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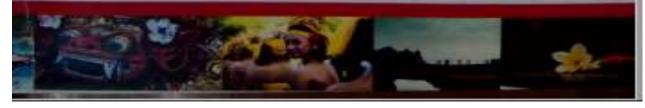
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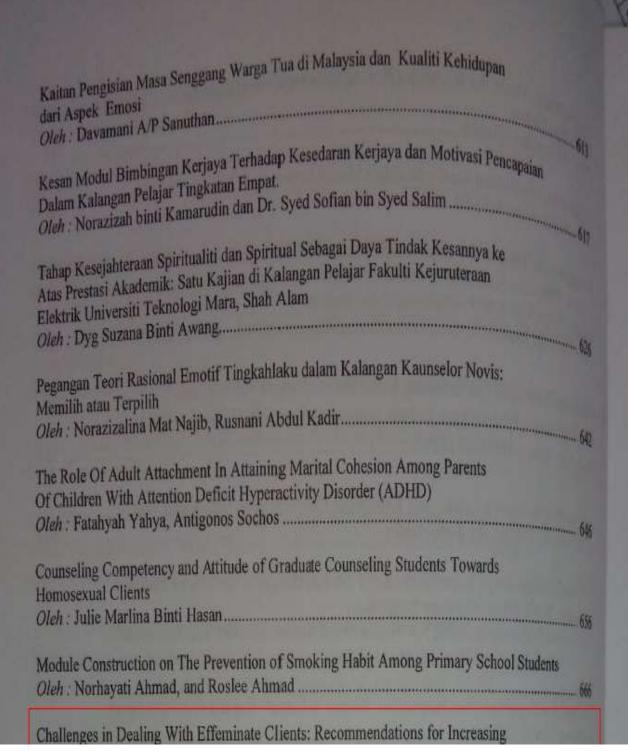
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THE ROLE OF ADULT ATTACHMENT IN ATTAINING MARITAL COHESION AMONG PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (ADHD)

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Abstract

The present study aimed to explore the influence of adult attachment on relationship quality in parents of children with ADHD. A cross-sectional method design was used to address the research objective. Two groups of participants were employed: parents of children with ADHD, and parents of children without ADHD. Three established questionnaires were used. The result from them hierarchical multiple regressions show that attachment style moderated the impact of having a child with ADHD on marital cohesion in the couple. In other words, having a child with ADHD was found to be affected by marital cohesion in the condition of high avoidance, but it was found to be unaffected by marital cohesion in the condition of low avoidance. This shows that the framework provided by Attachment Theory can potentially provide a unique understanding of the way in which adults function in terms of their interpersonal relationships. It is proposed that this research can make a contribution towards relevant intervention programs to facilitate support for parents of children with ADHD by emphasizing the importance of the attachment. In particular the findings of this research might inform interventions to enhance relationship satisfaction in parents of children with ADHD, and the behavior of the children with ADHD will be improved as an implication of their parents' relationship satisfaction.

Keyword: Adult Attachment; marital cohesion; Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

INTRODUCTION

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) was constitutes a chronic neurobiological condition characterised by developmentally inappropriate attention skills, impulsivity and/or hyperactivity (DSM-IV; American Psychiatric Association, 1994), that affecting approximately 3-5%, around 2 million children, in the United States (National Institute of Mental Health, 2004), and approximately 2-5% of all children in the world (Green & Chee, 1997). It is one of the most commonly diagnosed childhood psychiatric disorders (Cunningham, Benness & Siegel, 1988; Buhrmester, Camparo, Christensen, Gonzalez & Hinshaw, 1992; Rowland et al., 2002).

Symptoms include: inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity, which commonly begin to appear in a child's early life (National Institute of Mental Health, 2004). The main symptoms of ADHD are more common among: boys than among girls, preadolescents than among adolescents; and urban than among rural children (Hinshaw, 1994). All children are sometimes hyperactive, demonstrating the behaviours discussed above. However, ADHD may be

suspected if the child demonstrates behaviour that is very difficult to manage, along with poor social relationships and poor concentration, which is affecting school performance. In this case, it is important that the child receives a thorough examination and appropriate diagnosis by a qualified professional, (National Institute of Mental Health, 2004).

It is argued in this study that identifying the relevant attachment styles of the parents and also the pattern of their relationship cohesion within the couple relationship could be helpful in managing children in the environment. Several studies support the view that parents of children with ADHD experience a negative impact on every aspect of their daily and social life. To begin with, ADHD is associated with a disturbance of the parental relationship (Befera & Barkley, 1985; Cantwell, 1972; Gillberg, Carlstrom, Rasmussen, & Waldenstron, 1983). In relation to constructing a healthy relationship, a growing sense of attachment towards one