

EVOLUTION OF ATTACHMENT THEORY: FROM INFANT PSYCHOLOGY TO ORGANIZATIONAL AND ECONOMIC PSYCHOLOGY. GLOBAL APPROACHES

ЕВОЛЮЦІЯ ТЕОРІЇ ПРИХИЛЬНОСТІ: ВІД ПСИХОЛОГІЇ НЕМОВЛЯТ ДО ОРГАНІЗАЦІЙНОЇ ТА ЕКОНОМІЧНОЇ ПСИХОЛОГІЇ. ГЛОБАЛЬНІ ПІДХОДИ

The continuous development of science, technology, and, accordingly, new aspects of interpersonal relations, not only of the human-person type, but also of the human-organization type, are the focus of this research paper. We concentrated on the genesis of the concept of attachment. Initially, we examined the root causes, origins, and first studies of this phenomenon. The article analyzed the works of John Bowlby and Marie Ainsworth, who were among the first to study attachment. John Bowlby linked attachment to a long-term emotional connection. Marie Ainsworth was the first to classify and identify four main types of attachment: secure, avoidant, anxious-ambivalent, and disorganized. These two founders primarily worked with infant psychology. In our research, we aimed to analyze the entire development of knowledge about the phenomenon of attachment. The first prominent representatives of this field of research were K. Bartholomew and L. Horowitz. They adapted the attachment styles for adults into secure, dismissive-avoidant, preoccupied, and fearful-avoidant. Their adaptation remains largely unchanged and is used in various fields of psychology. The article emphasizes that researchers have not yet concluded whether attachment is an innate or acquired trait. The paper also analyzes the first attempts and further development of attachment research in the context of organizational psychology and personnel management. C. Barnard was one of the first in this scientific field, equating employee attachment with recognizing the authority of the leader. Later, research psychologists proved that attachment to a workgroup affects group results, and, in turn, attachment to an organization directly correlates with results at the organizational level. The next stage in studying attachment expanded the object beyond intra-organizational boundaries, proving the direct dependence of students' attachment to their educational institution on their academic performance. The article considers the works of scholars specializing mainly in marketing, such as A. Ahmadi and A. Ataei, who analyzed the relationship between emotional attachment and brand reputation. Recent researches on attachment examine its manifestations and patterns in the metaverse.

Key words: attachment, loyalty, commitment, infant development, organizational attachment, consumer attachment.

Невпинний розвиток науки, технологій, а відповідно і нових аспектів міжособистісних відносин не лише типу людина-людина, але і людина-організація. У цій своїй науко-

вій роботі зосередилися на вивченні генези поняття прихильності. Перш за все ми розглянули першопричини, витoki і перші дослідження такого феномену. У статті було проаналізовано роботи Джона Боулбі, Марі Ейнсворт, котрі одні з перших поставили перед собою такий предмет дослідження, як прихильність. Саме Джон Боулбі пов'язав прихильність з довготривалим емоційним зв'язком. Марі Ейнсворт вперше здійснила класифікацію і виділила чотири основні типи прихильності: безпечна, уникаюча, тривожно-амбівалентна та дезорганізована. Двоє засновників працювали перш за все з психологією немовлят. У нашому дослідженні ми поставили собі за мету проаналізувати весь шлях розвитку знань про феномен прихильності. І першими яскравими представниками цього напрямку науковців стали К. Бартоум'ю та Л. Хоровіц. Автори адаптували стилі прихильності для дорослих: безпечний, зневажливо-уникаючий, заклопотаний та стиль страху і уникнення. До сьогодні проведена ними адаптація залишилася майже без змін і застосовується у різних галузях психології. У статті наголошується що дослідники на даному етапі вивчення прихильності ще не дійшли висновку чи є вона вродженою чи набутою рисою. Проаналізовано перші спроби і подальший розвиток досліджень прихильності у контексті організаційної психології і менеджменту персоналу. Одним з перших в цій науковій площині був Ч. Барнард, котрий прихильність працівників фактично прирівнює до визнання авторитету керівника. Пізніше психологи-дослідники довели, що прихильність до робочої групи до впливає на результати групові результати, а, в свою чергу, прихильність до організації прямо корелює із результатами на організаційному рівні. Наступним етапом вивчення феномену прихильності стало розширення об'єкта за внутрішньоорганізаційні межі, а саме доведено пряму залежність прихильності студентів до навчального закладу і їх успішності. Розглянуто роботи науковців, котрі спеціалізуються більшою мірою на маркетингу. Серед них А. Ахмаді та А. Атаєї, котрі аналізували зв'язок емоційної прив'язаності з репутацією бренду. Останні дослідження прихильності вивчають її прояви і закономірності у мета-всесвіті.

