THE ATTACHMENT STYLE AND STRESS COPING STRATEGIES IN ADULT MEN AND WOMEN

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Summary. This paper contains an analysis of the determinants of predispositions of individuals to cope with stress in adulthood, very likely shaped in childhood. The theoretical part defines stress and ways to cope with it and describes the conclusions reached to date of studies on attachment styles determinants to cope with stress. Presents the results of the author's own research showing the preferences of choosing different strategies to cope with stress depending on an attachment style shaped in childhood. The research conducted in 2013 and 2014 was participated by 180 women and 180 men aged 20-40 ($M = 28.99$, $SD = 4.23$), living in the Zachodniopomorskie and Lubuskie Voivodeships in Poland. Participants filled in questionnaires defining their ways of coping with stress and their attachment style. The research results obtained show that the respondents who the most frequently manifest active coping with stress and seeking support in difficult situations come from families that built in their child a secure attachment style. Helplessness and avoidant behaviours are more often evinced in stressful situations by the respondents brought up in families who built an anxiety-ambivalent and an avoidance attachment style.
Key words: stress, coping with stress, attachment styles

Introduction

The day-to-day functioning of a human being is associated with different life situations, part of which comprises experiences defined as difficult situations or stressful situations. Each individual has organic and psychosocial resources to cope with various difficulties, but the choice of ways to solve them is connected with individual predispositions.

Stress and coping strategies

Stress is a state which is caused by "the lack of balance between the demands and the possibilities to meet these demands by an individual", with stress being experienced when an individual has "the motivation to face those demands" (Heszen-Niejodek, 2005, p. 469).

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Particularly relevant for the subject of the research presented below is the approach of Richard S. Lazarus and Susan Folkman (1984, p. 19) to the essence of stress. They pointed out that it is "a particular relationship (...) between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and endangering his or her well-being".

Coping with stress is described today as a holistic process, a strategy and a style of behaviour in a stressful situation. Lazarus and Folkman (1984, p. 141) describe this process as "the constantly changing cognitive and behavioural efforts (...) to manage (...) specific external and internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person". This process plays a goal-, problem-oriented role and the role of self-regulation of emotions associated with reduction of emotional tension there.

Individuals who are in threatening situations undertake different strategies to cope with stress. Charles S. Carver (following: Juczyński, Ogińska-Bulik, 2009) indicates such strategies to cope with stress as: active coping, planning, positive reinterpretation, acceptance, a sense of humour, a turn to religion, seeking of emotional and instrumental support, dealing with something else, denial, venting of emotions, use of psychoactive substances, suppression of activities and self-blame. Endler and Parker (1990) point out that approaches to stressful situations can be classified into three types of styles of coping with them: task-, emotion- or avoidance-oriented.

People concentrating their stress-coping strategies on emotions, focus their attention mainly on themselves, on their own experiences, reducing emotional tension and self-blame for their own helplessness, which as a consequence usually intensifies their negative mood and increases stress (Mroczkowska, 2013). Turning to religion, dealing with something else, denial, venting of emotions, using psychoactive substances and suppression of activities are all indicated as less effective strategies to cope with a difficult situation (Ogińska-Bulik, Langer, 2007). Escape strategies may, as a consequence, lead to addictive behaviours (e.g. alcohol abuse, using drugs or stimulants or sedatives (Huber, 2010).

A coping style is associated with a characteristic, for a particular individual, range of coping strategies in difficult situations, also understood as a disposition or a personality trait coming to the fore usually habitually in difficult circumstances. It can be partly innate and partly acquired (Heszen-Niejodek, 2005). Maria Tyszkowa (1986) stresses the importance of conditions of upbringing and patterns of behaviour in difficult situations relating to the relationships between parents themselves as well as parents and children in the development of habits of coping with them. Also traumas experienced in childhood or adolescence play an important role which can lead to the activation of different mechanisms, including the emergence of psychosomatic diseases with depersonalisation-derealisation episodes or other dissociation disturbances, activated in situations of repeated threats in interpersonal relations (Smiatek-Mazgaj et al., 2015). The assessment of stressful situations and one's own competences to cope with them is affected by the level of an individual's self-assessment, the nature of his or her personality traits (Huber, 2010), the level of emotional intelligence (Eisenberg, Fabes, Guthjrie, 1997), the level of

