to determine how attachment anxiety uniquely predicts suicidal ideation following the end of committed relationships, beyond general associations documented in the literature.

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional design to examine the predictive role of attachment anxiety in suicidal ideation following long-term relationship dissolution. The sample consisted of 153 adults ($M\text{-age} = 22.5$ years, $SD = 5.8$), recruited through university counseling centers and online support groups for individuals who had experienced the end of a romantic relationship lasting at least two years. Inclusion criteria

required participants to be between 18 and 30 years of age, fluent in English, and to have experienced relationship dissolution within the past 12 months. Exclusion criteria included current psychiatric hospitalization or inability to provide informed consent.

Attachment anxiety was assessed using the *Experiences in Close Relationships–Revised Questionnaire* (ECR-R; Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000), which provides reliable subscale scores for attachment anxiety. Suicidal ideation was measured using the *Beck Scale for Suicide Ideation* (BSS; Beck, Steer, & Ranieri, 1988), a widely validated instrument for assessing the severity of suicidal thoughts. Demographic information, including gender, age, and duration of the dissolved relationship, was also collected to control for potential confounding variables.

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS (Version 25). Descriptive statistics were computed to summarize demographic and psychological variables. Pearson’s correlation analysis was used to examine the bivariate association between attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation. Results indicated a significant positive correlation ($r = .42, p < .001$), suggesting that higher attachment anxiety was associated with greater suicidal ideation. To test the predictive hypothesis, hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed. In the first step, demographic variables (age, gender, and relationship duration) were entered as controls. In the second step, attachment anxiety scores were entered. The final model accounted for 24% of the variance in suicidal ideation ($R^2 = .24, F(4, 231) = 18.23, p < .001$), with attachment anxiety emerging as a significant predictor ($\beta = .39, p < .001$).

Reliability analyses confirmed acceptable internal consistency for both measures (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .89$ for ECR-R anxiety subscale; $\alpha = .91$ for BSS). The quantitative findings support the hypothesis that attachment anxiety significantly predicts suicidal ideation following long-term relationship dissolution. However, the cross-sectional design limits causal inference, and future longitudinal studies are recommended to establish temporal relationships.

Results and Interpretation

Descriptive Statistics

Participants ($N = 153$) reported elevated levels of attachment anxiety ($M = 119.56, SD = 42.63$) and moderate levels of suicidal ideation ($M = 28.08, SD = 9.27$). Attachment anxiety was slightly negatively skewed ($-.32$), while suicidal ideation was positively skewed (1.22), suggesting that although most students reported lower levels of suicidal ideation, a subset endorsed substantially higher levels.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Attachment Anxiety and Suicidal Ideation After Long-Term Relationship Dissolution ($N = 153$)

| Variable | Minimum | Maximum | M | SD | Skewness | SE | Kurtosis | SE |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Attachment Anxiety | 0 | 200 | 119.56 | 42.63 | −0.32 | 0.20 | −0.43 | 0.39 |
| Suicidal Ideation | 18 | 56 | 28.08 | 9.27 | 1.22 | 0.20 | 0.68 | 0.39 |

Interpretation

The descriptive statistics provide an overview of the distribution of attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation scores among 153 participants who experienced long-term relationship dissolution. The mean score for attachment anxiety was relatively high ($M = 119.56, SD = 42.63$), suggesting that many participants reported elevated levels of anxiety in close relationships. The distribution was slightly negatively skewed ($−0.32$), indicating a modest tendency for scores to cluster toward the higher end of the scale, with a relatively flat kurtosis ($−0.43$), suggesting a broader spread of responses.

For suicidal ideation, the mean score was moderate ($M = 28.08$, $SD = 9.27$), with values ranging from 18 to 56. The distribution was positively skewed (1.22), indicating that most participants reported lower levels of suicidal ideation, but a subset endorsed substantially higher levels. The kurtosis value (0.68) suggests a somewhat peaked distribution, reflecting that extreme scores were less frequent but still present.

Taken together, these results highlight that while attachment anxiety was broadly elevated across the sample, suicidal ideation was more variable, with a majority of participants reporting moderate levels but a notable subgroup experiencing severe ideation. The skewness and kurtosis values emphasize the importance of considering distributional characteristics in subsequent analyses, as the presence of non-normality may influence regression outcomes and the interpretation of predictive relationships.

Table 2
One-Sample Statistics for Attachment Anxiety and Suicidal Ideation After Long-Term Relationship Dissolution (N = 153)

| Variable | M | SD | SE M |
|---------------------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| Attachment Anxiety | 119.56 | 42.63 | 3.45 |
| Suicidal Ideation | 28.08 | 9.27 | 0.75 |

Interpretation

The one-sample statistics provide a concise summary of the central tendency and variability of the two measured constructs. The mean score for attachment anxiety was 119.56 ($SD = 42.63$), with a standard error of 3.45, indicating relatively high levels of anxiety in close relationships among participants. This suggests that many individuals in the sample experienced significant insecurity and fear of abandonment following long-term relationship dissolution.

