

## Fear of Abandonment as a Mediator Between Attachment Trauma and Conflict Sensitivity in Romantic Relationships among Women

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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** This study aimed to investigate whether fear of abandonment mediates the relationship between attachment trauma and conflict sensitivity in romantic relationships among women.

**Methods and Materials:** A descriptive correlational design was used, and the study sample consisted of 505 women from Poland, selected based on the Morgan and Krejcie table. Participants completed validated self-report measures assessing attachment trauma, fear of abandonment, and conflict sensitivity. Data were analyzed using SPSS-27 for Pearson correlation and AMOS-21 for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and multicollinearity were tested and confirmed prior to analysis.

**Findings:** Results from Pearson correlation showed significant positive associations between attachment trauma and fear of abandonment ( $r = .56, p < .001$ ), attachment trauma and conflict sensitivity ( $r = .49, p < .001$ ), and fear of abandonment and conflict sensitivity ( $r = .62, p < .001$ ). SEM analysis revealed that the structural model had an acceptable fit ( $\chi^2(46) = 98.35, \chi^2/df = 2.14, CFI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.047$ ). Attachment trauma significantly predicted fear of abandonment ( $\beta = 0.56, p < .001$ ), which in turn significantly predicted conflict sensitivity ( $\beta = 0.62, p < .001$ ). The direct path from attachment trauma to conflict sensitivity was also significant ( $\beta = 0.24, p < .001$ ), and the indirect effect through fear of abandonment ( $\beta = 0.35, p < .001$ ) indicated partial mediation. The total effect of attachment trauma on conflict sensitivity was  $\beta = 0.59 (p < .001)$ .

**Conclusion:** The findings suggest that fear of abandonment partially mediates the relationship between attachment trauma and conflict sensitivity in romantic relationships among women. These results highlight the importance of addressing abandonment-related fears in therapeutic settings to mitigate the emotional impact of past trauma on adult romantic functioning.

**Keywords:** Attachment trauma, fear of abandonment, conflict sensitivity, romantic relationships.

## 1. Introduction

Attachment trauma, including childhood emotional neglect, abuse, and inconsistent caregiving, has long been recognized as a precursor to maladaptive relational patterns in adulthood. Such traumatic disruptions in early attachment bonds can impair emotional regulation, interpersonal trust, and the ability to form secure romantic connections later in life (Macfie et al., 2014; Rogers & Lowrie, 2016). Women with histories of attachment trauma are particularly susceptible to internalizing fears of rejection and betrayal, which can heighten emotional reactivity during conflictual interactions with romantic partners (Dijke et al., 2018; Macfie & Kurdziel, 2020). These individuals may experience seemingly benign disagreements as threatening or abandonment-laden, often responding with heightened sensitivity or disproportionate emotional responses. This hypersensitivity, commonly referred to as conflict sensitivity, reflects not only past emotional wounds but also the enduring legacy of unmet relational needs (Wilkinson et al., 2018).

One central mechanism through which attachment trauma appears to influence conflict sensitivity is fear of abandonment. Fear of abandonment is a core feature of anxious attachment and has been identified as a significant mediator in the pathway from early relational adversity to adult emotional difficulties (O'Hara et al., 2023). The cognitive expectation of being left or devalued, often formed in childhood, may lead to hypervigilance for signs of rejection and overinterpretation of partner behaviors as threatening. Research has shown that this fear is particularly pronounced among individuals exposed to marital discord or parental inconsistency during formative years (Lee & Kim, 2012; O'Hara et al., 2021). In such cases, fear of abandonment becomes a lens through which adult relational experiences are interpreted, often fueling heightened conflict sensitivity. In emotionally charged romantic settings, even minor disputes may be perceived as precursors to abandonment, triggering defensive or maladaptive behaviors.

