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Attachment styles dynamics: The impact of surgical treatment of cancer patients

Joanna Szymczak

Medical University of Gdansk, Poland

The purpose of the study was to explore whether attachment style is a stable disposition of an individual with reference to life situation. The three attachment styles were assessed using Hazan and Shaver descriptions of people typical feelings in close relationships. Other variables were evaluated with Symptom Checklist (SCL-90), the BDI, the STAI, and the Emotions Scale. The healthy and clinical subjects did not differ in structure of style category selections. Healthy subjects have not changed style category within two months and achieved high correlation coefficients in test-retest procedure for rating scale. Patients exhibited stability indicators mostly low for categorical and rating scales. Their secure style was the most stable. In controls secure and ambivalent styles were the most stable. Synthetically four groups of dynamics in attachment styles changes were separated: stable either secure or insecure, changed from either insecure to secure or from secure to insecure. More agreeable choices were made by secure subjects than the insecure, and by avoidant subjects than by the ambivalents. About 44% of patients characterized by change in attachment style. In stepwise Wilk's analysis, only negative emotionality significantly influenced on style selection after hospitalization. The Anova analysis for factor "attachment style" on dependent variable of negative emotions showed significant effect of this factor. Some of the results indicates that subjects changing style from insecure to secure expressed lower negative emotions than those with reversed change or stable insecure style. The subjects with stable insecure style had meaningfully more negative emotions than persons with stable secure style. The results will be discussed in terms of prototype stability model for attachment styles, change of sense of security in bonds with partner, clinical implications and further research directions.

Biography

Joanna Szymczak had been working as a lecturer at Medical University in Gdansk (GuMed) in Poland for over 20 years till February 2018. Since then she has been continuing cooperation with the University. She has been also cooperating for over 10 years with SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities in Sopot Campus, Poland. Her research refers to psychosomatics, an adaptation process to disease and its treatment in the attachment paradigm, which was reflected in her reports. Her specialty is clinical psychology. Dr Szymczak has been counseling polish and international students of GuMed for 15 years. She is a certified psychoanalytic psychotherapist working at private practice in Gdańsk and a member of Polish Society of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy, and also a candidate of Polish Psychoanalytical Society with membership in the International Psychoanalytical Association (IPA).

joaszym@gumed.edu.pl

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