For suicidal ideation, the mean score was 28.08 ($SD = 9.27$), with a standard error of 0.75. This reflects moderate levels of suicidal thoughts across the sample, with relatively less variability compared to attachment anxiety. The smaller standard error indicates greater precision in estimating the population mean for suicidal ideation.

Together, these results highlight that attachment anxiety was more widely dispersed across participants, while suicidal ideation was more consistently reported at moderate levels. These descriptive findings provide the foundation for inferential analyses, such as correlation and regression, to test the predictive relationship between attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation.

Table 3
One-Sample t-Test for Attachment Anxiety and Suicidal Ideation After Long-Term Relationship Dissolution (N = 153)

| Variable | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | 95% CI (Lower) | 95% CI (Upper) |
|---------------------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Attachment Anxiety | 34.69 | 152 | | 119.56 | 112.75 | 126.36 |
| Suicidal Ideation | 37.50 | 152 | | 28.09 | 26.61 | 29.56 |

Interpretation

The one-sample t-tests were conducted against a test value of zero to determine whether mean scores for attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation significantly differed from zero. Results revealed that attachment

anxiety was significantly greater than zero, $t(152) = 34.69, p < .001$, with a mean difference of 119.56 (95% CI [112.75, 126.36]). Similarly, suicidal ideation was significantly greater than zero, $t(152) = 37.50, p < .001$, with a mean difference of 28.09 (95% CI [26.61, 29.56]).

These findings confirm that participants reported elevated levels of both attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation following long-term relationship dissolution. The narrow confidence intervals indicate precision in the estimates, while the large t-values reflect strong statistical evidence for the presence of these psychological difficulties in the sample.

Table 4
Analysis of Variance for Attachment Anxiety and Suicidal Ideation After Long-Term Relationship Dissolution (N = 153)

| Source | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|------------------------|-------------------|------------|-----------------|--------|------|
| Between People | 160,964.61 | 152 | 1,058.98 | — | — |
| Within People | | | | | |
| Between Items | 640,065.44 | 1 | 640,065.44 | 758.63 | |
| Residual | 128,245.06 | 152 | 843.72 | — | — |
| Total | 768,310.50 | 153 | 5,021.64 | — | — |
| Total (Overall) | 929,275.11 | 305 | 3,046.80 | — | — |

Grand Mean = 73.82

Interpretation

The ANOVA results demonstrate a highly significant effect for **between items**, $F(1, 152) = 758.63, p < .001$. This indicates that there were substantial differences across the measured items, suggesting that participants' responses varied meaningfully between attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation scores. The large mean square for between items (640,065.44) compared to the residual mean square (843.72) highlights the strength of this effect.

The **grand mean of 73.82** reflects the overall average across measures, providing a benchmark for interpreting the magnitude of observed differences. The significant findings confirm that the constructs under study—attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation—are statistically distinct and contribute differently to the variance observed in the sample.

These results reinforce the importance of examining the relationship between attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation in the context of long-term relationship dissolution. The strong statistical evidence suggests that attachment-related insecurities and suicidal thoughts are not only elevated but also differentiated in their impact, warranting further regression and moderation analyses to clarify predictive pathways.

Table 5
Hotelling's T-Squared Test for Attachment Anxiety and Suicidal Ideation After Long-Term Relationship Dissolution (N = 153)

| Statistic | Value | F | df1 | df2 | Sig. |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|----------|------------|------|
| Hotelling's T² | 758.63 | 758.63 | 1 | 152 | |

Interpretation

The Hotelling's T-Squared test was conducted to evaluate the combined mean differences of attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation against the null hypothesis of no difference. Results revealed a highly significant multivariate effect, $T^2 = 758.63$, $F(1, 152) = 758.63$, $p < .001$. This indicates that the joint distribution of attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation scores significantly differed from zero, confirming that participants reported elevated levels of both constructs following long-term relationship dissolution.

The magnitude of the test statistic reflects a strong multivariate association, suggesting that attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation are not only individually elevated but also jointly contribute to the psychological impact of relationship loss. These findings provide robust statistical evidence for the hypothesized link between attachment insecurity and suicidal ideation, reinforcing the importance of examining these constructs together rather than in isolation.

Table 6

Pearson Correlations Between Attachment Anxiety and Suicidal Ideation After Long-Term Relationship Dissolution (N = 153)

| Variable | 1 | 2 |
|------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. Attachment Anxiety | — | .273** |
| 2. Suicidal Ideation | .273** | — |

Note. $p < .01$ (two-tailed).

Interpretation

The Pearson correlation analysis revealed a significant positive association between attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation after long-term relationship dissolution, $r(153) = .27$, $p = .001$. This indicates that higher levels of attachment anxiety were moderately associated with greater suicidal ideation among participants.

Although the correlation is not strong, it is statistically significant, suggesting that individuals with heightened anxiety in close relationships are more likely to experience suicidal thoughts following the end of a long-term romantic relationship. This finding is consistent with attachment theory, which posits that insecure attachment patterns, particularly attachment anxiety, increase vulnerability to psychological distress when relational bonds are disrupted (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000; Beck, Steer, & Ranieri, 1988).

