Neuroticism, Preoccupied Attachment Style, and a Chronic Disease Condition as Predictors of Reminiscence During an Illness

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Нейротизм, тревожный стиль привязанности и хроническое заболевание как предикторы реминисценции во время болезни

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Abstract. The main aim of the study was to analyse to what extent attachment styles, personality traits, and a chronic disease condition were predictors of reminiscence during an illness. The second goal was to examine the relationship between personality traits, attachment styles, and reminiscence during an illness. Reminiscence during an illness was divided into two categories as emotional and cognitive patterns of the past experiences. In the study, there were 73 Turkish participants (43 males, 58.9 %). The mean age of participants was 40.2 (*SD* = 11.8). Results indicated that preoccupied attachment style, agreeableness, and whether having a chronic disease explain with 22.4 percent of the total variance of reminiscence during an illness. Reminiscence during an illness was positively related to preoccupied attachment style and negatively correlated with agreeableness along with extroversion. Gender had a significant effect on openness to experience, preoccupied attachment style, neuroticism, and negative cognitive reminiscence during an illness. Finally, chronic illness had a significant impact on reminiscence during an illness and neuroticism. The study suggested that personality traits, attachment styles, and gender affected the reminiscence during an illness.

Keywords: attachment style; reminiscence of past experiences during an illness; Big Five Personality Traits

Аннотация. Цели исследования состояли в том, чтобы проанализировать, в какой степени стили привязанности, личностные черты и хроническое заболевание являются предикторами реминисценции во время болезни; изучить взаимосвязь между личностными чертами, стилями привязанности и реминисценцией во время болезни. Было выделено две категории реминисценции: эмоциональные и когнитивные паттерны прошлого опыта. В исследовании приняли участие 73 человека из Турции (из них 43 мужчины, 58.9 %). Средний возраст участников составил 40.2 года (*SD* = 11.8). Результаты показали, что реминисценция во время болезни в 22.4 % случаев объяснялась тревожным стилем привязанности, покладистостью характера и наличием хронического заболевания. Реминисценция во время болезни положительно связана с тревожным стилем привязанности и отрицательно — с доброжелательностью и экстраверсией. Выявлена зависимость тревожного стиля привязанности, нейротизма, негативных когнитивных воспоминаний и открытости опыту от пола больного. Наконец, значительное влияние на реминисценцию во время болезни и проявление нейротизма оказывали хронические заболевания. Исследование показало, что черты характера, стили привязанности и пол влияют на реминисценцию во время болезни.

Ключевые слова: *стиль привязанности; воспоминание о прошлых переживаниях во время болезни; Большая пятерка черт характера*

Introduction

Individuals may have various thoughts and emotional patterns during an illness. Reminiscence refers to remembering any emotions which trigger thoughts. It was found that people with a high level of anxiety and depression tended to use reminiscence (Cully, LaVoie, & Gfeller, 2001). Insecure attachment styles and neuroticism were predictors of suicidal thoughts (Khosravi & Kasaeiyan, 2020). Moreover, fear of death was positively related to neuroticism (Pradhan, Chettri, & Maheshwari, 2022), and sensation of chronic pain was explained by attachment styles (Romeo, Tesio, Castelnuovo, & Castelli, 2017). In the current study, the aim was to examine the effects of attachment styles, big five personality traits, and having a chronic disease on reminiscence during an illness. The second aim was to analyse the relationship between five personality traits, attachment styles, and reminiscence during an illness.

Materials and Methods

In the study, there were 73 Turkish participants (43 males, 58.9 %). The mean age of participants was 40.2 (*SD* = 11.8), ranged from 20 to 75. The majority of participants were married (*n* = 38, 52.1 %) and had a university degree (*n* = 57, 78.1 %). Participants were asked to have a chronic illness or not. Majority of participants did not report a chronic illness (*n* = 51, 69.9 %). Individuals fulfilled the Relationship Scale Questionnaire

(Griffin & Bartholomomew, 1994), Brief Big Five Personality Traits Scale (Rammstedt & John 2007), and Reminiscence During an Illness which developed by the author via a Google form. Attachment styles (secure, preoccupied, dismissing, fearful), personality traits, and whether having a chronic illness were chosen as independent variables. Reminiscence during an illness was a dependent variable. The study was computed in SPSS program using Pearson correlation coefficient, Independent Sample T-Test, Multiple Linear Regression analysis.

