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Study of Correlation between Psychological Well-being and Different Styles of Attachment among Young Adults

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Abstract: ***Psychological well-being is a broad term that encompasses various aspects of one's mental and emotional health and also involves having positive relationship with others, coping well with stress and growing as a person. According to attachment theory, the emotional bonds we develop early in life influence how we connect with others later. These attachment patterns may also affect our overall mental and emotional well-being during young adulthood.***
The present study focused the relationship between psychological well-being and different Styles of Attachment among young adults like Secure Attachment, Anxious Attachment, Avoidant Attachment, a quantitative correlational design was used with a sample of 49 participants aged 18–25 years. Data were collected using two standardized tools: the State Adult Attachment Measure (SAAM) and Ryff's 18-item Psychological Well-Being Scale. The data were analyzed using SPSS to correlate the relationship between the variables. This study helps in understanding how different ways of forming relationships are connected to positive mental health in young adults.
Keywords: Psychological Well-being, Attachment Styles, Secure Attachment, Anxious Attachment, Avoidant Attachment, Young Adults, Correlation.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Psychological Wellbeing

Psychological well-being is commonly defined as a multidimensional construct that reflects optimal psychological functioning and positive evaluations of one's life, rather than the simple absence of mental disorder. Carol Ryff's framework breaks this idea down into six key areas, each showing a different side of living well.

1) Autonomy refers to being controller or boss of own life in life decisions of your ownself , staying true to your values, and not just following what others expect of you.
2) Environmental mastery is the ability to handle life effectively. People who feel this way believe they can manage their surroundings, make good use of opportunities, and create the conditions they need to thrive.
3) Personal growth is about constantly developing as a person. It's being open to new experiences, learning from them, and feeling that you are reaching your potential over time.
4) Positive relationships with others focus on the connections we have. Healthy relationships are warm, trusting, and supportive. They involve empathy, closeness, and the give-and-take that makes friendships and family bonds meaningful.
5) Purpose in life gives direction and motivation. When someone has clear goals and a sense of meaning, it organizes their actions and gives them a reason to keep moving forward, even during challenges.
6) Self-acceptance is all about finding peace within you and like yourself without being self -critic.

Hence these six areas provide a whole overview of psychological well-being, helping people not just in surviving, but actually thrive in life.

B. Attachment Styles

Attachment theory proposes that foremost first interactions with primary caregivers build internal working models of self and others, which guide affect regulation, proximity seeking, and expectations in close relationships across the lifespan.

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The four Attachment styles

1) Secure Attachment People with this style Comfortable with intimacy and Autonomy, Positive self-image, Communicates openly
2) Avoidant Attachment people with this style prefers independence, downplay emotions, has difficulty trusting.
3) Anxious Attachment people with this style fears abandonment, sensitive to partner cues, seek reassurance.
4) Disorganized Attachment people with this style fearful of intimacy, confused about relationships. This study is Correlational study: A research method that oversee at the relationship between two or more variables without changing them. It shows whether variables move hand-in -hand —like one increasing as another does—but it cannot prove that one causes the other.

II. RATIONALE

Researchers have long shown that attachment plays a big role in mental health problems. We know insecure attachment often leads to issues like anxiety, depression, or conflict in relationships. But what's been overlooked is how attachment might also shape the positive side of life—things like resilience, growth, and overall well-being. That's the gap this study is trying to fill.. Positive psychology frameworks like Ryff's six-factor model offer a strengths-based lens, yet integration with attachment theory in young adult samples is limited. This study addresses that gap by mapping specific attachment dimensions (security, anxiety, avoidance) onto multidimensional well-being, moving beyond deficit-focused research. (KMAN Publishers,).

Theoretical contribution: Bridges attachment theory with eudaimonic well-being models, testing whether secure attachment uniquely predicts all six well-being dimensions or shows domain-specific patterns (e.g., anxious attachment undermining positive relations). (ScienceDirect, n.d.).