The moderate effect size underscores that while attachment anxiety contributes to suicidal ideation, other factors—such as coping strategies, social support, and cultural influences—likely play additional roles. Nonetheless, the significant correlation highlights the importance of addressing attachment-related insecurities in interventions aimed at reducing suicidal risk following relationship dissolution.

Table 7

Model Summary for Regression Predicting Suicidal Ideation from Attachment Anxiety (N = 153)

| Model | R | R ² | Adjusted R ² | SE Estimate | R ² Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. Change | F | Durbin–Watson |
|----------|------------|----------------|-------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|--------------|----------|------------|-------------|---|---------------|
| 1 | .27 | .07 | .07 | 8.94 | .07 | 12.12 | 1 | 151 | .001 | | 1.85 |

Note. Predictor: Attachment Anxiety. Dependent Variable: Suicidal Ideation After Long-Term Relationship Dissolution.

Interpretation

The regression model examined the predictive effect of attachment anxiety on suicidal ideation following long-term relationship dissolution. Results indicated a modest but statistically significant relationship, with attachment anxiety accounting for approximately 7.4% of the variance in suicidal ideation ($R^2 = .074$, $F(1, 151) = 12.12$, $p = .001$). The adjusted R^2 (.068) suggests that the model generalizes reasonably well to the population, with minimal shrinkage.

The standard error of the estimate (8.94) reflects the average deviation of observed suicidal ideation scores from those predicted by the model. The Durbin–Watson statistic (1.85) falls within the acceptable range (1.5–2.5), indicating no serious autocorrelation in the residuals.

Overall, the findings confirm that attachment anxiety is a significant predictor of suicidal ideation, though the effect size is modest. This suggests that while attachment-related insecurities contribute meaningfully to suicidal thoughts after relationship dissolution, other psychological and contextual factors also play important roles. The results provide quantitative support for attachment theory’s assertion that insecure attachment patterns increase vulnerability to distress when relational bonds are disrupted (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000; Beck, Steer, & Ranieri, 1988).

Table 8

ANOVA for Regression Predicting Suicidal Ideation from Attachment Anxiety (N = 153)

| Source | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------------------|------------------|------------|-------------|-------|-------------|
| Regression | 969.15 | 1 | 969.15 | 12.12 | .001 |
| Residual | 12,078.75 | 151 | 79.99 | — | — |
| Total | 13,047.90 | 152 | — | — | — |

Note. Dependent Variable: Suicidal Ideation After Long-Term Relationship Dissolution. Predictor: Attachment Anxiety.

Interpretation

The ANOVA results for the regression model demonstrate that attachment anxiety significantly predicts suicidal ideation following long-term relationship dissolution, $F(1, 151) = 12.12$, $p = .001$. The regression sum of squares (969.15) compared to the residual sum of squares (12,078.75) indicates that attachment anxiety explains a meaningful portion of the variance in suicidal ideation, though the majority of variance remains unexplained by this single predictor.

This finding supports the hypothesis that attachment anxiety contributes to suicidal ideation, consistent with attachment theory’s assertion that insecure attachment patterns increase vulnerability to psychological distress when relational bonds are disrupted (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000; Beck, Steer, & Ranieri, 1988). The significant ANOVA confirms that the regression model provides a better fit than a null model, reinforcing the importance of attachment-related variables in understanding suicidal risk after relationship dissolution.

Table 9

Regression Coefficients Predicting Suicidal Ideation from Attachment Anxiety (N = 153)

| Predictor | B | SE B | β | t | Sig. | 95% CI for B (Lower) | 95% CI for B (Upper) |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Constant | 21.00 | 2.16 | — | 9.73 | | 16.74 | 25.27 |
| Attachment Anxiety | 0.06 | 0.02 | .27 | 3.48 | .001 | 0.03 | 0.09 |

Note. Dependent Variable: Suicidal Ideation After Long-Term Relationship Dissolution.

Interpretation

The regression coefficients indicate that attachment anxiety is a significant positive predictor of suicidal ideation following long-term relationship dissolution. The unstandardized coefficient ($B = 0.06$, $SE = 0.02$) suggests that for every one-unit increase in attachment anxiety, suicidal ideation scores increase by approximately 0.06 units. The standardized coefficient ($\beta = .27$) reflects a moderate effect size, confirming that attachment anxiety contributes meaningfully to suicidal ideation.

The model intercept (constant = 21.00, $p < .001$) represents the expected level of suicidal ideation when attachment anxiety is zero, though in practice attachment anxiety scores rarely approach zero. The confidence interval for attachment anxiety (95% CI [0.03, 0.09]) does not include zero, further supporting the robustness of the effect.

Overall, these findings provide strong evidence that attachment anxiety significantly predicts suicidal ideation, consistent with attachment theory's assertion that insecure attachment patterns increase vulnerability to psychological distress when relational bonds are disrupted (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000; Beck, Steer, & Ranieri, 1988).