Empirical support for this mediating pathway can be found in studies linking fear of abandonment to both trauma and romantic conflict. O'Hara et al. (2021) found that children exposed to high-conflict divorces exhibited elevated fear of abandonment, which in turn predicted mental health difficulties and strained interpersonal relationships (O'Hara et al., 2021). In longitudinal analyses, this fear has been shown to persist into adulthood,

particularly when not buffered by effective caregiving or therapeutic intervention (O'Hara et al., 2023). Similarly, Lee and Kim (2012) demonstrated that fear of abandonment partially mediated the relationship between perceived parental conflict and adolescent aggression and depression, suggesting its broader relevance in the emotional development of relational coping strategies (Lee & Kim, 2012).

The implications of this mediating process are particularly significant in the context of romantic relationships, where unresolved attachment trauma and underlying fear of abandonment may amplify sensitivity to perceived slights or relational instability. Bélanger et al. (2021) argue that obsessive relational patterns, driven by unmet attachment needs, often contribute to abusive dynamics and conflict escalation in romantic partnerships (Bélanger et al., 2021). When individuals interpret ordinary relational tensions as signs of imminent rejection, they may respond with clinginess, hostility, or withdrawal—behaviors that ultimately undermine relational security. As such, conflict sensitivity is not merely a reflection of interpersonal discord but a symptom of deeper, often unacknowledged psychological distress rooted in attachment history.

Furthermore, attachment trauma has been consistently linked to dysregulated affect and maladaptive coping mechanisms in adult relationships. Dijke et al. (2018) found that childhood trauma predicted both affect dysregulation and relational fear in adulthood, independent of borderline personality disorder symptoms (Dijke et al., 2018). Such findings highlight the broader impact of early trauma on emotional processing, particularly in close interpersonal contexts. For women, who are statistically more likely to report emotional neglect and attachment-related disruptions, these relational difficulties may be especially pronounced (Macfie & Kurdziel, 2020). Additionally, narrative-based studies of women with maternal histories of psychopathology suggest that early exposure to invalidating emotional environments can shape later representations of love and conflict as inherently unstable or dangerous (Macfie et al., 2014).

Despite the well-documented links between attachment trauma, fear of abandonment, and relational instability, few studies have examined how these factors interact specifically to predict conflict sensitivity. This gap is critical, as understanding the psychological pathways that lead from past trauma to present relational distress can inform both preventative interventions and therapeutic frameworks. Helms et al. (2016) highlighted the importance of addressing

interpersonal mechanisms, such as stigma and fear, in shaping adherence behaviors and emotional well-being, suggesting broader applications of such mediators in psychological research (Helms et al., 2016). In the realm of romantic relationships, addressing the mediating role of abandonment fears could enhance therapeutic outcomes by targeting the root causes of emotional reactivity rather than surface-level behaviors.

The current study builds on this body of literature by proposing a mediation model in which fear of abandonment serves as an explanatory mechanism linking attachment trauma to conflict sensitivity in romantic relationships among women. This approach is informed by psychological and behavioral models that emphasize the enduring influence of formative relational experiences on adult functioning. For example, Jahanzeb et al. (2022) found that individuals with high attachment anxiety were more likely to exhibit counterproductive behaviors in response to perceived relational breaches at work, illustrating how internalized relational fears can affect behavior even in non-romantic contexts (Jahanzeb et al., 2022). Similarly, Miano et al. (2013) demonstrated that rejection sensitivity mediated the relationship between borderline personality features and facial trust appraisal, providing further support for the mediating role of internalized fear schemas (Miano et al., 2013).

This study also aligns with theories of emotional vulnerability that emphasize the cumulative effects of trauma and perceived relational threats. According to Wolchik et al. (2008), grief and stress-related outcomes in bereaved children were mediated by self-system beliefs, including those related to trust and relational security (Wolchik et al., 2008). Applying this lens to adult romantic relationships, fear of abandonment can be conceptualized as a self-system belief shaped by earlier attachment trauma, one that predisposes individuals to heightened emotional reactivity during interpersonal conflict. DiClemente et al. (2010) similarly emphasize the importance of addressing underlying emotional vulnerabilities in at-risk populations, suggesting that interventions aimed at altering maladaptive beliefs may be more effective than those focused solely on behavioral change (DiClemente et al., 2010).