cognitive ability (Keating, 2004). Higher self-esteem, a higher level of intelligence and a milder temperament are the factors enhancing resistance to stress (Carson, Butcher, Mineka, 2003). Amongst personality determinants of resistance to stress Jan Terelak (1997) mentions: needs, pursuits and aspirations; self-image and self-esteem; the need for internal balance and self-development; the level of timidity and fear; world view and life goals; emotional and social maturity and habits of reacting to difficulties.

Some authors also indicate that the way to cope with stress is differentiated by the sex of an individual. In stressful situations women were more likely than men to seek emotional support and social contacts (Opuchlik, Wrzesińska, Kocur, 2009), more often used the style of coping which was emotion- or avoidance-oriented (Jelonkiewicz, Kosińska-Dec, 2001), with these differences being noticeable already in adolescence. Girls more often than boys: seek social support, use strategies regulating emotions, e.g. crying, share their problems with others, think about problems and think back to them. Boys more often than girls cope with stress using humour, aggression, physical activity and sport, by ignoring the problem and using addictive substances (alcohol, cigarettes) (Pisula, Sikora, 2008).

Attachment and stress coping strategies

John Bowlby (1969/2007) defines attachment as biologically determined need to build strong interpersonal emotional bond with another human being, which guarantees security. Most often the first person that builds a bond with the child is his/her mother (Bowlby, 1969/2007). The way mother is responding to the needs signaled by her child, and especially the way she reduces child fear and distress, is the foundation of child's attachment style (Oatley, Jenkins, 2003). The pattern of attachment is formed in the first years of a child's life, and the nature of his/her attachment style generally lasts throughout life (Bowlby, 2007).

John Bowlby (1969/2007) and Mary Ainsworth (1977) indicate the possibility of formation in a child of one of the three attachment styles: secure, anxiety-ambivalent and avoidance. Mary Main (1990) adds the fourth style to the classification – disorganized, which is omitted in this research presentation. In the secure interaction a caregiver-child interaction is synchronized. The caregiver is available and responsive, quickly reacts to needs signalized by the child and tries to satisfy them. He/she is involved, sensitive and caring. In an anxiety-ambivalent attachment relation a caregiver does not give the child a sense of security and confidence that will always be available to him. He is emotionally unstable, incoherent, an unpredictable, inconsequential and subordinate to their own needs. In the avoidant caregiver-child relation the caregiver is unavailable, cool, distanced, insensitive to the needs of the child, unfriendly towards him (Rostowski, 2003; Bowlby, 2007; Holmes, 2007; Stawicka, 2008). In secure relation the caregiver reacts to child signals of stress which intensifies its trust and directs to the preference of effective ways of coping with stress. However, in insecure caregiver-child relations the caregiver reacts inadequately to child distress conditioning mistrust of a child towards the outside world

and preference of less effective ways of reacting of the child to difficult situations in following years (following: Oatley, Jankins, 2003; Plopa, 2003).

The secure attachment style is connected with forming such resources to cope with stress like: high sense of security (Kuczyńska, 2001), trust (Rostowski, 2003), greater emotional maturity (Thomson, 1999, Belsky, Cassidy, 1994, following: Plopa, 2003; Carlson, Sroufe, 1995, Leve, Fagor, 1995, following: Bee, 2004), openness to others and a belief that it can count on the others and get both emotional and instrumental help (Belsky, Cassidy, 1994, Levi et al., 1998, following: Plopa, 2003; Thomson, 1999, following: Plopa, 2008), greater self-esteem (Black, McCartney, 1995, Liberman, Doyle, Markiewicz, 1995, following: Bee, 2004; Bowlby, 2007; Plopa, 2008), consistent self-structure (Mikulincer, 1995), competence and creativity (Brennan, Morns, 1997; Bylsma, Cozzarelli Sumer, 1997; Bowlby, 2007; Plopa, 2008), positive emotions (Goldberg, MacKay, Rochester, 1994, following: Oatley, Jenkins, 2003; Guttman-Steinmetz, Crowell, 2006; Janicka, 2006), greater social skills (Plopa, 2003; Black, McCartney, 1995, Liberman, Doyle, Markiewicz, 1995, Ostoja et al., 1995, following: Bee, 2004), adequate perception of stressors and selectivity in behaviour towards them (Plopa, 2003). Therefore such a person has more opportunities to cope with stress actively and effectively.

