

Andreja Poljanec, Jernej Buzeti in Gašper Cankar<sup>1</sup>

## Comparison of attachment styles among Slovenian and Australian teachers in primary schools

*Primerjava stilov navezanosti med slovenskimi in avstralskimi učitelji v osnovnih šolah*

### Abstract

The aim of our research was to adapt the ECR-RT teacher questionnaire for the Slovenian context and to conduct a survey on the basis of this questionnaire to study, based on attachment theory, levels of anxiety and avoidance among Slovenian teachers. The ECR-RT methodological tool was designed to measure teachers' levels of avoidance and anxiety and was used for the first time in primary and secondary schools in Australia. As part of our research, we collected responses from 779 teachers from primary schools in Slovenia using an online survey questionnaire. The results show that the anxiety level is  $M=43.3$  ( $SD=17.3$ ), while the avoidance level is  $M=51.4$  ( $SD=16.8$ ), with the avoidance level of Slovenian teachers being statistically significantly higher than that of Australian teachers. Given the relatively high levels of anxiety and avoidance among the teachers in our sample, we suggest the development of appropriate support programmes and supervision for teachers aimed at promoting emotional maturity and strengthening secure attachment. The results of our research highlight the importance of equipping teachers with self-awareness and emotion regulation skills in the educational process, which provides essential insights for possible curriculum changes at different levels of the education system. Our findings point to a strong need for further research on the attachment styles of teachers in Slovenia and abroad. We recommend that future research should also include secondary school teachers.

**Keywords:** teacher, school, avoidance, anxiety, adult attachment

<sup>1</sup> Full Prof. Dr. Andreja Poljanec, Sigmund Freud University Vienna – Ljubljana branch, Slovenia, [andreja.poljanec@sfu-ljubljana.si](mailto:andreja.poljanec@sfu-ljubljana.si)  
Assist. Prof. Dr. Jernej Buzeti, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Public Administration, Slovenia, [jernej.buzeti@fu.uni-lj.si](mailto:jernej.buzeti@fu.uni-lj.si)  
Assist. Prof. Dr. Gašper Cankar, National Examination Centre, Slovenia, [gasper.cankar@ric.si](mailto:gasper.cankar@ric.si)

## Povzetek

Namen naše raziskave je bil prilagoditi anketni vprašalnik ECR-RT za učitelje za slovensko okolje in na tej osnovi proučiti stopnjo anksioznosti in izogibanja slovenskih učiteljic in učiteljev glede na teorijo navezanosti. Vprašalnik so za merjenje stilov navezanosti učiteljev in učiteljic prvič uporabili na osnovnih in srednjih šolah v Avstraliji. V naši raziskavi smo s pomočjo spletnega anketnega vprašalnika zbrali odgovore 779 učiteljic in učiteljev slovenskih osnovnih šol. Ugotovili smo visoki stopnjo anksioznosti  $M=43,3$  ( $SD=17,3$ ) in izogibanja  $M=51,4$  ( $SD=16,8$ ), pri čemer je stopnja izogibanja pri slovenskih učiteljicah in učiteljih statistično značilno višja kot pri avstralskih. Glede na to predlagamo razvoj ustreznih podpornih programov in supervizije, ki naj bodo namenjeni razvijanju čustvene zrelosti in krepitvi varne navezanosti učiteljic in učiteljev. Rezultati raziskave kažejo na pomembnost razvijanja veščin samozavedanja in regulacije čustev učiteljic in učiteljev, kar bi bilo potrebno podpreti s spremembami učnih načrtov na različnih ravneh izobraževalnega sistema. Naši izsledki kažejo tudi na potrebo po nadaljnjih raziskavah navezanosti pri učiteljicah in učiteljih v Sloveniji in tujini tako na osnovnošolski kot srednješolski ravni.