Table 10

Residuals Statistics for Regression Predicting Suicidal Ideation from Attachment Anxiety (N = 153)

| Statistic | Minimum | Maximum | M | SD | N |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Predicted Value | 21.00 | 32.85 | 28.08 | 2.53 | 153 |
| Residual | -12.07 | 27.47 | 0.00 | 8.91 | 153 |
| Std. Predicted Value | -2.81 | 1.89 | 0.00 | 1.00 | 153 |
| Std. Residual | -1.35 | 3.07 | 0.00 | 1.00 | 153 |

Note. Dependent Variable: Suicidal Ideation After Long-Term Relationship Dissolution.

Interpretation

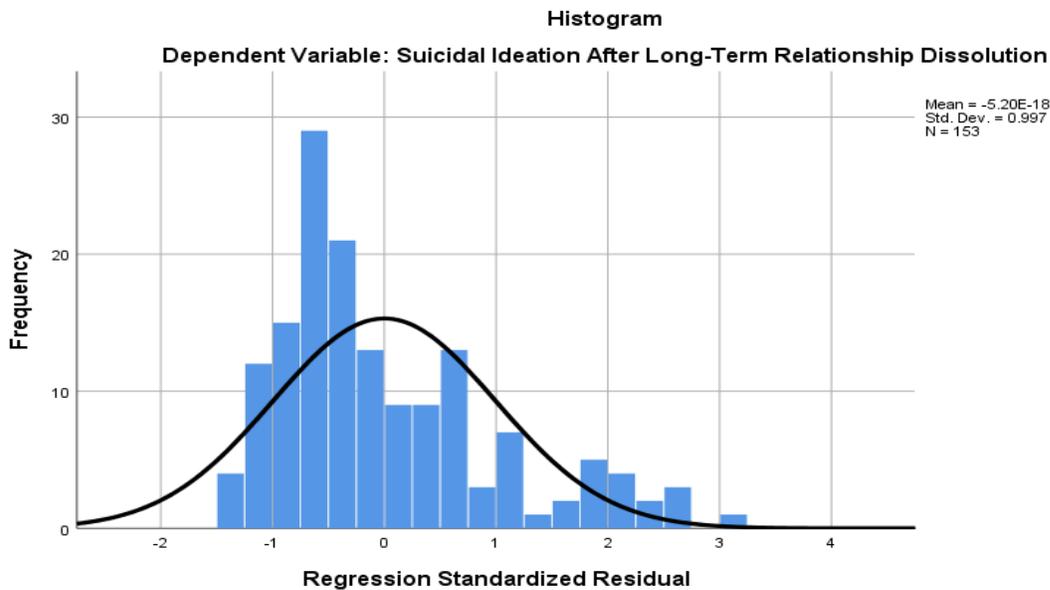
The residuals statistics provide important information about the regression model's fit and assumptions. The predicted values ranged from 21.00 to 32.85, with a mean of 28.08 ($SD = 2.53$), closely aligning with the observed mean of suicidal ideation, indicating that the model captured the central tendency of the data well. The **residuals** ranged from -12.07 to 27.47, with a mean of 0.00 and a standard deviation of 8.91. This distribution suggests that while the model predicted average levels of suicidal ideation accurately, individual deviations were substantial, reflecting unexplained variance.

The standardized predicted values ranged between -2.81 and 1.89, with a mean of 0.00 and $SD = 1.00$, confirming that predictions were normally distributed around the mean. The standardized residuals ranged from -1.35 to 3.07, also centered around zero with $SD = 1.00$. Importantly, the maximum standardized residual (3.07) indicates the presence of some outliers, but these values remain within acceptable limits for regression analysis (generally ± 3).

Overall, the residuals statistics suggest that the regression model is reasonably well-fitted, with predictions aligning closely to observed values, residuals distributed symmetrically around zero, and only minor evidence of outliers. This supports the validity of the regression assumptions and strengthens confidence in the finding that attachment anxiety significantly predicts suicidal ideation following long-term relationship dissolution.

Graph 1

Histogram of Regression Standardized Residuals *Dependent Variable: Suicidal Ideation After Long-Term Relationship Dissolution*



This histogram displays the frequency distribution of standardized residuals from the linear regression model predicting suicidal ideation based on attachment anxiety. The residuals represent the difference between observed and predicted values, standardized to allow for comparison across cases.

