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Early Adult Attachment Styles, Emotional Regulation and Sensitivity, and Interpersonal Stress Coping

An Examination of Conceptual Consistency in Infant and Early Adult Attachment Styles

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The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships among early adult attachment styles, emotional regulation, and interpersonal stress coping. In Study 1, the relationship between early adult attachment styles and emotional regulation was examined with 460 undergraduates. Results showed that secure attachment was positively related to emotional expression and sensitivity, but ambivalent attachment was negatively related to them. Also, analysis concerning attachment dimensions revealed that Anxiety was significantly associated with low emotional sensitivity, and Avoidance with low emotional expression. In addition, an interaction of Anxiety and Avoidance was associated with emotional control: it could be explained by Avoidance in cases of low Anxiety. In Study 2, the relationship between early adult attachment styles and interpersonal stress coping was examined with 393 participants. Results showed that secure attachment was positively related to positive relationship-oriented strategies, negatively related to negative relationship-oriented strategies, and insecure attachment, on the other hand, was positively related to negative relationship-oriented strategies. As for attachment dimensions, Anxiety appeared to have an influence on negative relationship-oriented strategies and postponed-solution coping, and Avoidance on positive relationship-oriented strategies. These results were discussed in terms of conceptual consistency in infant and early adult attachment styles.

Keywords: early adult attachment styles, attachment dimensions, stress coping, nonverbal

skill, emotion



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