**Ključne besede:** učitelj, šola, izogibanje, tesnoba, stili navezanosti odraslih

## 1. Introduction

The traditional education system often prioritizes cognitive development over emotional growth. In Slovenia, teachers typically do not receive training on managing or discussing their emotions in the classroom, and neither are such skills developed during their university education. Historically, in the 20th century, teachers expected pupils to obey (Zalar, 2023) and could punish them as a form of discipline (Brdar, 2017). However, contemporary practices have shifted; punishment is no longer permitted in Slovenia (Zakon o organizaciji in financiranju vzgoje in izobraževanja (Law on the organisation and financing of education)) Today, pupils are more likely to comply when they understand the reasons behind rules and are increasingly aware of their rights. Nevertheless, the National Institute for Public Health reports a rise in psychological problems and symptoms of psychopathology among children (Klanšček Jeriček et al., 2023). This has left teachers confused about how to effectively manage their classrooms, contributing to an increase in teacher turnover (Sindikat vzgoje, izobraževanja, znanosti in kulture v Sloveniji, 2023; Trade Union of Education, Science and Culture in Slovenia, 2023).

Attachment theory, along with modern neuroscientific findings, underscores the importance of the relationships that teachers establish with their pupils

(Cozolino, 2013). Research indicates that a secure attachment model fosters relaxed and high-quality relationships, positively impacting both the learning process and teacher well-being (Cozolino, 2013; Rose et al., 2018; Bergin & Bergin, 2009).

Following the Attachment theory (Bowlby, 1988), we have assumed that teachers' internal attachment models may shape their reactions under stress. Therefore, in this article, we aim to explore levels of anxiety and avoidance among Slovenian primary school teachers and compare these with their Australian counterparts.

### 1.1. Literature review and hypothesis development

#### 1.1.1. The Importance of secure attachment

For healthy development, children need to feel accepted, safe, protected, and noticed. A nurturing environment allows their emotions, personality, and cognitive abilities to flourish. Insecure attachment can form when primary caregivers and other significant adults fail to respond appropriately to a child's needs, (Bowlby, 1988). Mary Main has contributed significantly to understanding how insecure attachments can evolve into secure ones in adult relationships (Main, 1993). Hazan and Shaver (1990) later extended the theory to work relationships (Yip et al., 2018), suggesting the potential for personal development among teachers if they receive adequate support.

#### 1.1.2. Measuring attachment

Initial research in personality and social psychology focused on categorical and dimensional self-reported measures assessing affect, behaviour, and cognition in relational contexts (Brennan et al., 1998; Hazan & Shaver, 1987) Attachment styles were classified into four categories: preoccupied, dismissing, fearful, and secure. More recent studies suggest that adult attachments styles are best understood along two dimensions – attachment avoidance and attachment anxiety (Brennan et al., 1998; Fraley & Spieker, 2003; Fraley & Waller, 1998). In this study, we utilized the Experience and Close Relationships Questionnaire revised for teachers (ECR-RT), based on this dimensional approach (Riley, 2013).

Anxiously attached individuals (also referred to as preoccupied) have an excessive need for closeness and approval, often accompanied by chronic fears of abandonment (Brennan et al, 1998). Neglectful and rejecting caregiver experiences can lead to an avoidant attachment style (also referred to as dismissing), characterized by discomfort with emotional closeness and distrust of others (Brennan et al., 1998; Karantzas et al., 2010). Such individuals tend to suppress negative emotions and withdraw in times of distress (Braun et al., 2012; Gillath et al., 2016), resulting in a fragile self-concept (Cozarelli et al., 1998). Securely

attached individuals score low on both dimensions, effectively regulating their emotions and responding constructively in conflicts (Cassidy & Shaver, 2016). Those with high scores on both dimensions (fearful attachment) exhibit a desire for close relationships but avoid them due to fears of emotional pain (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Gillath et al., 2016).