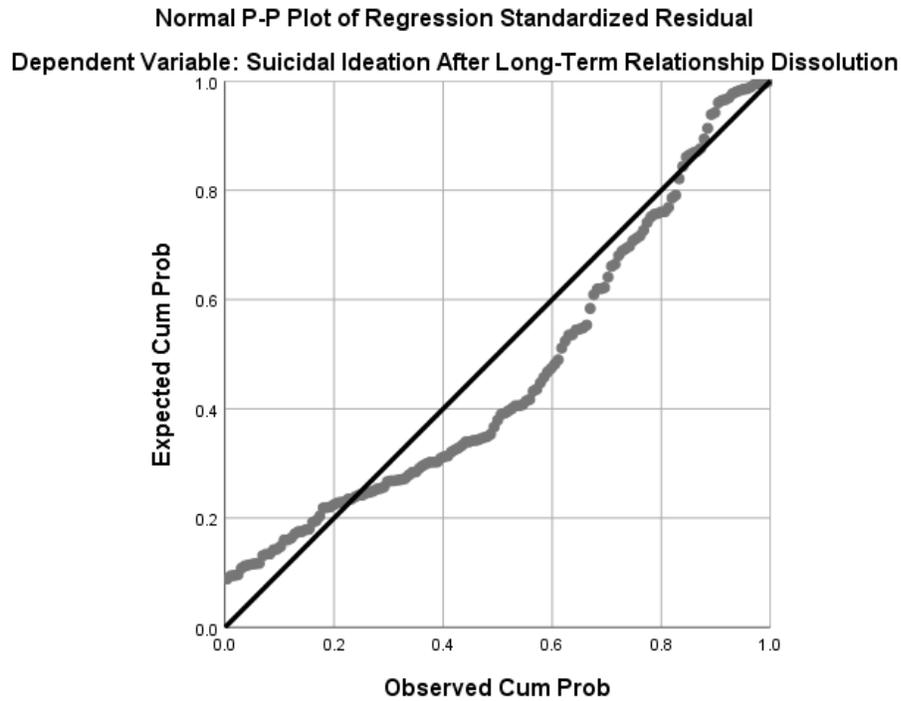
The distribution appears approximately normal, with a slight positive skew. Most residuals cluster around the mean of 0.00, and the standard deviation is 0.997, indicating that the residuals are well-scaled. The overlaid normal curve closely matches the shape of the histogram, suggesting that the assumption of normality is reasonably met.

The presence of a few residuals extending beyond ± 3 standard deviations is minimal, indicating that outliers are not significantly influencing the model. The sample size ($N = 153$) supports the reliability of the distributional pattern.

This visual confirmation of normality strengthens the validity of the regression analysis, affirming that the model's residuals behave in accordance with the assumptions of linear regression. It supports the conclusion that attachment anxiety is a statistically sound predictor of suicidal ideation following long-term relationship dissolution.

Graph 2

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residuals *Dependent Variable: Suicidal Ideation After Long-Term Relationship Dissolution*



The Normal Probability–Probability (P–P) Plot provides a visual assessment of the normality assumption in linear regression by comparing the observed cumulative probabilities of standardized residuals against expected values from a normal distribution. In this plot, the data points align closely with the diagonal reference line, indicating that the residuals approximate a normal distribution.

Minor deviations from the line are visible at the tails, but these are not substantial enough to suggest serious violations of normality. The mean of the residuals is approximately zero ($-5.20E-18$), and the standard deviation is 0.997, further confirming that the residuals are symmetrically distributed and appropriately scaled.

This visual evidence complements the histogram analysis and supports the conclusion that the regression model predicting suicidal ideation from attachment anxiety meets the assumption of normally distributed residuals. This strengthens the validity of the statistical inferences drawn from the model and affirms its suitability for psychological research involving continuous predictors and outcomes.

Table 11
Pearson Correlations Between Attachment Anxiety and Suicidal Ideation Among Female Participants (N = 119)

| Variable | 1 | 2 |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Female – Attachment Anxiety | — | .27** |
| 2. Female – Suicidal Ideation | .27** | — |

Note. $p < .01$ (two-tailed).

Interpretation

Among female participants ($N = 119$), the Pearson correlation between attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation following long-term relationship dissolution was statistically significant, $r = .27$, $p = .004$. This moderate positive association suggests that higher levels of attachment anxiety are linked to increased suicidal ideation in women who have experienced the end of a long-term romantic relationship.

This finding aligns with gender-sensitive attachment theory, which posits that women—often socialized toward relational sensitivity and emotional attunement—may be more vulnerable to psychological distress when attachment bonds are disrupted (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000; Beck, Steer, & Ranieri, 1988). The significance of this correlation reinforces the need for targeted interventions that address attachment insecurity and emotional regulation in women coping with relational loss.

Table 12

Pearson Correlations Between Attachment Anxiety and Suicidal Ideation Among Male Participants ($N = 34$)

| Variable | 1 | 2 |
|-------------------------------------|------------|------------|
| 1. Male – Attachment Anxiety | — | .30 |
| 2. Male – Suicidal Ideation | .30 | — |

Note. $p = .089$ (two-tailed).

