

Substances use could affect attachment style?

B. Marianna (Azienda Socio-Sanitaria, Pavia, Italy) F. Ruzzi, M. Boso, G. Tiraboschi, M. C. Monti, G. Sacco, A. Urru, E. Caverzasi

Objective

Our aim is to understand if attachment styles could change due to substances use.

Methods

The observational-transversal study involves 50 patients (30 with Substance Use Disorder - SUD - and 20 with SUD and Borderline Personality Disorder - BPD) between 18 and 45 years old, admitted to our Mental Health Service and Addiction Service from March 2015 to July 2017. The psychological assessment consists of Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV I and II (SCID I and II), in order to assess psychiatric disorders; Adult Attachment Questionnaire (AAQ), in order to assess attachment style

Results

BPD and SUD are mainly avoidant (60% vs 40%), subsequently secure (20% vs 35%), preoccupied (16,67% vs 20%) and disorganized (3,33% vs 5%). These results considerably differ from literature: BPD attachments seem best characterized as unresolved with preoccupied features in relation to their parents, and fearful or secondarily preoccupied in their romantic relationships.

Conclusion

Attachment and substance use share some biological and psycho-social features: reward system by dopamine and oxytocin, stress as trigger to turn on attachment system and substance use, emotional regulation obtained by attachment and drug use. As suggested by Crittenden, attachment could be dynamic and change during life according to new experiences.