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AFFECTIVE TEMPERAMENT AND AND ATTACHMENT - ALSO A STUDY ABOUT DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY IN A YOUNG ADULT POPULATION

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Introduction: The transition from adolescence into adulthood is a stage of human development characterized by a broad change of physical and psychological dimensions.

Objectives and aims: To examine the associations between affective temperaments (depressive, cyclothymic, hyperthymic, irritable and anxious) and attachment styles in a population of adolescents and young adults.

Method: Sample: 760 nursing students from 4 Higher Schools. Data was collected by a self-report questionnaire, with several measures: Temperament Evaluation of Memphis, Pisa, Paris and San Diego (TEMPPS-A), (Akiskal & Akiskal, 2005a, Figueira et al., 2008), the Intimate Friendship Scale (Sharabany, 1994; Cordeiro, 2007), Father/Mother Attachment Questionnaire - QVPM, Version IV (Matos & Costa, 2001a), Love Attachment Questionnaire - QVA, Version III (Matos & Costa, 2001b), Beck Depression Inventory (Beck, 1967; Vaz Serra & Pio de Abreu, 1973ab) and the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory - STAI - Forms Y-1 and Y-2 (Spielberger, Gorsuch & Lushene, 1997, Silva & Campos, 1998, Santos & Silva, 1997).

Results: The participants are mostly female (83.3%) with an average age of 21.3 years.

The dominant affective temperament for the total of the studied population was the depressive temperament but the results suggested a balance between anxious and irritable temperaments and also between depressive and cyclothymic temperaments.

Conclusion: The attachment to a best friend has shown to be associated with anxious temperament. All temperaments were associated with several factors of attachment to the mother, the father or to love peers.

A correlation between temperament and anxiety and between temperament and depressive symptoms were also found.