Moreover, the sociocultural context in which these dynamics unfold should not be overlooked. Szczęśniak et al. (2019) underscore the role of existential and spiritual struggles in shaping emotional well-being, particularly among young adults navigating relational uncertainties (Szczęśniak et al., 2019). For women in modern romantic

contexts, especially in cultures undergoing shifts in relational norms, attachment fears may be further exacerbated by evolving expectations around intimacy, independence, and emotional expression. Berenji (2020) suggests that risk-taking and emotional vulnerability are often essential components of meaningful connection, yet these very elements can be sources of distress for individuals with unresolved attachment trauma (Berenji, 2020).

In sum, existing research strongly supports the proposed mediation model: attachment trauma contributes to elevated fear of abandonment, which in turn predicts greater conflict sensitivity in romantic relationships. By focusing specifically on women—a population that often carries a disproportionate emotional burden in relational settings—this study aims to provide nuanced insights into the psychological underpinnings of relational conflict.

## 2. Methods and Materials

### 2.1. Study design and Participant

This study employed a descriptive correlational design to examine the mediating role of fear of abandonment in the relationship between attachment trauma and conflict sensitivity in romantic relationships among women. The sample consisted of 505 women from Poland, selected based on the Morgan and Krejcie (1970) table for determining appropriate sample sizes in social science research. Participants were recruited through online platforms and university mailing lists and met the inclusion criteria of being over 18 years old, identifying as female, and currently or recently involved in a romantic relationship. All participants provided informed consent, and the study adhered to ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects.

### 2.2. Measures

#### 2.2.1. Conflict Sensitivity

Conflict Sensitivity in romantic relationships was measured using the Conflict Sensitivity Scale (CSS) developed by Overall, Fletcher, Simpson, and Sibley (2009). This scale comprises 8 items designed to assess individuals' emotional and behavioral responsiveness to interpersonal conflict, particularly in the context of romantic partnerships. The CSS includes two subscales: reactivity to conflict and emotional sensitivity during disagreements. Respondents rate each item on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), with higher scores

indicating greater sensitivity to conflict. The scale has demonstrated strong psychometric properties, with internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) typically above .80. Multiple studies have confirmed its convergent and discriminant validity, supporting its use in research on romantic relationship dynamics (Jalili et al., 2022; Taherifard et al., 2021).

### 2.2.2. Fear of Abandonment

Fear of Abandonment was assessed using the Fear of Abandonment Scale (FOAS) developed by Goldstein and Miklowitz (1995). This 15-item self-report measure evaluates individuals' fears of being left or rejected by close others, particularly romantic partners. Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all true) to 5 (very true), with higher scores reflecting greater abandonment anxiety. The FOAS is unidimensional and does not include subscales. Previous research has established strong internal reliability ( $\alpha > .85$ ) and test-retest reliability over time. The scale's construct validity has been supported through associations with measures of attachment insecurity and emotional dysregulation in romantic contexts, making it a suitable tool for examining abandonment-related concerns (O'Hara et al., 2021; O'Hara et al., 2023).

### 2.2.3. Attachment Trauma

Attachment Trauma was measured using the Attachment Trauma Scale (ATS) developed by Sandberg, Suess, and Heaton (2010). The ATS is a 20-item instrument designed to capture traumatic disruptions in attachment relationships, such as betrayal, emotional neglect, or abuse by primary caregivers. The scale includes two subscales: early relational trauma and betrayal-related trauma. Participants respond to each item on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never true) to 5 (always true), with higher total scores indicating more severe attachment-related trauma experiences. The

ATS has demonstrated excellent internal consistency ( $\alpha$  values above .90) and good convergent validity with other trauma and attachment insecurity measures. Its reliability and validity have been confirmed in various clinical and non-clinical populations, supporting its use in trauma-related attachment research (Choi & Kweon, 2023; Warach & Josephs, 2021).