Ключові слова: прихильність, лояльність, відданість, розвиток дитини, прихильність до організації, прихильність споживачів.

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Introduction. Increased technological sophistication in production and deeper integration of information technology into daily life have become the norm. The service sector's development is increasingly personalized, with services becoming more individualized. The competition for customers now extends beyond providing a well-made product or

service. Organizations are no longer just offering services or selling products but are genuinely taking care of their customers. The competition is for the customer attachment rather than just for a purchase. The purpose of this paper is to trace the genesis of the concept of attachment from the psychology of infant development to its organizational and economic aspects. We aim to

accumulate, systematize, and analyze theoretical and practical scientific achievements in the field.

Outline of the Main Material: The study of the attachment phenomenon began with the psychology of infants and their development. Over time, this research expanded and was adapted for adults. Consequently, attachment theory and its concepts were integrated into various fields of psychology, including organizational and economic psychology. Eventually, attachment theory evolved concurrently in all these areas.

Attachment Theory in Infant Development and Adult Relationships. Attachment is primarily a deep and lasting emotional bond [9]. The impetus for developing the concept of "attachment" was given by John Bowlby, a British psychologist, psychiatrist, and psychoanalyst. Bowlby studied the phenomenon of attachment between children and parents, changing the way scientists think about mother-child bonds, their formation, and breakdown due to separation or loss. He presented his ideas in his trilogy of fundamental scientific works, "Attachment and Loss," where he essentially founded attachment theory. His work significantly advanced scientific understanding of infant development and the formation of emotional ties between children and their caregivers. Bowlby's ideas have influenced childcare practices, highlighting the need for stable and responsive relationships between children and their caregivers.

Mary Ainsworth, an American-Canadian researcher, further developed Bowlby's theory. Ainsworth created a methodology to empirically confirm Bowlby's theoretical achievements and expanded the theoretical framework of the concept of "attachment." She contributed to the development of the concept of the attachment figure, a reliable base from which an infant can explore the world. Ainsworth also introduced the concept of a mother's sensitivity to a child's signals and its role in forming attachment patterns between infant and mother [2].

In her work "Patterns of Attachment: A Psychological Study of the Strange Situation," Mary Ainsworth, alongside her colleagues, identified and described four types of attachment, making a significant contribution to the field of attachment psychology [3]:

- Secure Attachment: Children with this type of attachment are confident that their parents (or guardians) will support them.
- Avoidant Attachment: Children with this type of attachment are indifferent to the presence or absence of their parents and do not become anxious when separated from them.
- Anxious-Ambivalent Attachment: Children with this attachment type tend to show severe anxiety when separated from their parents and have difficulty calming down even after their return.

- Disorganized Attachment: Children with this type of attachment display inconsistent and contradictory behaviors in response to separation or reunification with their parents.

Thus, John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth equally contributed to the creation of one of the first attachment theories [4].

Further research on attachment expanded beyond child-rearing and development, extending into social relationships. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) [7] modified Ainsworth's types of attachment and identified four attachment styles based on two dimensions: self-perception and perception of others. These four styles are discussed below:

The first is the Secure Attachment style, characterized by a positive self-perception and a high degree of trust in others. Individuals with this attachment style are capable of open communication and emotional intimacy, typically having healthy relationships. They usually possess a high level of trust in others and self-respect, feeling comfortable both in relationships and alone.

