

Original research

# The relationship of parental bonding in the developmental period with grandiose and vulnerable narcissism: the mediating role of attachment anxiety

Saeid Shahhosseini Tazik<sup>\\*\*</sup>, Changiz Rahimi Taqanaki<sup>\\*\*</sup>, Noorullah Mohhammadi<sup>\\*\*</sup>, Abdolaziz Aflakseir<sup>\\*\*</sup>

#### **Abstract**

**Introduction**: Narcissistic personality disorder is one of the most severe personality disorders that have a significant impact on interpersonal relationships, and it is very important to identify the factors that shape it. The aim of the present study was to determine the fit of the structural pattern of parental bonding in the developmental period and pathological narcissistic phenotypes with the mediating role of attachment anxiety.

**Research method:** The descriptive research method was correlation type. The present research population was all the students of State universities of Mashhad in the academic year of 1402-1403, of which 345 people were selected by Cluster sampling and available sampling method. Then they completed the pathological narcissism inventory (PNI), parental bonding scale (PNS) and close relationship experience scale (CREQ).

**Results**: The findings showed that attachment anxiety has a positive relationship between attachment parenting in the developmental period and vulnerable narcissism ( $\beta$ =0.247; P=0.001) and adult narcissism positively ( $\beta$ =0.219; P=0.0001) mediates.

**Conclusion:** According to these results, it can be said that if the quality and quantity of parental care and supervision is not such as to create security and peace for the child, trauma and attachment anxiety will be created in him, and he will use behaviors to protect and care for himself. Pathological narcissism takes shelter; these results show the importance of healthy care in the mental health of people, which requires necessary training for parents in this field.

**Keywords**: grandiose narcissism, parental bonding, attachment anxiety, vulnerable narcissism

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- '- ( **corresponding author**), PhD candidate in clinical psychology, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Shiraz University, Iran, <a href="mailto:s.shahhosseini.psy@gmail.com">s.shahhosseini.psy@gmail.com</a> tell:09156839138
- <sup>r</sup> Professor, Department of Clinical Psychology, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Shiraz University, Iran, <a href="mailto:crahimi@hotmail.com">crahimi@hotmail.com</a>
- <sup>r</sup> Professor, Department of Clinical Psychology, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Shiraz University, Iran, nmohamma1di@rose.shirazu.ac.ir
- <sup>†</sup> Professor, Department of Clinical Psychology, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Shiraz University, Iran, <a href="mailto:aaflakseir@shirazu.ac.ir">aaflakseir@shirazu.ac.ir</a>

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#### **Introduction:**

The growth period due to the attachment that the child establishes with his parents Slowness is one of the most important periods of every person's life, because the cornerstone of his personality and health is laid in this period to be(1). One of the basic injuries that has its roots in the growth period Gered, the damage of the narcissistic personality (2).

Clinically, narcissism is defined as a style of self-centeredness, selfishness, arrogance, and lack of empathy that begins in early adulthood and manifests itself in various areas of life.(3). Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5 (DSM-5), to narcissism from a pathological perspective without considering its healthy evolutionary processes Its prevalence rate is 17% in the clinical population and 6.2% in the general population slow(4), while the theory psychoanalytic such as theory Freud's(5), the Kohut (6) and Kernberg(7) They believe that some manifestations of narcissism are part of normal psychological development. Theory Other researchers place narcissism along a continuum It starts from healthy function and ends with impaired function to be(8) Another group considers healthy and pathological narcissism as two completely distinct aspects of personality Don't think that it represents the organization Dehi is compatible and incompatible personality(9). This group identifies two phenotypes of pathological narcissism They are my Grandiose narcissist and vulnerable narcissist(10).

Narcissistic and overvalued magnanimous images Exaggerated and fascinated by ideas Al own are and strategy incompatible Such as exploitation of others, lack of empathy, intense jealousy, aggression and display for self-protection exaggerated to it works brand. In contrast to the narcissist Fragile people have a weak self-image and suffer from characteristics such as feelings of shame, emptiness, helplessness, and hypersensitivity to rejection and criticism. For this reason, the brand usually withdraws from social relations do(11). The type of communication with parents and the individual's perception of this communication during the growth period, which is referred to as parental bonding It is one of the most effective environmental factors in the growth and cognitive development of a child(12).