State Adult Attachment Measure (SAAM) by Gil lath et al. (2009): Chosen for its sensitivity to current attachment states rather than trait-like patterns, allowing detection of contextual fluctuations relevant to young adults' transitional life phase. Its three clear subscales (security, anxiety, avoidance) align directly with theory and show strong psychometric properties. (Gil lath et al.).

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sagone et al. (2023): the relationship between adult attachment styles and psychological well-being among singles and individuals in stable relationships. The study concluded that people in stable relationships reported higher well-being, while insecure attachment—especially avoidant patterns and need for approval—was interconnected to lower well-being.

Riaz & Malik (2023): Explored the concept of attachment styles and mental well-being, focusing on benevolent humor as a mediator. The findings showed that insecure attachment predicted poorer well-being, but benevolent humor partially reduced this negative effect.

Hasantehrani & Moharami (2024): In the result of their study attachment styles, psychological well-being, and neuroticism among college students. The study concluded that secure attachment was associated with lower neuroticism, while insecure attachment increased neurotic traits, partly due to intolerance of uncertainty.

Vafaei (2021): studied attachment styles and therapeutic alliances among psychotherapists. The results indicated that secure attachment and higher well-being led to stronger therapeutic relationships, whereas insecure attachment was linked to weaker alliances.

Anandita & Bhambri (2024): examined the link between adult attachment styles and mental health in young adults. The study found no significant relationship, suggesting that other factors may play a stronger role in influencing mental well-being.

Fatima (2024): reviewed literature on attachment styles, perfectionism, and life satisfaction. The review concluded that secure attachment promotes higher life satisfaction, while insecure attachment is associated with perfectionism and emotional distress.

Elgendy et al. (2025): analyzed the influence of attachment styles on psychological well-being, highlighting resilience as a mediator. The study concluded that secure attachment enhances resilience and mental health, while insecure attachment increases emotional distress.

Maunder & Hunter (2022): In this study attachment styles and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings showed that secure attachment was linked to better well-being and lower distress, while insecure attachment increased vulnerability to anxiety and depression.

Agarwal & Raj (2025): investigated adult attachment dimensions and psychological well-being among young adults. The study concluded that secure attachment improved emotional stability and well-being, whereas attachment anxiety led to greater emotional distress.

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Gómez-López et al. (2020): Explored the attachment styles, existential well-being, and mental health across cultures. The study concluded that insecure attachment increased depression and anxiety, but a strong sense of meaning in life reduced these negative effects.

AIIMS Study (2024): assessed attachment styles and depression among nursing officers in India. The findings showed that secure attachment was linked to lower depression, while anxious and avoidant styles were associated with higher depressive symptoms.

Khan & Cherian (2024): In this research attachment styles and social support in relation to well-being. The study concluded that secure attachment combined with strong social support enhanced well-being, whereas insecure attachment increased emotional distress.

Nair & Bhuyan (2025): In their findings attachment patterns and happiness among young adults. The results indicated that secure attachment was positively related to happiness and life satisfaction, while insecure attachment reduced emotional fulfillment.

Singh & Kaur (2023): studied parenting styles, attachment, and loneliness in young adults. The study proved that negative parenting is responsible to insecure attachment, which in outcome increased loneliness.

Sharma & Verma (2024): Highlighted attachment styles in romantic relationships and mental well-being. The findings showed that secure attachment improved relationship satisfaction and emotional health, while insecure attachment caused stress and instability.

Patel & Mehta (2023): attachment styles and emotional stability among migrated students. The study suggested that secure attachment enhanced students adjust in proper way, while insecure attachment was leaded to stress and poor adaptation in students.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The Objective of the study was to study correlation between Psychologically Well-Being and The Different styles of Attachment among Young Adults with the Hypothesis: H_0: There will be no significant relationship between anxious attachment style and psychological well-being among young adults.