The second is the Dismissive-Avoidant Attachment style, characterized by a positive self-perception but a negative perception of others. Individuals with this style have high self-esteem but tend to avoid emotional closeness with others due to distrust. They strive for independence and self-reliance.

The third is the Preoccupied Attachment style, where the perception of others is positive, but the perception of oneself is negative. These individuals are often anxious, with low self-esteem, but they highly value their partners in relationships. They can be somewhat dependent and obsessive, constantly seeking approval from others.

The fourth is the Fearful-Avoidant Attachment style, involving negative orientations in both dimensions. These individuals fear betrayal and rejection in relationships, leading them to avoid intimacy. They are distrustful of others and insecure about themselves.

The theory of attachment in the context of family relationships was further developed by L. Guerrero (1996) [17], who demonstrated the relationship between attachment styles and behavior in romantic relationships. Her findings are particularly valuable in understanding emotional and communication aspects. L. Guerrero explored how different attachment styles affect intimacy and non-verbal involvement in romantic relationships. Her study supports K. Bartholomew and L. Horowitz's model of four attachment categories, showing that each attachment style is associated with specific behavioral patterns.

Mario Mikulincer and Phillip R. Shaver (2007) [25] expanded and refined attachment

theory in their work, "Attachment in Adulthood: Structure, Dynamics, and Change." They explored how different attachment styles impact behavioral strategies, interpersonal relationships, and emotional regulation in adults. Their research demonstrated that attachment styles are not fixed but can evolve over time due to various circumstances or therapeutic interventions.

Some researchers, like C. Hesse and S. Trask (2014) [19], propose that attachment may be an innate trait, which they term the "Affection Trait." This refers to a natural inclination to both express and receive love and affection. Hesse and Trask investigated differences in the intensity of this trait among groups. However, J. Jones et al. (2018) [21] reached different conclusions, suggesting that while attachment styles tend to remain stable over shorter periods, they can change over the long term depending on life experiences and personal growth.

For instance, Z. Tepeli Temiz (2018) [37] examined the links between attachment styles and various psychological factors, such as life satisfaction, alexithymia, and psychological resilience. Temiz found that individuals with secure attachment styles generally have higher self-esteem, which positively influences their adaptability and resilience. In contrast, insecure attachment styles – such as dismissive-avoidant, preoccupied, and fearful-avoidant – are associated with lower self-esteem and can lead to higher levels of alexithymia and decreased life satisfaction.

Organizational and economic aspects of attachment theory. Attachment as an organizational phenomenon has been explored for a long time, though often in management contexts without explicitly using the term "attachment." One of the earliest contributions was by C. I. Barnard (1938) [6] in his work *The Functions of the Executive*, where he analyzed attachment in terms of accepting authority and following orders. Chris Argyris (1957) [5] also addressed related concepts, arguing that psychological security and openness are crucial in the workplace and foster positive employee behavior. Without working directly with the phenomenon of commitment, Lyndon Porter and Edward Lawler (1968) [27] demonstrated that employee satisfaction and expectations regarding rewards have a direct impact on productivity and motivation.

By the 1990s, researchers began focusing more explicitly on the concept of commitment in the employee-organization relationship. A significant advancement came from John Meyer and Natalie Allen in their 1991 work [23]. They developed a theory identifying three components of commitment: Affective Commitment, Continuance Commitment, and Normative Commitment. While this theory is closely related

to attachment, further research is needed to explore these components in detail.

Later, psychologists started to directly apply their understanding of attachment and its impact on interpersonal relationships to organizational contexts. In 2005, M. Riketta and R. Van Dick [33] conducted a meta-analysis of the previous scientific researches and concluded that attachment to a work group tends to be stronger than attachment to the organization itself. They found that attachment to a work group influences group performance, while attachment to the organization affects organizational-level outcomes.