Parental bonding It refers to a person's perception of the quality and quantity of care and supervision provided by parents(13). In creating and determining the quality of this emotional bond, the two issues of mother's accessibility and responsiveness play a unique and unique role(14). According to Fonagy and Target, if the relationship between the child and the caregiver is not warm and appropriate, the capacity of visualization will not develop well in him. and his mentalization will fail As a result, pathological narcissism is formed in him take(15). Found It has also been shown experimentally There are children who have self-esteem in the family Ignore them Be more likely to behave arrogantly in the future It shows the difference give(16). One of the important topics in child-parent relationship is attachment style and injury it is caused by it as a transformative factor in the tendency Personality and shape Characterization works slow.

Bartholomew(17) Attachment is defined based on two main aspects of anxiety and avoidance slow People with secure attachment (low anxiety, low avoidance) have(18) and people with insecure attachment who experience high anxiety based on the intensity of avoidance, they include two anxiety groups (high anxiety, low avoidance) and avoidance group (high anxiety, high avoidance)(19)(20). Nielson et al., in a study on a clinical sample, concluded that the psychological organization of people who are classified as personality disorders Acceptance



is similar to the psychological organization of ambivalent attachment style(21). Research Others have also shown are that narcissism with many problems such as depression disorders(22), anxiety(23) The experience of anger Severe and continuous discharges(24), lack of emotional experience and suppression of emotions(25) Accompanied.

Despite the high prevalence rate of narcissistic personality disorder and its consequences in individual and social dimensions, very little information is known about the conditions that cause it and how it forms. Getting this disorder in the family There are Iranians. In this regard, due to the high prevalence rate, many consequences and research gap in the Iranian culture of research the present study was conducted with the aim of investigating the mediating role of attachment anxiety in the relationship between parental bonding during development and pathological narcissism.

#### **Research Method:**

The method of the current research was a correlational description. The research community of all university students were the government offices of Mashhad city. Among this group in the sample method get a cluster A (Selection of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad and Medical Sciences University of Mashhad from among all universities public schools of Mashhad city) and available choice of people from among universities 345 people were selected as a research sample. Criterion Entry requirements include studying in one of Mashhad's public universities and age between 18 and 45 years. Criterion Exclusions included suffering from severe clinical disorders and suffering from chronic and severe physical illness. After completion and collection data collection for data analysis, spss26 software was used for descriptive statistics (graph, mean, standard deviation) and PLS was used for structural modeling. Tools:

Pathological Narcissism Scale (PNS): This scale is a 52-item, multidimensional instrument developed by Pinkas et al(9) It is constructed and evaluates seven components of pathological narcissism and two phenotypes of grandiose narcissism and fragile narcissism which is in a 6-point Likert range of scores 0 (I'm not like that at all) to the score 5 (I am like this a lot) is scored. Convergent validity of this tool is also through negative correlation with Rosenberg self-respect scale (0.37), moral attitudes scale (-0.14) and positive correlation with shame experience scale (0.55) and personality organization scale including subscale Primary defenses (0.60), identity confusion (0.62), impaired reality measurement (0.47), aggression (0.36) and low moral values (0.45) were obtained. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for all scales were between 0.78 and 0.93, and Cronbach's alpha for the score The total questionnaire of pathological narcissism was equal to 0.95(9). In Iran, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of self-exploitation and concealment components is close to 0.60 and the rest its components are also reported above 0.70. The 15-day retest reliability in the components of pathological narcissism was also above 0.70(26).

**Parental Bonding Scale:** The parental attachment tool is a 25-question questionnaire made by Parker et al. (1979); Questions with a Likert scale in a range of 4 options It is graded. Out of 25 questions of this questionnaire, 7 questions are related to intimate relationship, 7 questions are related to striving for dependence, 6 questions are related to encouragement for independence, and 4 questions are related to indifference. According to the results obtained from the factor analysis of this questionnaire in Iran, the results support a four-factor content situation and validity and reliability (0.79 to 0.88) have been reported.(27). The value of

Cronbach's alpha in the research of Behzadi, Saro Qad and Samani in the mother form questionnaire including intimate relationships is 0.88; Indifference is 0.79 and encouragement for independence is 0.86, and for the father form, it includes intimate relationship: 0.88, striving for dependence: 0.86, indifference, 0.79 and encouragement for independence: 0.80.(28).