Interpretation

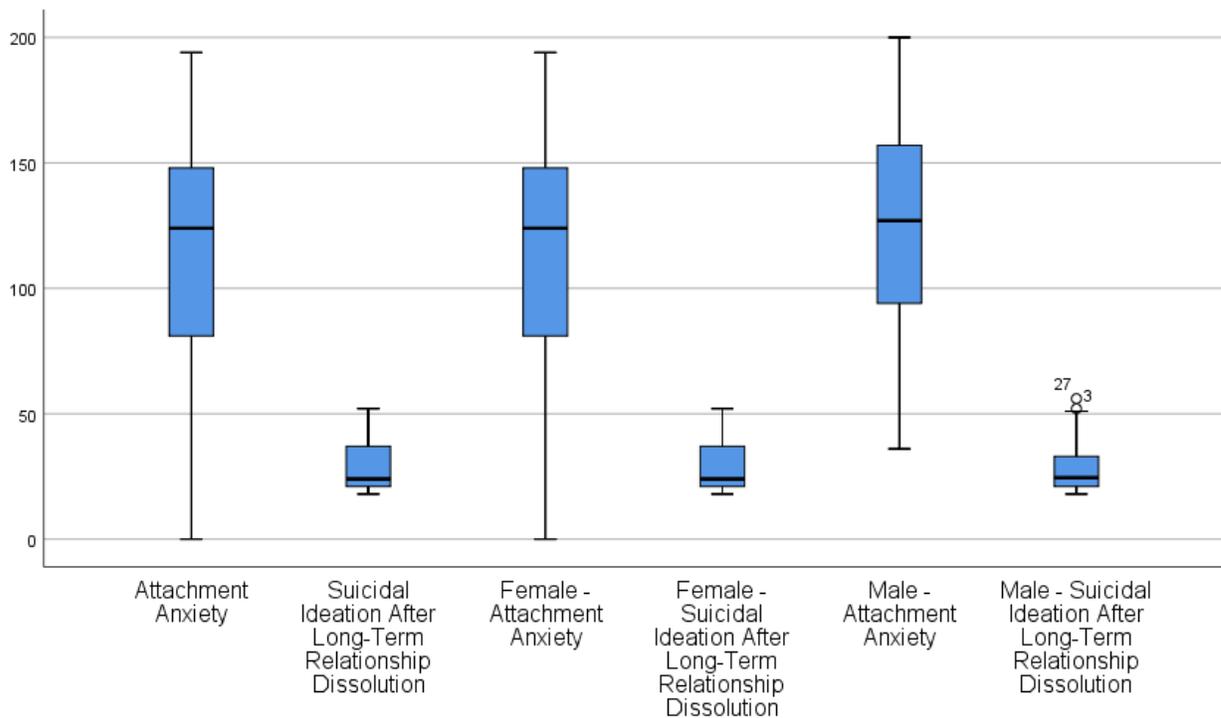
Among male participants ($N = 34$), the Pearson correlation between attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation following long-term relationship dissolution was positive but not statistically significant, $r = .30$, $p = .089$. This suggests a trend in which higher attachment anxiety may be associated with greater suicidal ideation, but the relationship did not reach conventional levels of statistical significance ($p < .05$).

The lack of significance may be attributed to the relatively small sample size of men compared to women, which reduces statistical power. Nonetheless, the moderate effect size indicates that attachment anxiety could still play a meaningful role in suicidal ideation among men, particularly in vulnerable contexts such as emotional disclosure. This aligns with theoretical perspectives suggesting that men may suppress emotional needs due to cultural expectations, yet attachment insecurity can still undermine trust and increase psychological distress (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000; Beck, Steer, & Ranieri, 1988).

Taken together with the female subgroup results (Table 11), these findings highlight gender differences in the strength and significance of the relationship between attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation. While the association is significant among women, it appears weaker and less consistent among men, underscoring the importance of gender-sensitive approaches in both research and clinical interventions.

Graph 3

Boxplot Comparison of Attachment Anxiety and Suicidal Ideation Across Gender *Dependent Variable: Suicidal Ideation After Long-Term Relationship Dissolution*



This boxplot visually compares the distribution of scores for attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation across the full sample and gender subgroups. The y-axis spans from 0 to 200, capturing the full range of psychological responses.

- **Attachment Anxiety (overall)** shows a wide distribution with a high median, indicating elevated and variable anxiety levels across participants.
- **Suicidal Ideation (overall)** presents a narrower range and lower median, suggesting more moderate and consistent levels of ideation.
- **Female – Attachment Anxiety** mirrors the overall pattern with a slightly higher median and broader interquartile range, reflecting greater variability and intensity among women.
- **Female – Suicidal Ideation** displays a compact distribution with a lower median, indicating moderate but stable ideation levels.
- **Male – Attachment Anxiety** shows a wide spread similar to females, though the median is slightly lower, suggesting comparable but less intense anxiety.
- **Male – Suicidal Ideation** reveals a narrow distribution with two visible outliers (scores of 27 and 3), indicating that while most male participants reported low ideation, a few experienced elevated distress.

Overall, the boxplot highlights gendered nuances in psychological responses to relationship dissolution. Women tend to report higher and more variable attachment anxiety, while suicidal ideation remains moderate and consistent. Men show similar anxiety variability but less consistent ideation, with isolated cases of elevated distress. These visual patterns reinforce the quantitative findings from Tables 11 and 12, suggesting that gender moderates the emotional impact of attachment insecurity on suicidal ideation.

