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THE MEDIATING ROLE OF MENTALIZATION IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTACHMENT STYLE AND REJECTION SENSITIVITY: A PRELIMINARY STUDY

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The aim of the present study was to assess the role of mentalizing in mediating the association between attachment style and rejection sensitivity. Participants were 526 Italian University students (399 women and 127 men) who were administered the Attachment Style Questionnaire (ASQ), Mentalization Questionnaire (MZQ), Adult Rejection Sensitivity Scale Questionnaire (ARSQ) and Teate Depression Inventory (TDI). Rejection Teate Depression Inventory and Attachment Style were both significantly associated with mentalization and depression. A mediational model analyzing the direct and indirect effects of attachment style on rejection sensitivity through the mediating role of mentalization and depression suggested that the relationship was significant. Correlations among the variables reported that both avoidant and anxious attachment were negatively related to mentalization ability ($r = -0.55$ and $r = -0.61$ respectively) and positively associated to depressive symptoms ($r = 0.39$ and $r = 0.51$ respectively) and rejection sensitivity severity ($r = 0.29$ and $r = 0.43$ respectively). An opposite pattern of correlations was observed for secure attachment. The results are consistent with Bateman and Fonagy's Theory that implies a mediating role of mentalizing between attachment and psychopathology.

BIOGRAPHY

Anna Contardi is an Assistant professor, psychotherapist and researcher in Clinical Psychology since 2009. She teaches "Cognitive and Personality Psychology" and "General Psychodiagnostics and laboratory" for the undergraduate and graduate Psychology courses at the European University of Rome (UER). She is the coordinator of the MA in Psychology for the UER and she has been a member of the Doctoral Committee (Cognitive Psychology and Clinical Assessment) for the same university. She collaborates with the research group of the Institute Skinner of Rome to build a causal cognitive model.

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