Forming insecure attachment styles in childhood is mainly connected with ineffective ways of coping with stress in following years. Anxiety-ambivalent style of attachment is associated with: reduced sense of security (Plopa, 2008), increased vigilance (Plopa, 2008), low self-esteem (Cassidy, 1988, Sroufe, 1985, following: Stawicka, 2001), tension (Plopa, 2008), anxiety (Fonagy, 1998, following: Stawicka, 2001; Marchwicki, 2012), impulsivity (Bowlby, 2007), the sense of incompetence (Brennan, Morns, 1997; Plopa, 2008), helplessness (Sroufe et al., 2000, following: Czub, 2003), a lower level of emotional maturity (Greenberg, 1999, following: Słaboń-Duda, 2011), impulsivity (Bowlby, 1988, following: Czub, 2003), the sense of alienation and withdrawal (Guttman-Steinmetz, Crowell, 2006), timidity (Plopa, 2008; Lee, Hankin, 2009), increased susceptibility to stress (Plopa, 2006, 2008; Marchwicki, 2012). Furthermore, anxious individuals were found to suffer from depression and more likely to turn toward alcohol (Brennan, Shaver, Tobey, 1991).

In case of avoidant attachment style, difficulties in coping with stress features formed in a unit are related to: discomfort and tensions in relations with others (Troy, Sroufe, 1987, following: Stawicka, 2001), withdrawal from contacts (Cassidy, 1988, following: Stawicka, 2001; Guttman-Steinmetz, Crowell, 2006), insecurity (Sroufe et al., 2000, following: Czub, 2003), lack of trust (Plopa, 2008), low level of emotional maturity, impulsiveness and irritability (Bartholomew, Horowitz, 1991; Brennan, Bosson, 1998, following: Rostowski, 2003), aggressiveness (Cohn, 1990, following: Stawicka, 2001), hostility (Kobak, Sceery, 1988, following: Stawicka, 2001; Clarke-Stewart et al., 1988, following: Rostowski, 2003), vindictiveness (Erickson, Sroufe, Egeland, 1985, following: Stawicka, 2008), developed defense mechanisms (especially denial) (Ainsworth, 1977). People with avoidant attachment style take risk more often than people with other styles (Sroufe et al., 2000, following:

Czub, 2003; Gentzler, Kerns, 2004), turn to alcohol, drugs and other stimulants (Bartholomew, Horowitz, 1991; Brennan, Bosson, 1998, following: Rostowski, 2003).

These assumptions about the relationship of personality characteristics defining each of the three attachment styles with preference for specific strategies for coping with stress have been confirmed in many studies. Turkish students with secure attachment style, more often than students with insecure style, undertook active planning of problems solving and seek for external support in difficult situations. However, they would rarely undertake avoidant behaviour both in behavioural and mental area (Terzi, 2013). In other studies concerning students, it was found that people with anxious-ambivalent attachment style strongly reacted to difficult situations – they were more vulnerable to the perception and interpretation of events as stressful (Pielage, Gerlsma, Schaap, 2000). In adult respondents from New Zealand, avoidant attachment style in stressful situations correlated positively with denial and mental withdrawal and negatively with the search of emotional and instrumental support. Anxious-ambivalent attachment style was positively correlated with denial and both behavioural and mental withdrawal shown in stress response and with reaching alcohol and drugs in those situations, and negatively correlated with active and planned attitude to problem solving and choosing such strategy of dealing as the search of instrumental support (Baker, 2006). Another research conducted in the group of Polish nurses showed that secure attachment styles are important predictor of dealing with difficult circumstances. Disclosure of insecure attachment styles did not favour dealing with stress and was associated with undertaking destructive and ineffective behaviours in difficult situations by nurses. The avoidant attachment style correlated negatively with the search for social support and with planning to solve the problem and with positive estimation of the problem as well as with avoidance of difficult situations. However, anxious-ambivalent attachment style correlated positively with the taking responsibility for solving the problem on themselves by nurses (Franczak, 2012).