There will be no significant relationship between avoidant attachment style and psychological well-being.

There will be no significant relationship between secure attachment style and psychological well-being. Sample details are Sampling Technique: Purposive Sampling Technique, Sampling Size :49 respondents, Sampling population: **Y**oung Adults between the range of 18-25 years. The variables used were Psychologicalwell-being and Attachment Styles and the tools used were State Adult Attachment Measure (SAAM) and Psychological Well-Being Scale. Exclusion Criteria were People under Psychiatric medication, People unwilling to give Consent, Have difficulty understanding the questionnaire language, Are outside the specified age range. Inclusion Criteria were Age Criteria 18-25 yrs, Willing to Participate and Provide Informed Consent ,Be able to read and understand the language of the questionnaire, Be willing to complete the full questionnaire. Research design used was Quantitative Research Design.

A. Procedure

1) Participants were provided with an online questionnair**e** created using a digital survey platform.

2) The questionnaire consisted of three sections. The first section included demographic details such as age and gender.

3) The second and third sections consisted of two standardized psychological scales Participants were given clear instructions and were requested to respond honestly to all items. Confidentiality was maintained, and no personally identifiable information was collected.

4) Data was collected over span of few weeks, and responses were manually recorded and entered MS Excel for further statistical analysis.

5) Then the scoring was done by using SPSS to find the correlation among variables. The responses were recorded automatically and used solely for research purposes.

V. RESULT ANALYSIS

A. Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for all study variables. Among PWB subscales, Self-Acceptance yielded the highest mean score (M = 9.67, SD = 2.54), while Positive Relations with Others yielded the lowest (M = 7.45, SD = 3.44). Personal Growth demonstrated the widest observed range (3–18), suggesting considerable variability in this dimension.

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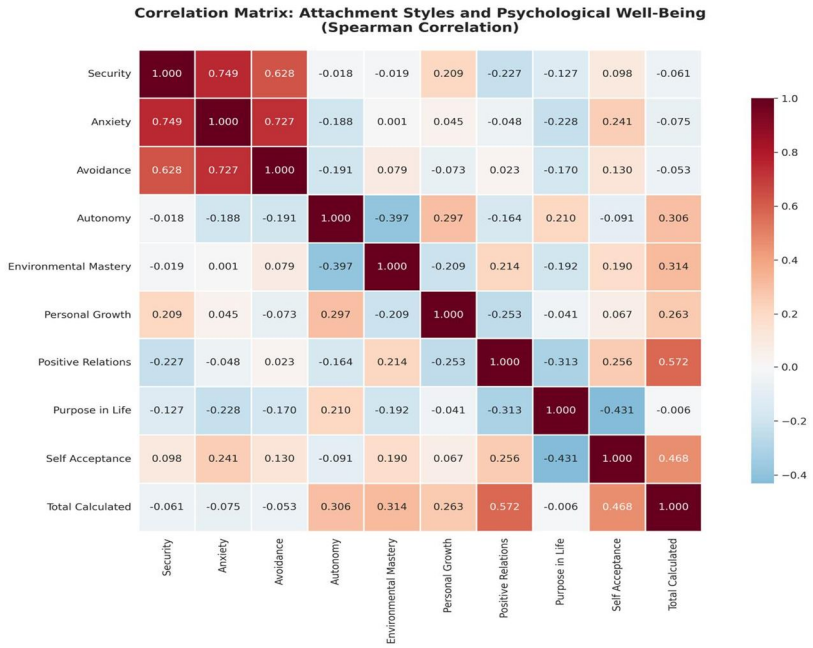


Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for All Study Variables

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Autonomy	49	8.53	2.13	5	14
Environmental Mastery	49	9.31	3.03	1	14
Personal Growth	49	8.63	2.80	3	18
Positive Relations	49	7.45	3.44	0	14
Purpose in Life	49	8.27	2.72	4	18
Self-Acceptance	49	9.67	2.54	0	14
Security	49	35.59	6.41	7	44
Anxiety	49	34.22	5.15	13	44
Avoidance	49	32.96	6.41	7	43
Total Calculated	49	51.86	5.57	35	66