Close Relationship Experience Scale: Close relationship experience questionnaire including 36 questions by Brennan et al(29) It is designed to assess the attachment patterns of adults. Based on the Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). put to be Questions 11-20-22-26-27-28-29-30-31-33-34-35-36 are scored in reverse order, to be The first 18 questions of the questionnaire are measured under the anxiety subscale and the second 18 questions under the avoidance subscale. (29) They reported the alpha coefficient of 0.91 for anxiety and 0.96 for avoidance. They reported the retest reliability of this questionnaire three weeks apart as 0.70. Also, there is a positive correlation between anxiety and avoidance subscales with depression and hopelessness, as well as with shame, depression and loneliness(29) Is obtained. In Nadi's research(30) Cronbach's alpha was 0.65 for the avoidance dimension and 0.71 for the anxiety dimension.

## **Findings:**

Finding research in two descriptive (demographic characteristics and mean and standard deviation of variables) and inferential parts of hypothesis testing research and model fit has been investigated. The gender of the selected respondents in the sample shows that 53.6% of the respondents (185 people) are male respondents and 46.4% of the respondents (160 people) are female respondents; In terms of age, 68.1% were between the ages of 18 and 25, 24.9% were between the ages of 25 and 32, and 7% were over 32. The marital status of the sample was such that 37.7% were married and 62.3% were single. In terms of the field of study, 19.42 percent of the field Engineering, 27.29 percent of the field medical sciences, 13.04 percent of basic science fields, 21.44 percent of majors Humanities and 16.81% of fields were paramedics.

According to Table 1, the mean and standard deviation for the variables of parental attachment (61/78, 19/32), attachment anxiety (98/77, 21/73), grandiose narcissism (55/96, 16/39), fragile narcissism (99/101, 01/29) May be

Variable	Number	The lowest amount	The maximum	Average	standard deviation
			amount		
Big imagination	345	10	34	26/22	40/6
Self-improvement with	345	7	29	73/18	40/6
self-sacrifice					
Interest draw	345	5	25	75/12	73/4
My great narcissism	345	30	84	96/55	39/16
<b>Conditional self-esteem</b>	345	16	58	26/36	16/11
self concealment	345	12	49	78/30	13/11

**Table 1.** Mean and standard deviation of model variables



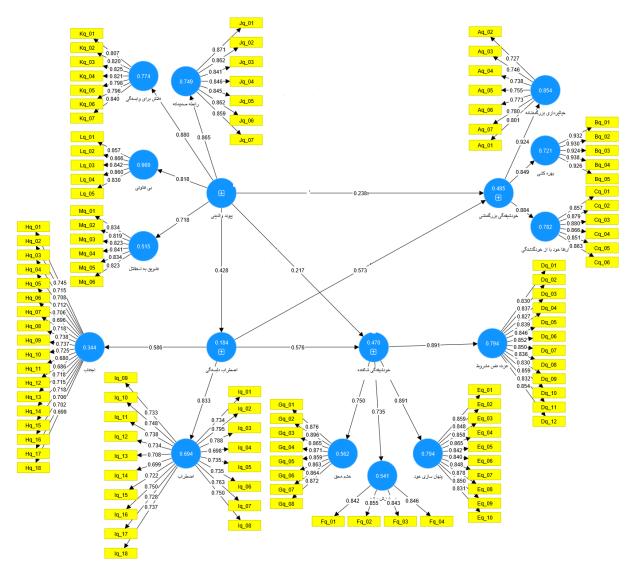
devaluation	345	4	20	31/11	89/3
righteous anger	345	9	39	62/23	38/8
Fragile narcissism	345	46	160	99/101	01/29
intimate relationship	345	7	34	55/17	62/6
Attempting to depend	345	7	33	54/17	84/6
Incuriosity	345	5	25	75/12	73/4
<b>Encouragement for</b>	345	6	29	93/13	15/5
independence					
Parental bonding	345	31	110	78/61	32/19
anxiety	345	22	82	98/45	70/14
avoid	345	28	85	97/52	46/15
attachment anxiety	345	61	155	77/98	73/21