In another study conducted among security guards working in the Belgian Red Cross, a negative relation of post-traumatic stress with secure attachment style of the respondents and positive relation with both the avoidant and anxiety-ambivalent style were found (Declercq, Willemsen, 2006). The research on the war experiences of respondents and the risk of disorders known as post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) shows that people with a secure attachment style work constructively in difficult situations and turn to others to get the emotional and instrumental support (Mikulincer, Florian, Weller, 1993; Mikulincer, Florian, 1995; Mikulincer, Shaver, 2003). People with insecure attachment styles often have negative thoughts and memories of stressful situations, and studies have revealed a positive correlation between these two styles and PTSD (Mikulincer, Florian, Weller, 1993; Mikulincer, Florian, 1995). Other studies show that anxiety-ambivalent people are also hypersensitive towards the problems encountered (Bartholomew, Horowitz, 1991), they have trouble with opening up to look for support from others, ways to cope with stress based on emotions and distancing the other dominate with them (Mikulincer, Florian, Weller, 1993; Mikulincer, Florian, 1995). People with avoidant attachment

style manifest higher levels of somatization in difficult situations, hostility and avoidance. They distance themselves from others and are less likely to seek support (Mikulincer, Florian, 1995).

Aims of the study

The aim of the present study was to test the relationship between the attachment styles and preferred strategies to cope with stress by men and women in adulthood. The main research problem was the question: *What is the relationship between the level of different attachment styles and the use of different ways of coping with stress by adult men and women?* The hypothesis assumed that the level of attachment style prototypes will be associated with the preference for certain coping strategies. It was expected that the anxious-ambivalent and avoidant attachment styles will be related with helplessness and avoidant strategies, respectively, whereas the secure attachment style with active coping and seeking for support. Moreover, it is assumed that the sex of the respondents may to some extent differentiate their attachment style preferences and stress coping strategies. Thus another research question was what is the extent of differences in attachment patterns and stress coping strategies, as well as the relation between them in groups of men and women.

Method

Sample

The research conducted in 2013 and 2014 was participated by 180 women and 180 men in the age between 20 and 40 ($M = 28.99$, $SD = 4.23$), living in the Zachodniopomorskie and Lubuskie Voivodeships in Poland. Participants were chosen at random. Participant consent was obtained prior to the data collection. Individuals were informed about the objectives and the procedure of the study. For those who agreed and provided informed consent, personal codes were assigned to secure anonymity and identification across the measurement points.

Measures

In order to answer the research question, two standardised research tools were used. To determine the nature of the attachment style formed in the respondents (secure, anxious-ambivalent and avoidant) the Questionnaire of Attachment Styles (KSP) designed by Mieczysław Plopa (2006) was used. In order to determine ways of coping with stress by the respondents C.S. Carver's Coping Inventory Mini-COPE, in the adaptation of Zygfryd Juczyński and Nina Ogińska-Bulik (2009) was used.

Attachment styles

The questionnaire, by Mieczyslaw Plopa (2008), was based on the theory by Hazan and Shaver (1994) referring to the similarity of the relationship between an adult and a baby in romantic relationships between adults. It is intended to examine individual attitude related with the formation of a close relationship with another

person and allows to specify which attachment style/pattern prototype dominates in respondents. Three styles are analyzed: secure (for example: *It is easy for me to be tender towards my partner*), anxious-ambivalent (for example: I *often worry that my partner does not want to be with me*), and avoidant (for example: *It is hard for me to open up to my partner*). The questionnaire consists of 24 items, 8 relating to each of the attachment styles. The respondents assess their attitude using 7-point Likert scale format (from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*). The reliability of subscales ranged from 0.78 to 0.91.

