

A Study of Relationship between Dissociation, Adult Attachment and Betrayal Trauma

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A STUDY OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DISSOCIATION & ADULT ATTACHMENT

Abstract

Background: Dissociative people show interpersonal difficulties such as difficulties in building up relationship with therapists and intimate partners. The interpersonal difficulties are highly related to relational schema developed in dissociative people. In order to indicate relational schema, adult attachment style is used. As both dissociation and adult attachment style are theoretically related to betrayal trauma, moderation effect of betrayal trauma may be resulted.

Aim: The aim of this study was first to find out relationship between dissociation and adult attachment. Second, we aimed to dig out the moderation effect of betrayal trauma in the relationship between dissociation and adult attachment.

Method: Total 82 first year college students aged from 30 to 42 participated in a self-report questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of dissociative experience scale (DES), adult attachment style scale (AAS) and brief betrayal trauma survey (BBTS).

Result: Dissociation was positively correlated to insecure adult attachment style. Also, it was negatively correlated to secure adult attachment style. Besides, it also showed a correlation with high betrayal trauma, but the effect size was small. However, high betrayal trauma showed no correlation with adult attachment style; and did not moderate the relationship between dissociation and adult attachment style.

Discussion: The correlation between dissociation and adult attachment style was found. Obtaining a secure adult attachment style may help dissociative people in decreasing dissociative experience or symptoms and have a better interpersonal relationship. However, further studies may need to dig out their causal relationship. On the other hand, the relationship between betrayal trauma and adult attachment style was not found. Also betrayal trauma was not a moderator to moderate the relationship between dissociation and adult attachment style. This showed that betrayal trauma was not a key in determined the later adult attachment style. However, a longitudinal study was suggested for study the influence of betrayal trauma on early childhood attachment.

Keywords: dissociation, adult attachment, betrayal trauma