The analysis of models in the method of structural equations with the partial least squares approach consists of two main steps, including checking the fit of the model and then testing the research hypotheses. The phase of checking model fit includes three parts: measurement models, structural model fit, and overall model fit.(31). In the model fitting section sizes Convergent validity is examined at two levels, the agent and the agent. At the representative level, the appropriate factor loading coefficients should be above 0.4(32). In this study, all factor loadings were greater than 0.4. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) index is also used to check the convergent validity at the factor level. The minimum appropriate value for this coefficient from the Fornell-Larker point of view(33) value of 0.5 and from the point of view of Magner et al(34) The value is 0.4. Cronbach's alpha has also been used to evaluate reliability, and the value of this index should be above 0.7(35). Table 2 shows information about reliability and validity show that the results confirm the validity and reliability of the variables of the model be

**Table 2**. The values of Cronbach's alpha statistic and average variance extracted for research constructs

Cronbach's alpha	Mean variance
coefficients	extracted
0.943	0.508
0.933	0.751
0.951	0.546
0.924	0.519
0.961	0.865
0.868	0.717
0.905	0.724
0.909	0.688
0.916	0.665
0.954	0.758
0.954	0.561
	0.943 0.943 0.933 0.951 0.924 0.961 0.868 0.905 0.909 0.916 0.954

Fragile narcissism	0.971	0.676
Grandiose imagination	0.878	0.578
intimate relationship	0.939	0.731
Conditional self-esteem	0.962	0.707
self concealment	0.958	0.726
Parental bonding	0.954	0.676



**Figure 1.** The conceptual model of the research with path coefficients and external loads The implemented model is shown in Figure 1 shows that parental bonding has a positive effect on grandiose narcissism with a coefficient of (0.238), fragile narcissism with a coefficient of (0.217), and attachment anxiety with a coefficient of (0.428). Also, attachment anxiety affects grandiose narcissism with a coefficient of (0.573) and fragile narcissism with a coefficient of (0.576). be

In the fourth version of SmartPLS, SRMR and NFI indices are used to fit the model to be which in this research according to table 3 is 0.02 and 0.97 respectively considering that they are smaller than 0.08 and above 0.90; therefore, it can be claimed that the current research model has a very good fit.



**Table 3.** Model fit values

SRMR index less than 0.08	02/0
NFI index above 0.90	97/0

According to Table 4, it can be seen that the direct path of the parental bond variable to grandiose narcissism (T=0.238,  $\beta$ =4.357) to fragile narcissism (T=4.235,  $\beta$ =0.217) and to attachment anxiety (T=7.723,  $\beta$ =0.428) is significant. Also, the direct path of attachment anxiety variable is significant to magnanimous narcissism (T=14.637,  $\beta$ =0.573) and to fragile narcissism (T=15.837,  $\beta$ =0.576). Finally, according to table 5, it can be seen that the indirect path of parental bond to grandiose narcissism through attachment anxiety (T=7.265,  $\beta$ =0.219) and parental bond to fragile narcissism through attachment anxiety (T=7.081),  $\beta$ =0.247) were significant.

**Table 4.** Coefficients of direct effects

relationship path	P Values	t-value	The standard	Path
		statistic	deviation	coefficient
Parental bonding ->	0.017	4.357	0.055	0.238
Grandiose				
narcissism				
Attachment anxiety	0.001	14.637	0.039	0.573
-> grandiose				
narcissism				
Parental Bond ->	0.002	4.235	0.051	0.217
Fragile Narcissism				
Attachment anxiety	0.001	15.837	0.036	0.576
-> fragile narcissism				
Parental bonding ->	0.001	7.723	0.055	0.428
attachment anxiety				

Table 5. Coefficients of indirect effects

relationship path	Path coefficien t	The standard deviation	t-value statistic	P Values
Parental bonding -> attachment anxiety ->	0.219	0.033	7.265	0.001
grandiose narcissism				
Parental bonding -> attachment anxiety ->	0.247	0.035	7.081	0.001
fragile narcissism				