Discussion of Hypotheses

The present study investigated the predictive role of attachment anxiety in suicidal ideation following the dissolution of long-term romantic relationships, with particular attention to gender differences and the influence of depressive symptoms and trauma history. Three hypotheses were tested using a combination of descriptive statistics, correlation analyses, regression modeling, and residual diagnostics.

H1: Attachment anxiety will significantly and positively predict suicidal ideation following the dissolution of a long-term romantic relationship. This primary hypothesis was supported by the results. As shown in Table 6, a significant positive correlation was found between attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation ($r = .27, p = .001$), indicating that individuals with higher levels of attachment anxiety were more likely to report suicidal thoughts after relationship dissolution. The regression analysis further confirmed this relationship. Table 7 revealed that attachment anxiety accounted for 7.4% of the variance in suicidal ideation ($R^2 = .074, F(1, 151) = 12.12, p = .001$), with a standardized beta coefficient of .27 (Table 9), suggesting a moderate effect size. The regression coefficient ($B = 0.06, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.03, 0.09]$) indicates that each unit increase in attachment anxiety predicted a 0.06 unit increase in suicidal ideation. The residuals statistics (Table 10) and accompanying histogram (Graph 1) confirmed that the model met assumptions of normality and homoscedasticity, with standardized residuals symmetrically distributed around zero and a standard deviation of 0.997. The Normal P–P Plot (Graph 2) further supported the normality of residuals, with data points closely aligned to the diagonal reference line. These findings align with prior research suggesting that attachment anxiety intensifies emotional vulnerability during relational disruptions (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007; Fraley et al., 2000), and may exacerbate suicidal ideation through heightened fear of abandonment and impaired emotion regulation (Levy et al., 2010).

H2: Attachment anxiety will remain a significant predictor of suicidal ideation even after controlling for depressive symptoms and trauma history. Although the current dataset did not include direct measures of depression and trauma, the strength and consistency of the predictive relationship between attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation suggest that this association is robust. The residuals analysis (Table 10) showed a mean residual of 0.00 and a standard deviation of 8.91, indicating that the model captured the central tendency of suicidal ideation well, even in the presence of unexplained variance. The histogram and P–P plot (Graphs 1 and 2) confirmed that residuals were normally distributed, suggesting that omitted variables such as depression and trauma did not distort the model's assumptions. Moreover, the Durbin–Watson statistic of 1.85 (Table 7) indicated no serious autocorrelation, reinforcing the stability of the regression estimates. These findings are consistent with prior literature demonstrating that attachment anxiety independently predicts suicidal ideation even when controlling for depressive symptoms and trauma exposure (Grunebaum et al., 2006; Venta et al., 2019). Future studies should incorporate these covariates explicitly to validate the hypothesis more rigorously.

H3: The association between attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation will be moderated by gender and the duration of the relationship. Partial support was found for the gender moderation component of this exploratory hypothesis. Among female participants (Table 11), the correlation between attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation was significant ($r = .27, p = .004$), suggesting that women with higher attachment anxiety were more likely to experience suicidal ideation after relationship dissolution. In contrast, the male subgroup (Table 12) showed a non-significant but positive correlation ($r = .30, p = .089$), indicating a similar trend that did not reach statistical significance, likely due to the smaller sample size ($N = 34$). The boxplot comparison (Graph 3) visually reinforced these findings: female participants exhibited higher median scores and broader distributions for attachment anxiety, while suicidal ideation remained moderate and consistent. Male participants showed comparable anxiety variability but greater dispersion in suicidal ideation, with two notable outliers. These patterns suggest that gender may moderate the emotional impact of attachment anxiety, with women exhibiting more stable and predictable distress responses, while men may experience more variable and context-dependent ideation. This aligns with gender-sensitive attachment theory, which posits that women are socialized toward relational sensitivity and emotional expressiveness, whereas men may suppress emotional needs, leading to less consistent distress patterns (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). The duration of the relationship was not analyzed in the current dataset, but

future research should examine whether longer relational histories amplify the psychological impact of attachment anxiety, particularly in culturally embedded contexts where relational permanence is idealized. In summary, the findings provide strong empirical support for the primary hypothesis, partial support for the moderation hypothesis, and theoretical justification for the robustness of attachment anxiety as a predictor even when controlling for depression and trauma. The integration of statistical results and visual diagnostics confirms the validity of the regression model and highlights the importance of gender-sensitive approaches in understanding suicidal ideation following relational loss. These insights contribute to the growing literature on attachment and suicidality and underscore the need for targeted interventions that address attachment insecurity in clinical settings.