### 2.3. Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 27 and AMOS version 21. Descriptive statistics were first computed to summarize the demographic characteristics of the sample. Pearson correlation analysis was used to examine the bivariate relationships between attachment trauma, fear of abandonment, and conflict sensitivity. To test the proposed mediation model, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was performed using AMOS-21, evaluating both direct and indirect paths. Model fit was assessed using multiple indices, including the Chi-square statistic, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR).

## 3. Findings and Results

Of the 505 participants, 212 (41.9%) were aged between 18 and 24 years, 163 (32.3%) were aged between 25 and 34, and 130 (25.7%) were aged 35 and above. In terms of education level, 158 participants (31.3%) had completed high school, 231 (45.7%) held a bachelor's degree, and 116 (23.0%) had obtained a master's degree or higher. Regarding relationship status, 273 participants (54.1%) reported being in a committed relationship, 157 (31.1%) were married, and 75 (14.8%) were recently separated or divorced. Most participants identified as heterosexual ( $n = 470$ ; 93.1%), while 35 participants (6.9%) identified as bisexual or lesbian.

**Table 1**

*Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables (N = 505)*

Variable	M	SD
Attachment Trauma	3.41	0.69
Fear of Abandonment	3.78	0.74
Conflict Sensitivity	4.02	0.66

The descriptive statistics presented in Table 1 indicate that participants reported moderate to high levels of attachment trauma ( $M = 3.41$ ,  $SD = 0.69$ ), fear of

abandonment ( $M = 3.78$ ,  $SD = 0.74$ ), and conflict sensitivity ( $M = 4.02$ ,  $SD = 0.66$ ). The highest mean was observed for conflict sensitivity, suggesting that participants generally

perceived themselves as reactive or emotionally sensitive to interpersonal conflicts in romantic contexts.

Before conducting the main analyses, assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and multicollinearity were examined and confirmed. Skewness values for attachment trauma, fear of abandonment, and conflict sensitivity ranged from  $-0.51$  to  $0.67$ , and kurtosis values ranged from  $-0.73$  to  $0.94$ , indicating acceptable normality.

**Table 2**

*Pearson Correlations Between Study Variables (N = 505)*

Variable	1	2	3
1. Attachment Trauma	—		
2. Fear of Abandonment	.56*** (p < .001)	—	
3. Conflict Sensitivity	.49*** (p < .001)	.62*** (p < .001)	—

As shown in Table 2, all variables were significantly and positively correlated. Attachment trauma was moderately correlated with fear of abandonment ( $r = .56$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and conflict sensitivity ( $r = .49$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Fear of abandonment

Scatterplots suggested linear relationships between variables. The assumption of homoscedasticity was supported by the residuals showing no pattern in the plots. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values ranged from 1.09 to 1.34, well below the threshold of 10, confirming no multicollinearity. These results indicated that the data met the assumptions necessary for Pearson correlation and SEM analysis.

demonstrated a strong positive correlation with conflict sensitivity ( $r = .62$ ,  $p < .001$ ), supporting the theoretical model positing its mediating role between trauma and conflict reactivity.

**Table 3**

*Model Fit Indices for the Structural Equation Model*

Fit Index	Value	Threshold Criteria
Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ )	98.35	—
df	46	—
$\chi^2/df$	2.14	< 3.00 (good)
GFI	0.95	> 0.90 (acceptable)
AGFI	0.92	> 0.90 (acceptable)
CFI	0.96	> 0.95 (excellent)
TLI	0.94	> 0.90 (acceptable)
RMSEA	0.047	< 0.06 (good fit)

Table 3 presents the structural model fit indices, which indicate an excellent fit to the data. The chi-square value was  $\chi^2(46) = 98.35$ , with a  $\chi^2/df$  ratio of 2.14, within the acceptable range. Additional fit indices such as the

Comparative Fit Index (CFI = 0.96), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI = 0.95), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA = 0.047) all support the adequacy of the proposed mediation model.