### **Discussion and conclusion:**

The present study aims to investigate the role of mediator Attachment anxiety was investigated in the relationship between parental bonding during development and fragile and magnanimous narcissism. The results of the model showed that the t-value statistic for all direct and indirect paths of the model is above 1.96. It means that it is confirmed at the level of 0.05 to be Therefore, the role of mediator Attachment anxiety is supported in the relationship between parental bonding during development and both fragile and grandiose narcissistic phenotypes. This result with the findings Research Hi Visca(36), set(37) Pablo(38) Aligned with research High Green, Mc Lynn and Charles(39) and Kilikaya et al(40) Uneven be

In explaining this finding ha me It can be said that people grow within the framework of family, school and society and in this context they are influenced by their parents, siblings, other peers, friends, peers and others. Meanwhile, parents are the most influential part that transmit values, moral principles, ideals, habits and ways of thinking and acting through interaction and modeling and shape the child's personality. give(41, 42). If this relationship is not healthy or if the parents themselves are not mentally healthy, it creates the basis for personality and behavioral disorders such as narcissism. do The researchers showed that the parental bond is cold and b The difference before It is a strong predictor of narcissism(40). Pablo(38) Found in another research showed that both subtypes of narcissism with linkage Parental trauma Nasty (B Difference and care Exceeding of limit) are related. In addition, both subtypes of parental narcissism are related to attachment anxiety (avoidant and anxious attachment) in children.

In explaining the mediating role of attachment anxiety in the relationship between parental bonding during development and phenotype His greatness and injury accepts It can be said that if the relationship between the child and the caregiver is not warm and suitable, the visualization capacity will not develop well in him and his mentalization will fail In this situation, the child does not touch communication and relationships in a safe space and experience this insecure atmosphere by avoiding relationships or enduring constant anxiety in relationships Slow for this reason to take care of himself in such a situation, the person by creating unequal and narcissistic relationships It's like defending yourself slow so as not to harm him. Selfish His magnanimity by creating a position High and look Up-down, exploitation of others, lack of empathy, intense jealousy, aggressiveness and showmanship in your relationships with others prevent you from getting too close to others. and protect themselves do, narcissist damage In this situation, the receiver usually behaves passively, such as avoiding relationships, being oppressed, being overly sensitive to rejection, and finally being aggressive. They passively defend themselves do In this case, Reis et al(43) A research entitled the effect of adult attachment on pathological narcissism and response They did emotions of rejection. Found showed that fragile narcissism was negatively related to both attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance, but grandiose narcissism was only related to attachment avoidance. Another explanation for this result is as follows It can be said that in the explanation of this result It can be said from the point of view transformative experiences Formations with patterns of primary caregivers in Fig Taking a person's basic feelings towards himself and others, as well as how to deal with challenges and obstacles have a significant impact on the path of growth. In this context, attachment theory as a developmental view of the lifespan of trauma and personality disorders are considered to be



the result of an insecure internal pattern take In this model condition inside One's own work and the other's flexibility It is inevitable and the person in action Communication and social problems are felt slow(44). Based on the interactional attachment perspective The parent-child primitives in Fig getting a representation Cognitive or effective internal model plays an important role slow and acts as a guide on the behavior of oneself and others in close emotional and social relationships slow According to Roan Transformational scientists if a person feels warmth, trust, accessibility He did not get the adaptability and security from the relationship with his attachment figure, his sense of security is disturbed and two anxious attachment styles (longing for intimacy and fear of rejection and abandonment) and avoidant attachment are formed in him may take. Based on these results Ability to receive parents by method Improper parenting causes anxiety and attachment trauma in children Sean May be that this damage in adulthood, it causes the shape Taking on a narcissistic personality to be

**Research limitations:** Of limitation of the present research it can be pointed out that the method of the present research is limited in terms of determining cause and effect relationships. Also, because of the group that the research on done and is an academic group generalization Adaptability to other strata is limited. I suggest be in research Future studies to reduce the impact of bias Individuals instead of using questionnaires from experiments be used creatively. Also app Educational programs based on attachment patterns should be conducted with the aim of familiarizing parents with the principles of parenting in accordance with Iranian Islamic culture.

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**Contribution of creators:** Saeid Shah Hosseini Tazik wrote and collected data Ha and Cengiz Rahimi Taganki, Nurullah Mohammadi and Abdul Aziz Aflak Data review process and were responsible for reviewing and correcting the work.

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