Results

Correlation Levels Between Variables

Pearson correlation coefficient showed that fearful attachment was negatively correlated with secure attachment style ($r = -.43$, $p = .001$), and extroversion ($r = -.33$, $p = .01$), while it was positively related to dismissing attachment style ($r = .42$, $p = .001$).

Figure showed that reminiscence during an illness was positively related to preoccupied attachment style ($r = .33$, $p = .001$), while negatively related to agreeableness ($r = -.26$, $p = .03$) and extroversion ($r = -.27$, $p = .02$).
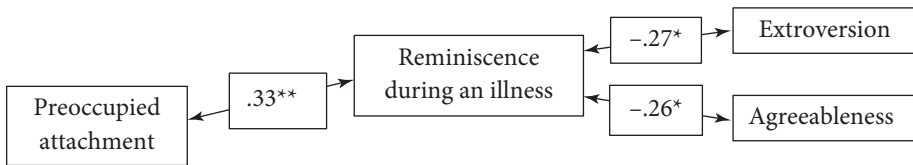

Figure. The correlation level related to reminiscence during an illness.
Note. **$p \leq .01$, *$p \leq .05$

Agreeableness was positively correlated with consciousness ($r = .27$, $p = .02$), extroversion ($r = .26$, $p = .02$), and openness to new experiences ($r = .25$, $p = .03$). Consciousness was positively related to extroversion ($r = .37$, $p = .001$). Extroversion was negatively correlated with neuroticism ($r = -.35$, $p = .003$).

The Mean of Variables

The study indicated that majority of participants had a dismissing attachment style ($n = 39$, 59.1 %), secure attachment style ($n = 16$, 24.2 %), fearful attachment style ($n = 7$, 10.6 %), preoccupied attachment style ($n = 4$, 6.1 %). The mean of variables in turn: extroversion — 3.66, $SD = .9$, agreeableness — 4.06, SD = .69, neuroticism — 2.9, $SD = .86$, openness to new experience — 3.39, $SD = .94$, the total level of reminiscence during an illness — 2.43, $SD = .93$, negative emotions of reminiscence — 2.66, $SD = 1.01$, negative cognitive reminiscence — 2.25, $SD = 1.02$.

The Effects of Gender on Variables

Results illustrated that men had a higher level of preoccupied attachment style: mean for males was 4.3 (SD = .8), mean for females were 3.09 (SD = 1.35), t (71) = −4.82, p = .001; and negative cognitive reminiscence during an illness: mean for males was 2.45 (SD =1.07), mean for females was 1.97 (SD = .88), t (71) = −2.03, p = 0.04. Females performed a higher score of openness to new experience: mean for females was 3.71 (SD = .98), mean for males was 3.16 (SD = .85), t (71) = 2.56, p = 0.01; and neuroticism: mean for females was 3.17 (SD = .92), mean for males was 2.71 (SD = .76), t (71) = 2.31, p = .02.

The Effects of Having Chronic Illness on Variables

It was found that participants with chronic illness had a lower level of reminiscence during an illness: mean for people who had a chronic illness was 2.09, SD = 1, mean for people who do not have a chronic illness was 2.58, SD = .93, t (71) = −2.03, p = .04. Furthermore, individuals with the absence of a chronic illness had a higher score on neuroticism (M = 3.03, SD = .82), than people with a chronic illness (M = 2.59, SD = .89), t (71) = −2.05, p = .04.

Predictors of Reminiscence During an Illness

Table with Multiple linear regression analysis showed that reminiscence during an illness was explained with 22.4 % by a chronic illness case, preoccupied attachment style, and agreeableness, $F(3,69)$ = 7.92, p = .001, R^2 = .26.

Table
Predictors of reminiscence during an illness

Predictors	Unstand. coefficients		Stand. coefficients	t	p	95 % CI	
	B	SE	*Beta*			lower bound	upper bound
Chronic illness	.5	.22	.24	2.3	.02	.068	.939
Preoccupied attachment	.30	.08	.38	3.6	.001	.135	.469
Agreeableness	−.4	.14	−.29	−2.8	.007	−.702	−.115

Note. R = .51, R^2 = .26, *adjusted* R^2 = 22.4.

Conclusion

The research concluded that having preoccupied occupied attachment styles led to negative emotions during an illness. Moreover, people with high levels of neuroticism and less level of agreeableness affect cognitive and emotion patterns during an illness. These findings may be helpful in the therapeutic setting.

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