

Fizke E, Buchheim A, Juen F (2013) Activation of the attachment system and mentalization in depressive and healthy individuals - an experimental control study. *Psihologija*, 46, 161-176.

Author Abstract:

From a developmental and clinical point of view attachment theory and mentalization are closely connected and have become increasingly important to understand the origins of psychopathological development. However, very little is known about how exactly different inner working models of attachment are related to diverse mentalizing abilities and this is particularly true for adult populations – healthy as well as clinical populations. In the present study, we investigated this relation with a sample of inpatients diagnosed with depression and a sample of healthy individuals. In an experimental setting the attachment system was activated using the Adult Attachment Projective Picture System (AAP). Mentalization was assessed during activation and in comparison to a control condition using a modified version of the Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test (RMET). We expected that an activation of the attachment system i) diminishes the capacity to take another's perspective in individuals with unresolved state of mind, ii) has no impact in individuals with secure attachment representation and iii) is dependent of clinical status in individuals with insecure (but organized) working models of attachment. Overall, these hypotheses were confirmed. However, the impact of clinical status on mentalization in insecure attachment has to be further explored. We summarize that attachment state of mind has a mediating influence on mentalization basically in such situations where the attachment system is activated.