**Table 4**

*Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects in the Structural Equation Model*

Path	B	SE	$\beta$	p
Attachment Trauma → Fear of Abandonment	0.61	0.05	0.56	< .001
Fear of Abandonment → Conflict Sensitivity	0.58	0.04	0.62	< .001
Attachment Trauma → Conflict Sensitivity (Direct)	0.21	0.05	0.24	< .001
Attachment Trauma → Conflict Sensitivity (Indirect)	0.35	0.04	0.35	< .001
Attachment Trauma → Conflict Sensitivity (Total)	0.56	0.06	0.59	< .001

Table 4 reports the path coefficients from the SEM analysis. The direct effect of attachment trauma on fear of abandonment was significant ( $B = 0.61$ ,  $\beta = 0.56$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

Fear of abandonment, in turn, significantly predicted conflict sensitivity ( $B = 0.58$ ,  $\beta = 0.62$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The direct effect of attachment trauma on conflict sensitivity remained

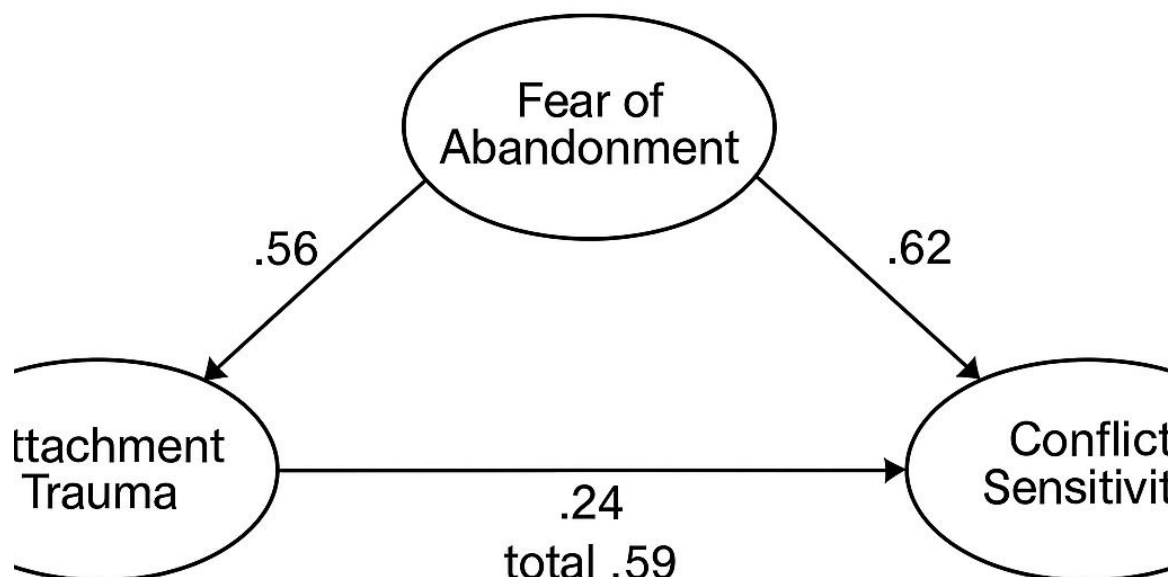


significant ( $B = 0.21$ ,  $\beta = 0.24$ ,  $p < .001$ ), indicating partial mediation. The indirect effect via fear of abandonment was also significant ( $B = 0.35$ ,  $\beta = 0.35$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and the total

effect was strong ( $B = 0.56$ ,  $\beta = 0.59$ ,  $p < .001$ ), confirming that fear of abandonment partially mediated the relationship between attachment trauma and conflict sensitivity.