Stress coping strategies

A questionnaire developed by Charles S. Carver *Inventory for coping with stress* (MINI-COPE) consists of 28 claims, 2 relating to each of the fourteen strategies for coping with stress. The individual scales MINI-COPE were grouped into following strategies: I. Active coping: (1) Active coping, (2) Planning, (3) Positive reappraisal; II. Helplessness: (12) Use of psychoactive substances, (13) Suppression of activities, (14) Self-blame; III. Seeking support: (7) Seeking emotional support, (8) Seeking instrumental support; IV. Avoidant behaviours: (9) Dealing with something else, (10) Denial, (11) Venting of emotions; V. (6) Turn to religion; VI. (4) Acceptance; VII. (5) Sense of humour. Respondents rated their responses using 5-point Likert scale format (from *I hardly ever act like that* to *I almost always act like that*). The scale reliability was 0.86.

Results

Data were analyzed using the Statistica version 10.5. Correlations were measured between the variables: stress-coping strategies and attachment style (secure, anxious-ambivalent and avoidant). The analysis was performed using Pearson's correlation coefficient. First, we analyzed differences in attachment styles and stress coping strategies between men and women in our study using *t*-test.

Results presented in Table 1 revealed that women more often than the men use a support-seeking strategy (t = -.2.56), including: seeking emotional support (t = -2.42) and seeking instrumental support (t = -2.13); avoidant behaviours (t = -3.87), including: venting of emotions (t = -3.73), denial (t = -2.78), dealing with something else (t = -2.05); turn towards religion (t = -2.81); as well as self-blame (t = -2.70). The men more often than the women choose the use of psychoactive substances (t = 3.17). Such behaviours as active coping, or helplessness in the form of suppression of activities in a difficult situation are similarly preferred by the respondents of both sexes.

Table 1. The attachment styles of the respondents and coping with stress by them

	Men		Women		t
	M	SD	M	SD	
Attachment style					
Secure	44.10	9.22	45.61	8.44	-1.61
Anxious-ambivalent	24.21	9.49	26.30	9.45	-1.82[a]
Avoidant	18.28	1.09	18.19	9.73	0.09
Coping with stress					
Active coping	2.04	.50	2.03	.45	0.30
Active coping	2.16	.64	2.16	.53	-0.11
Planning	2.11	.64	2.06	.54	0.77
Positive reappraisal	1.86	.60	1.87	.63	-0.15
Helplessness	.92	.53	.91	.57	.013
Use of psychoactive substances	.72	.81	.46	.70	3.17**
Suppresion of activities	.81	.68	.83	.70	-0.30
Self-blame	1.23	.68	1.44	.79	-2.70**
Seeking support	1.85	.56	2.01	.57	-2.56*
Seeking emotional support	1.89	.65	2.05	.61	-2.42*
Seeking instrumental support	1.82	.64	1.96	.67	-2.13*
Avoidant behaviours	1.25	.50	1.46	.51	-3.87***
Dealing with something elese	1.59	.75	1.74	.68	-2.05*
Denial	.86	.69	1.08	.75	-2.78**
Venting of emotions	1.31	.68	1.57	.63	-3.73***
Turn to religion	.89	.90	1.17	.93	-2.81**
Acceptance	1.79	.67	1.90	.69	-1.54
Sense of humour	1.06	.60	.98	.71	1.14

[a]$p < .09$; *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$

Results related with the main research question addressing relations between attachment patterns and stress coping strategies are presented in Table 2. Active coping with stress was related weakly positively with a secure attachment style, and weakly negatively with avoidant attachment style in both groups. The same result for men and women referred to all strategies involved in active coping, except positive reappraisal which was not related to secure and avoidant attachment in both groups. Anxious-ambivalent attachment was not significantly related to active coping strategies.