Table 2
DETAILED CORREALTION: ATTACHMENT STYLES AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING
Tables 2a through 2c present dimension-level Spearman correlations for each attachment style.
Table 2a Spearman Correlations: Security Attachment and PWB Dimensions

PWB Dimension	r	p-value	Sig
Personal Growth	0.209	0.1489	ns
Self- Acceptance	0.098	0.5018	ns
Autonomy	-0.018	0.9017	ns
Purpose in Life	-0.127	0.3827	ns
Environmental Mastery	-0.019	0.8950	ns
Positive Relations	-0.227	0.1160	ns

Note. No correlations reached statistical significance (all p > .05). ns = not significant.

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Among security attachment correlations, the highest magnitude was observed for Positive Relations (ρ = −0.227, p = .116) and Personal Growth (ρ = +0.209, p = .149), both of which approached but did not reach conventional significance thresholds. The negative direction for Positive Relations is particularly noteworthy given that secure attachment is theoretically associated with more satisfying interpersonal relationships; this unexpected direction may reflect sampling variability or measurement artifacts.

Table 2b
Spearman Correlations: Anxiety Attachment and PWB Dimensions

PWB Dimension	r	p-value	Sig.
Autonomy	-0.188	0.1960	ns
Self -Acceptance	0.241	0.0948	ns
Personal Growth	0.045	0.7612	ns
Positive Relations	0.048	0.7458	ns
Environmental Mastery	0.001	0.9919	ns
Self -Acceptance	0.241	*0.0948*	ns

Note. No correlations reached statistical significance (all p > .05). ns = not significant.

Anxiety attachment demonstrated the widest range of correlation magnitudes across PWB dimensions. The strongest correlations emerged for Self-Acceptance (ρ = +0.241, p = .095) and Purpose in Life (ρ = −0.228, p = .115), with both approaching significance at the trend level (p < .10). The positive association between anxiety and self-acceptance may appear counterintuitive; however, it could reflect a pattern in which anxiously attached individuals heightened self-monitoring paradoxically yields greater self-awareness. Environmental Mastery showed a near-zero correlation (ρ = +0.001, p = .992).

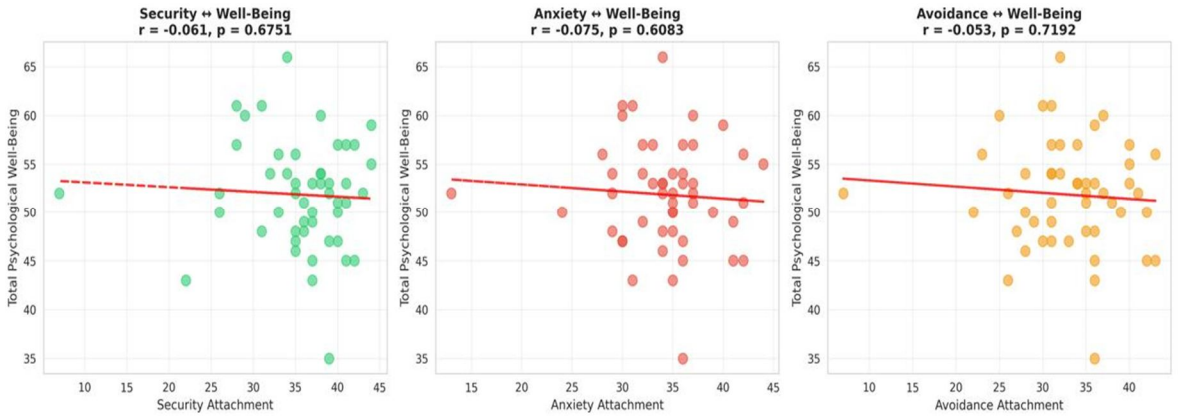
Table 2c
Spearman Correlations: Avoidance Attachment and PWB Dimensions