The study by M. Somers (2010) [36], titled "Patterns of Attachment to Organizations: Attachment Profiles and Work Outcomes," is particularly noteworthy as it links attachment and commitment. Somers examined attachment profiles among healthcare professionals. The results aligned with previous research, showing that normative and long-term commitment strengthen affective commitment. The study also noted that employees less involved in the organization's social and professional life were more likely to resign.

D. Richards and A. Schat (2011) [32] investigated how attachment in adults relates to personality traits like affectivity and the Big Five. Their study concluded that employees' emotional reactions and behaviors are linked to their attachment styles. It was found that people with different attachment styles use various approaches to manage interpersonal relationships, stress, and conflict.

Psychologists have also extended the concept of attachment beyond intra-organizational relationships. For example, L. Holt and J. Fifer (2016) [20] examined students' attachment to their educational institutions, finding that the attachment style of mentors plays a significant role in student retention. Additionally, attachment to higher education institutions impacts students' academic performance [35]. These insights help us understand how attachment can influence the relationship between customers and the organizations they interact with, as the student-institution relationship parallels the customer-organization dynamic. However, the existing knowledge on customer relationships with organizations (and possibly brands) is often fragmented and lacks a unified framework.

Researchers like F. Reichheld [31], P. Kotler [22], D. A. Norman [26] and others have contributed to the study of consumer attachment and its formation mechanisms. Their focus is typically on loyalty, emotional attachment, customer satisfaction, and the frequency of repeat purchases. Reichheld developed the Net Promoter Score, a key tool for measuring customer satisfaction and loyalty. D. A. Norman

[26] has explored emotional design, analyzing how emotions influence consumers' perceptions of products and their preferences. G. Zaltman [38, 39] has also focused on emotions and their impact on consumer behavior. An intriguing aspect of his research is the study of how the unconscious influences consumer choice.

The study of attachment is highly relevant for marketers today. For instance, A. Ahmadi and A. Ataei (2024) [1] confirmed a link between emotional attachment and brand advocacy and reputation. Expanding the possibilities of the virtual world presents a new frontier for marketers. Finding effective ways to reach customers in virtual environments has become both a scientific challenge and a practical necessity. Recent research in this area emphasizes that social presence, time spent, the number of like-minded individuals in the metaverse, and commitment to it contribute to reuse among G. Generation [16].

Conclusions. In summary, we may assert that attachment theory has undergone four main stages of development:

Inception: Attachment theory, originally initiated by John Bowlby and expanded by Mary Ainsworth, remains one of the most influential concepts in infant development psychology. Key achievements from this stage include the identification of different attachment styles: secure, avoidant, anxious-ambivalent, and disorganized. Subsequent empirical research has proven how these styles influence infant development and their ability to form relationships and maintain emotional well-being.

Adult Attachment: The theory's scope expanded to include adult relationships, with significant contributions from researchers such as K. Bartholomew, L. Horowitz, M. Mikulincer, and Shaver. They explored how adult attachment styles affect interpersonal romantic relationships, behavioral strategies, and emotional regulation.

Intra-Organizational: The next stage in the development of attachment theory involved applying it to the study of interpersonal relationships, both among employees and between employees and the organization. Studies in this area have shown a direct link between employees' attachment to their work groups and group performance. The same holds true for the organization itself: the more committed employees are to the organization, the better the overall results at the organizational level.

External Organizational: Today, the study of attachment extends beyond internal organizational processes and employee relations. Research now focuses on understanding how customers' attachment to organizations – through the services and products they consume – affects their loyalty and engagement. Therefore, future

research should focus on validating attachment styles in the context of economic interpersonal relationships and client-organization interactions.

Thus, the study of the attachment phenomenon and the development of attachment theory remains relevant and opens up new perspectives for researching human behavior, particularly in relation to consumers of products and services.

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