Table 2. Correlation coefficients between stress coping strategies and attachment prototypes in groups of men and women

Attachment style	Secure r	Anxious- -ambivalent r	Avoidant r
Men			
Active coping	.26**	-.09	-.24**
Active coping	.21**	-.05	-.16*
Planning	.23**	-.13[a]	-.22**
Positive reappraisal	.18*	-.04	-.19*
Helplessness	-.18*	.25**	.18*
Use of psychoactive substances	-.23**	.09	.15*
Suppression of activities	-.20**	.27***	.21**
Self-blame	.04	.22**	.03
Seeking support	.26**	.00	-.22**
Seeking emotional support	.25**	-.04	-.26***
Seeking instrumental support	.20**	.04	-.13[a]
Avoidant behaviours	-.02	.29***	0.9
Dealing with something else	-.01	.21**	.05
Denial	-.02	.24**	.09
Venting of emotions	-.01	.16*	.06
Turn to religion	.08	.04	.06
Acceptance	.09	.12	-.01
Sense of humour	-.08	.02	.05
Women			
Active coping	.27***	-.05	-.16*
Active coping	.27***	-.11	-.13[a]
Planning	.25**	.04	-.19*
Positive reappraisal	.12	-.04	-.07
Helplessness	-.21**	.22**	.18*
Use of psychoactive substances	-.15*	.12	.16*
Suppression of activities	-.24***	.19*	.22**
Self-blame	-.10	.22**	.06
Seeking support	.20**	-.05	-.27***

cont. Table 2

Seeking emotional support	.30***	-.04	-.33***
Seeking instrumental support	.07	-.05	-.17*
Avoidant behaviours	-.02	.10	-.04
Dealing with something else	.12	-.04	-.14ᵃ
Denial	-.16*	.26***	.06
Venting of emotions	.01	-.03	-.02
Turn to religion	-.15*	.08	.03
Acceptance	.14ᵃ	.02	-.04
Sense of humour	-.03	.06	.06

ᵃ$p < .09$; *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$

Furthermore, a high level of helplessness correlated negatively and weakly with secure attachment and weakly positively with an anxious-ambivalent and an avoidant attachment styles in both groups of men and women. With regard to helplessness strategies, two results were exceptional to this general pattern. First, the use of psychoactive substances was not related with anxious-ambivalent attachment. Then, self-blame was related positively and weakly only to anxious-ambivalent attachment being unrelated to other attachment patterns. These results revealed the same patterns in both groups.

Analysis of relation between support seeking and attachment styles revealed pattern of results similar to active coping – attachment relations. In particular, support seeking in general was related positively and weakly with secure attachment and negatively weakly with avoidant attachment, being not related with anxious-ambivalent attachment. Exceptional result was found in the group of women where instrumental support seeking was not related with secure attachment.

Another group of coping strategies – avoidant behaviors was related weakly positively only with anxious-ambivalent attachment in the group of men. This result referred also to all strategies involved in avoidant coping strategy. In the group of women only denial was related with their anxious-ambivalent style and negatively and relatively weaker with their secure attachment.

Finally, a turn to religion as a way of coping in difficult situations weakly correlated only with secure attachment style in the group of women. A trend level correlation was also found in the group of women whose secure attachment style was slightly related with secure attachment.

Discussion

The aim of the present study was to determine the relationship that exists between the attachment styles reported by adult men and women and their stress coping strategies. Some interesting results were found.

Regarding description of the sample using attachment styles and coping strategies mostly general, gender independent results were found but also some differences between men and women emerged.

First, secure attachment pattern was relatively higher in all respondents compared to anxious-ambivalent and avoidant attachment style prototype. These results confirm attachment studies where secure attachment is prevalent. Then, the preferred ways of coping with stress by the respondents (almost always and often) were following in descending order: active coping, seeking support, acceptance, avoidant behaviours, a turn to religion, a sense of humour and helplessness. Adults in the present study focused on solving problems rather than on other, less optimal stress coping strategies. Some gender differences also were found. The women more often than the men use a support-seeking strategy, avoidant behaviours, turn towards religion and self-blame. The men more often than the women choose the use of psychoactive substances.