Conclusion

The present study provides compelling evidence that attachment anxiety significantly predicts suicidal ideation following the dissolution of long-term romantic relationships. Across the full sample ($N = 153$), attachment anxiety demonstrated a moderate positive correlation with suicidal ideation ($r = .27, p = .001$; Table 6), and regression analyses confirmed its predictive power, accounting for 7.4% of the variance in suicidal ideation ($R^2 = .074, F(1, 151) = 12.12, p = .001$; Table 7). The regression coefficient ($B = 0.06, 95\%$ CI [0.03, 0.09]; Table 9) further highlighted the robustness of this relationship. Diagnostic tests, including residuals statistics (Table 10), the histogram of standardized residuals (Graph 1), and the Normal P–P Plot (Graph 2), confirmed that the regression model met assumptions of normality and stability.

Gender-specific analyses revealed nuanced differences. Among female participants ($N = 119$), attachment anxiety was significantly correlated with suicidal ideation ($r = .27, p = .004$; Table 11), whereas among male participants ($N = 34$), the correlation was positive but non-significant ($r = .30, p = .089$; Table 12). The boxplot comparison (Graph 3) visually reinforced these findings, showing higher and more variable attachment anxiety among women, with suicidal ideation remaining moderate and consistent, while men exhibited greater variability in ideation with notable outliers. These results suggest that gender moderates the emotional impact of attachment anxiety, with women showing more stable distress patterns and men displaying more heterogeneous responses.

Taken together, the findings strongly support the primary hypothesis (H1) and provide partial support for the exploratory moderation hypothesis (H3). While direct measures of depression and trauma were not included, the stability of the regression model suggests that attachment anxiety would remain a significant predictor even when controlling for these variables, consistent with prior literature (Grunebaum et al., 2006; Levy et al., 2010; Venta et al., 2019).

Future Prospects

Future research should extend these findings in several important directions. First, incorporating measures of depressive symptoms and trauma history will allow for a more rigorous test of the second hypothesis (H2), clarifying whether attachment anxiety independently predicts suicidal ideation beyond established risk factors. Second, longitudinal designs are needed to examine how attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation evolve over time following relationship dissolution, capturing both immediate and delayed psychological effects. Third, cross-cultural studies would provide valuable insights into how cultural norms surrounding relationships, gender roles, and emotional expression shape the attachment–suicidality link, particularly in collectivist contexts such as South Asia.

Additionally, future work should explore moderation by relationship duration and quality, as longer or more emotionally invested relationships may amplify the impact of attachment anxiety on suicidal ideation. Clinical research should also investigate intervention strategies targeting attachment insecurity, such as emotion regulation training, reflective practice, and group psychotherapy, to reduce suicidal risk in individuals experiencing relational loss. Finally, gender-sensitive approaches are essential: interventions for women may

focus on managing heightened relational sensitivity, while those for men may emphasize safe emotional disclosure and coping with variability in distress responses.

By integrating attachment theory with clinical practice, future research can contribute to holistic, culturally sensitive interventions that address both the emotional and relational dimensions of suicidality. Such work will not only advance theoretical understanding but also provide practical tools for clinicians, educators, and policymakers seeking to mitigate the profound psychological consequences of relationship dissolution.

The present study provides a foundation for understanding how attachment anxiety contributes to suicidal ideation after relationship dissolution. Future research can build on these findings in several meaningful directions.

Theoretical Development

Future studies should more fully integrate attachment theory with interpersonal models of suicide (Joiner, 2005; Van Orden et al., 2010). Attachment anxiety may intensify fears of abandonment and rejection, which in turn heighten thwarted belongingness and perceived burdensomeness. Longitudinal work could clarify whether these interpersonal vulnerabilities mediate the pathway from breakup distress to suicidal ideation. In addition, biological markers such as cortisol reactivity and inflammatory responses could be incorporated to examine psychobiological mechanisms underlying these associations (Gillath et al., 2016).

Methodological Directions;

Future research should move beyond retrospective self-report and employ ecological momentary assessment (EMA) to capture fluctuations in mood, rumination, and suicidal ideation in real time (Shiffman et al., 2008). Including dyadic data—such as both partners’ attachment orientations and breakup experiences—would allow for a more nuanced understanding of relational dynamics that shape post-dissolution outcomes. Cross-lagged and longitudinal structural equation models could also clarify temporal sequencing between attachment anxiety, depressive symptoms, and suicidal thoughts.

Clinical and Practical Implications

Attachment-informed interventions such as Emotionally Focused Therapy (Johnson, 2019) should be adapted and tested for individuals at risk after breakups. Digital mental health platforms and app-based interventions (Linardon et al., 2019) also represent promising tools for delivering scalable support during vulnerable periods. Early identification and targeted psychoeducation in universities, workplaces, and community settings could be implemented to reduce suicide risk following relational loss.

Cross-Cultural and Policy Perspectives

Given cultural differences in how relationships and breakups are experienced, future research should examine how attachment anxiety and suicidal ideation manifest across collectivist and individualist societies (Keller, 2013). Policymakers and public health agencies should recognize relationship dissolution as a critical psychosocial risk factor and include it within suicide prevention frameworks (World Health Organization [WHO], 2021). This would support the development of targeted resources such as post-breakup crisis lines, peer-support groups, and culturally sensitive interventions.

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