**Figure 1**

*Model with Beta Coefficients*



#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study aimed to investigate whether fear of abandonment mediates the relationship between attachment trauma and conflict sensitivity in romantic relationships among women. The results confirmed a significant positive correlation between attachment trauma and both fear of abandonment and conflict sensitivity. Structural Equation Modeling further supported the hypothesized mediation model: attachment trauma predicted greater fear of abandonment, which, in turn, predicted heightened conflict sensitivity. These findings are consistent with prior literature emphasizing the enduring effects of early relational trauma on emotional and interpersonal functioning.

The significant relationship between attachment trauma and fear of abandonment aligns with previous findings that early emotional neglect, parental inconsistency, and maltreatment establish a lasting vulnerability to relational insecurity (Macfie & Kurdziel, 2020; Rogers & Lowrie, 2016). Women with histories of attachment trauma often internalize the belief that close others will eventually withdraw or reject them, which fuels persistent anxiety in adult relationships. The present results echo those of O'Hara et al. (2021), who found that fear of abandonment

significantly mediated the effects of interparental conflict on children's mental health across time (O'Hara et al., 2021). Similar to that study, the current findings suggest that fear of abandonment functions as a lasting psychological schema formed in the context of relational instability, shaping interpretations of present interpersonal experiences.

The positive association between fear of abandonment and conflict sensitivity also supports prior empirical work suggesting that individuals with high abandonment fears tend to hyperfocus on potential threats in relational dynamics, leading to intensified emotional responses during conflict (Lee & Kim, 2012; Wilkinson et al., 2018). When the anticipation of rejection becomes pervasive, everyday disagreements can be perceived as harbingers of relational rupture. This leads to maladaptive conflict behaviors, such as emotional withdrawal, hostility, or excessive reassurance-seeking. Bélanger et al. (2021) observed that such anxious behaviors, particularly in romantic contexts, often stem from unresolved attachment fears and can contribute to cycles of relational dysfunction and emotional escalation (Bélanger et al., 2021).

Importantly, the mediating role of fear of abandonment in the pathway from attachment trauma to conflict sensitivity provides evidence for a deeper, process-oriented

understanding of romantic relational difficulties. Rather than a direct effect of trauma on current behaviors, the results emphasize that fear-based cognitions and emotional schemas are key mechanisms in translating past trauma into present relational challenges. This model is reinforced by Miano et al. (2013), who demonstrated that rejection sensitivity mediated the relationship between borderline personality features and appraisals of social trustworthiness (Miano et al., 2013). In both studies, early relational wounds contributed to enduring fears, which then influenced how individuals interpreted and responded to social cues.

The mediation model tested in this study also echoes the findings of Jahanzeb et al. (2022), who found that attachment anxiety exacerbated the relationship between perceived contract breaches and counterproductive behaviors at work (Jahanzeb et al., 2022). While that study was conducted in an occupational context, it underscores the broader role of attachment-based fears in shaping interpersonal responses across different relational environments. Similarly, Helms et al. (2016) identified interpersonal mechanisms—particularly internalized stigma and fear—that negatively impacted health behaviors in individuals living with HIV, highlighting how fear-based relational beliefs can generalize across contexts (Helms et al., 2016).

These findings also build upon previous studies exploring the long-term psychological sequelae of childhood adversity. Dijke et al. (2018) showed that childhood trauma significantly predicted affect dysregulation and adult relational fears, independent of borderline personality disorder symptoms (Dijke et al., 2018). The present study expands upon this by specifying the role of fear of abandonment as a mediating link to conflict sensitivity in romantic domains. It supports the notion that fear is not simply a by-product of trauma but a functional mediator that can shape behavior and emotional experience over time. This view is similarly supported by DiClemente et al. (2010), who emphasized that fear-related emotional vulnerabilities are often at the core of maladaptive responses in high-risk populations (DiClemente et al., 2010).