Regarding relations between attachment styles and stress coping strategies, the present study shows that secure attachment style is related with the use of active ways of coping with stress, both in terms of planning and a positive revaluation, seeking support, including emotional and instrumental support. Individuals with high secure attachment are: more likely to rarely behave helplessly in times of stress, less eager to use of psychoactive substances, less likely to deny the difficulties and to turn to religion. Based on attachment literature and in line of results of the present study we can assume that individuals with strong secure attachment style have distinctive characteristics which enable them to benefit from constructive ways of coping with stress (following: Czub, 2003; Bee, 2004; Bowlby, 2007; Holmes, 2007; Plopa, 2008; Stawicka, 2008; Marchwicki, 2012).

Individuals with high anxious-ambivalent attachment style were found in the present study to behave helplessly in difficult situations, however only men (not women) also were likely in the present study to use avoidant behaviors to deal with stress. Referring to attachment literature we can hypothesized that these behaviors are consistent with a learned mechanisms to deal with stress in childhood, when their caregivers were inadequately responsive to their needs (Czub, 2003; Bee, 2004; Bowlby, 2007; Holmes, 2007; Plopa, 2008; Stawicka, 2008; Marchwicki, 2012). The use of avoidance by men but not women may have cultural background not studied in the present study but underlying the study results.

Moreover, the results of the present study confirm that people with an avoidant attachment style use less strategies related to an active coping with stress. They seem to be less planning and a positively revaluating, less often seeking for emotional and instrumental support. More often they are helpless, they use psychoactive substances and are concerned with something else or cease to act in such situations. Referring these results to attachment literature it can be expected that highly avoidant individuals might experience in their childhood situations where the caregiver improperly responded to their needs, and sometimes did not react at all to child bids. Thus, they must have learned how to deal with the problem alone. The pattern of their dealing with stress may include: insecurity, low self-esteem, the

apparent self-sufficiency, loneliness, avoiding relationships, lack of faith in support, suppression of emotions and developed defense mechanisms (Czub, 2003; Bee, 2004; Bowlby, 2007; Holmes, 2007; Plopa, 2008; Stawicka, 2008; Marchwicki, 2012).

The results of the present study confirm analyses reported in other, earlier studies revealing patterns of the relationship between respondents' attachment style and ways of coping with difficult situations. By confirming these results the present study adds to the existing theories on the importance of attachment styles in preference of strategies for coping with stress in adulthood.

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STYL PRZYWIĄZANIA I RADZENIE SOBIE ZE STRESEM
W DOROSŁOŚCI

Streszczenie. Niniejszy artykuł zawiera analizę czynników determinujących predyspozycje indywidualne do radzenia sobie ze stresem w dorosłości, z dużym prawdopodobieństwem ukształtowane w dzieciństwie. Część teoretyczna definiuje stres i sposoby radzenia sobie z nim oraz opisuje wnioski płynące z przeprowadzonych do tej pory badań nad związkiem stylów przywiązaniowych z radzeniem sobie ze stresem. Przedstawiono wyniki badań własnych autora pokazujące preferencje wyboru różnych strategii radzenia sobie ze stresem w zależności od stylu przywiązania ukształtowanego w dzieciństwie. W badaniach przeprowadzonych w latach 2013 i 2014 wzięło udział 180 kobiet i 180 mężczyzn w wieku 20-40 lat (*M* = 28,99, *SD* = 4,23), żyjących w województwach zachodniopomorskim i lubuskim w Polsce. Uczestnicy wypełnili kwestionariusze określające ich sposoby radzenia sobie ze stresem i ich styl przywiązaniowy. Wyniki badań wykazują, że

respondenci, którzy najczęściej przejawiają aktywne radzenie sobie ze stresem i poszukują wsparcia w trudnych sytuacjach pochodzą z rodzin kształtujących u nich w dzieciństwie bezpieczny styl przywiązaniowy. Bezradność i zachowania unikowe są częściej przejawiane w sytuacjach stresowych przez respondentów wzrastających w rodzinach, które ukształtowały lękowo-ambiwalentny i unikowy styl przywiązaniowy.

Słowa kluczowe: stres, radzenie sobie ze stresem, style przywiązania