PWB Dimension	r	p-value	Sig
Purpose in Life	-0.170	0.2416	ns
Environmental Mastery	0.079	0.5874	ns
Personal Growth	-0.073	0.6205	ns
Positive Relations	0.023	0.8728	ns
Autonomy	-0.191	0.1895	ns
Self -Acceptance	0.130	0.3716	ns

Note. No correlations reached statistical significance (all p > .05). ns = not significant.

Avoidance attachment yielded consistently small-to-negligible correlations across all PWB dimensions. The strongest associations were observed for Autonomy (ρ = −0.191, p = .190) and Purpose in Life (ρ = −0.170, p = .242). The negative direction for Autonomy may be theoretically meaningful, as avoidant individuals' suppression of relational needs could interfere with the development of genuine self-direction.

Summaries of Hypothesis's Testing Results



Hypothesis	r- value	p-value	Result
H1: Security	-0.061	0.6751	Not Rejected
H2: Anxiety	-0.075	0.6083	Not Rejected
H3: Avoidance	-0.053	0.7192	Not Rejected

VI. DISCUSSION

Contrary to theoretical expectations derived from attachment theory and prior empirical literature, none of the three attachment orientations—Security, Anxiety, or Avoidance—demonstrated a statistically significant correlation with total PWB or with any individual PWB dimension in the present sample.

Several methodological factors may account for the absence of significant effects. First, the relatively modest sample size (N = 49) limits statistical power to detect small effect sizes; power analyses suggest that detecting a small Spearman correlation ($\rho \approx .20$) with 80% power at $\alpha = .05$ would require approximately N = 191 participants. Second, restriction of range in either the PWB or attachment scores could attenuate true correlations. Third, the sample composition (young adults) may reflect a developmental period characterized by attachment system reorganization, which could introduce measurement inconsistency.

Theoretically, the trend-level associations observed for Self-Acceptance with Anxiety attachment ($\rho = +0.241$, $p = .095$) and Purpose in Life with Anxiety ($\rho = -0.228$, $p = .115$) merit attention in future, adequately powered replications. The negative associations between avoidance and autonomy, and between security and positive relations, also present theoretically interesting patterns deserving further exploration.

Future research should employ larger, more diverse samples, and may benefit from examining moderating variables such as relationship status, trauma history, or cultural background that may mediate the attachment–well-being relationship.

VII. CONCLUSION

Based on the statistical analysis of 49 participants Spearman correlation analyses were used to study the relationship between attachment styles (security, anxiety, and avoidance) and whole psychological well-being. The results indicated that there were no statistically significant correlations between any of the attachment styles and psychological well-being at the significance level of $\alpha = .05$. Specifically, the correlation between secure attachment and psychological well-being was not significant, $r = -.061$, $p = .675$. Similarly, anxious attachment was not significantly related to psychological well-being, $r = -.075$, $p = .608$. In addition, avoidant attachment showed no significant correlation with psychological well-being, $r = -.053$, $p = .719$. As all p-values were greater than .05, the null hypotheses for all three attachment styles were retained. These findings suggest that, within the present sample, attachment styles (secure, anxious, and avoidant) do not significantly predict levels of psychological well-being. All three null hypotheses were accepted. This suggests that in this sample, attachment styles do not significantly predict psychological well-being scores.