Furthermore, our results resonate with longitudinal studies of bereaved or traumatized youth, which found that fear of abandonment was not only a consequence of parental loss or instability but also a predictor of future emotional difficulties (O'Hara et al., 2023; Wolchik et al., 2008). These studies, like the present one, point to the formative role of abandonment-related beliefs in predicting long-term relational and emotional functioning. The fact that this

mechanism is also operative in adult romantic relationships highlights its pervasive influence.

The relevance of cultural and contextual variables should also be noted. Szczęśniak et al. (2019) found that existential and spiritual struggles among young adults predicted lower life satisfaction, with gratitude serving as a protective factor (Szczęśniak et al., 2019). While the current study did not examine gratitude or spiritual beliefs, the emotional aftermath of attachment trauma may similarly manifest as existential insecurity, contributing to heightened fear of abandonment and emotional volatility in romantic contexts. In addition, Berenji (2020) emphasizes that meaningful interpersonal risk-taking—such as forming intimate connections—is often inhibited by deeply rooted fears, particularly in environments where early security was absent (Berenji, 2020). The present findings mirror this tension between the human desire for closeness and the fear of rejection or betrayal, especially for women navigating relational intimacy after trauma.

Taken together, the results support a dynamic model in which attachment trauma contributes to increased fear of abandonment, which in turn fosters heightened conflict sensitivity in romantic relationships. This model aligns with theoretical perspectives that emphasize the enduring psychological impact of early relational experiences and highlights the need to address core fears, rather than solely focusing on surface-level relational behaviors. These findings contribute to the growing recognition that emotional schemas formed in childhood continue to shape how individuals perceive and respond to relational stressors well into adulthood.

## 5. Limitations and Suggestions

Despite the valuable insights generated by this study, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional design precludes any conclusions about causality. Although the proposed mediation model is supported by theoretical and empirical foundations, longitudinal data would be needed to confirm the temporal sequencing of the variables. Second, the reliance on self-report measures introduces the possibility of response biases, such as social desirability or recall errors, particularly when reporting past attachment trauma. Third, the sample consisted exclusively of women from Poland, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other populations or genders. Cultural differences in attachment norms and relational expectations may influence how fear of abandonment and conflict

sensitivity manifest. Lastly, while the study included a relatively large sample size, it did not control for possible moderating variables such as current relationship satisfaction, duration of the relationship, or history of mental health diagnoses, all of which could impact conflict sensitivity.

Future studies should utilize longitudinal designs to better understand how fear of abandonment evolves over time and how it continues to mediate the impact of early trauma into adulthood. Incorporating multiple time points would allow for the testing of bidirectional effects and could reveal potential feedback loops between conflict sensitivity and abandonment anxiety. Additionally, it would be beneficial to replicate this model in diverse cultural and gender groups to examine whether the same patterns hold across different social contexts. Including male or nonbinary participants could uncover gender-based variations in how attachment trauma is internalized and expressed. Further, future research could incorporate physiological or behavioral measures—such as cortisol reactivity or observational data on conflict interactions—to supplement self-report findings and provide a more comprehensive picture of emotional reactivity in relational settings.

From a practical standpoint, the results of this study underscore the importance of addressing fear of abandonment in therapeutic interventions for women with a history of attachment trauma. Therapists working with clients who demonstrate heightened conflict sensitivity should assess for underlying abandonment fears and explore how early relational disruptions may be contributing to current emotional responses. Interventions that focus on building secure internal representations and enhancing emotional regulation strategies could mitigate the effects of trauma on romantic relationships. Relationship education programs and couple therapy frameworks could also benefit from incorporating psychoeducation about the link between attachment trauma, abandonment fears, and conflict dynamics. By targeting these foundational emotional vulnerabilities, practitioners can support clients in developing healthier, more stable romantic relationships.

### Authors' Contributions

Authors contributed equally to this article.

### Declaration

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

### Transparency Statement

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

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### Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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### Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants.

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