VIII. LIMITATIONS

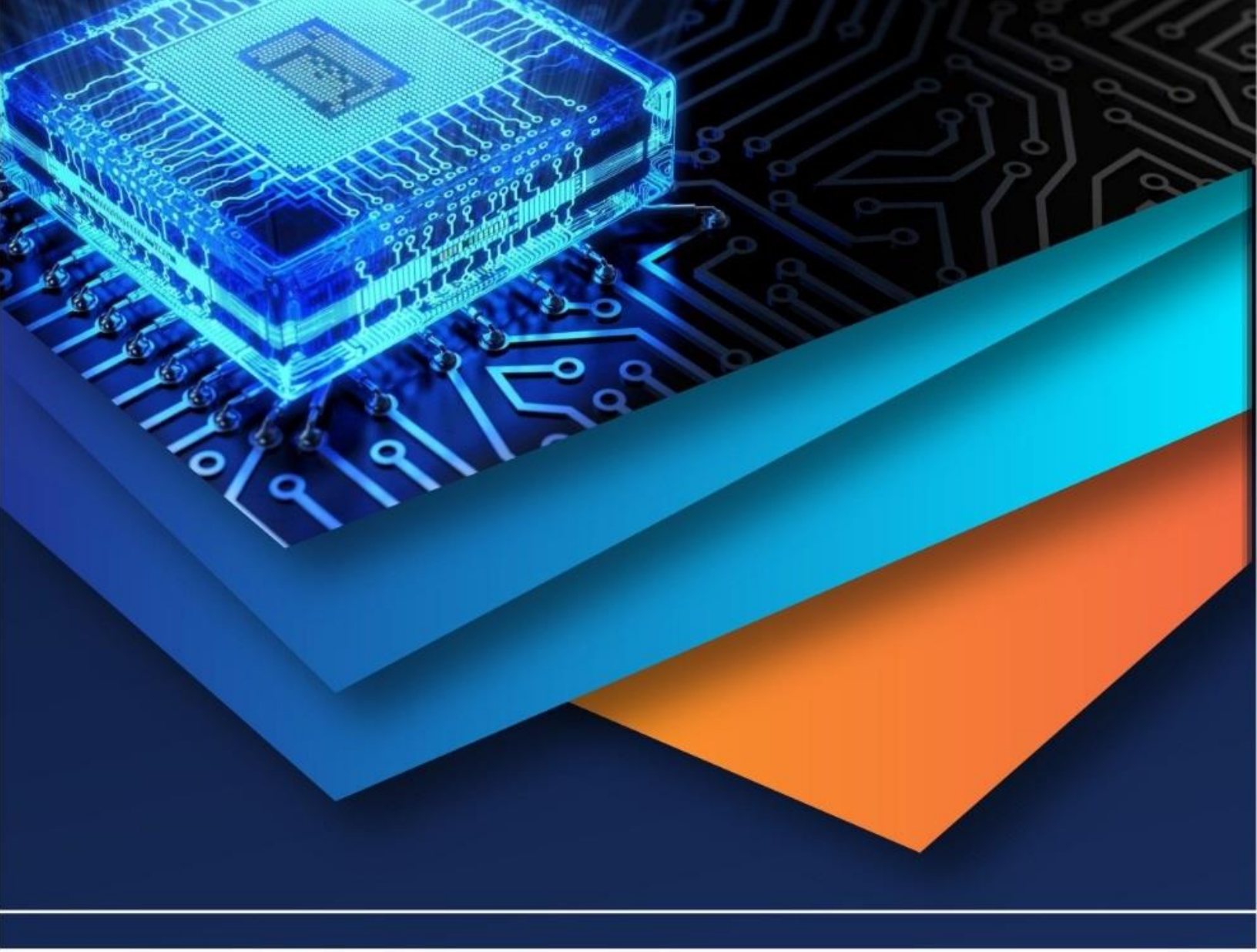
1) Sample size been collected: N = 49 (small sample may limit statistical power)
2) Self-report measures method: Subject to response bias
3) Sampling method: Results may not generalize to broader population of the sample

IX. FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

Future research should use larger sample sizes
Consider longitudinal designs to examine causal relationships
Include additional variables (e.g., social support, life events)
Use diverse sampling methods to improve generalizability

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