Research shows that children can also form attachments to teachers (Verschuere & Koomen, 2012; Verschuere, 2012; Mitchell-Copeland et al., 1997; Cozolino, 2013; Bergin & Bergin, 2009; Kesner, 2000). Cozolino (2013) argues that the teacher-pupil relationship is neurologically similar to the child-parent attachment, co-creating neural connections in the brain that foster enduring memories. Emotions are fundamental to cognitive learning; therefore, engaging the emotional dimensions of pupils' minds is essential for effective teaching (Immordino-Yang & Damasio, 2007). This raises questions about the emotional environment that Slovenian teachers create and whether they primarily exhibit a secure attachment style.

#### 1.1.3. Adult attachment

The attachment styles of adults significantly influence the attachment style of a child towards them, highlighting the critical role of adults in nurturing personal development, especially in educational contexts (Erzar & Kompan Erzar, 2011).

Teachers' attachment histories with their primary caregivers significantly impact their relationships with pupils (Pallini & Baiocco, 2015). Research by Gilbert et al. (1996) demonstrates that the quality of parental bonding experiences impacts teachers' responses to pupil requests. Specifically, teachers who report having received adequate parental care and who experienced less overprotection, shaming, and favouritism, tend to feel less embarrassed, angry, unqualified, alarmed, or powerless in their interactions with pupils. Conversely, those who perceive themselves as devalued, overprotected, or inferior as a result of their upbringing may experience a sense of inferiority that can adversely affect their interactions with pupils. Such dysfunctional patterns are likely to influence their approaches to conflict resolution and overall classroom management. Consequently, teachers play a crucial role in influencing their pupils' sense of coherence and academic functioning. Additionally, a pupil's sense of connection to their teacher impacts their well-being and academic engagement (Al-Yagon & Mikulincer, 2004). Thus, understanding the interplay between teachers' attachment histories and their professional behaviour is crucial for fostering supportive educational environments.

#### 1.1.4. Teachers' personal development

While individual attachment styles tend to be relatively stable (Bowlby, 1988; Harms, 2011), the brain's plasticity allows for the re-categorization of past experiences in the light of new ones (Riley, 2010; Main, 1985; Edelman, 1987). Riley

(2009) found that teachers in the first five years of teaching exhibited higher levels of avoidance and anxiety compared to their more experienced colleagues. Similarly, in his adaptation of the ECR-RT questionnaire, Riley (2013) observed that less experienced teachers reported greater avoidance and anxiety than their more experienced peers. Riley (2009) suggested that teachers may enter the profession to seek corrective emotional experiences to improve their own past attachments (Riley, 2009).

To date, we have not identified any additional studies using the ECR-RT questionnaire in the teacher population in available scientific databases. While some studies have employed the ECR or ECR-R questionnaires, their results are not directly comparable. Riley, (2013) demonstrated that ECR and ECR-RT yielded significantly different results in terms of anxiety and avoidance levels.

Given the role of teachers as potential attachment figures in schools (Cozolino, 2013), understanding this process is crucial. Riley (2013) found that higher avoidance levels were associated with lower teacher sensitivity and a less positive classroom climate. Teachers with avoidant styles were less responsive to the pupils' emotional and academic needs and exhibited lower levels of warmth and positive affect (Sher-Censor et al., 2019).

Maintaining mental well-being is vital for creating an environment conducive to learning. A teacher's supportive encouragement, balanced with appropriate challenges, activates neurotransmitters conducive to learning (Barad, 2000; Huang et al., 1999; Kang & Schuman, 1995; Kilgard & Merzenich, 1998; Kirkwood et al., 1999; Tang et al., 1999; in Cozolino, 2013). Conversely, an inability to connect, belong, cooperate, love, and be loved can lead to anxiety, depression, and alienation for both teachers and pupils (Cozolino, 2013). As Kennedy and Kennedy (2004) suggest, teachers need support to recognize the impact of their negative emotions and the benefits of positive teacher-pupil relationships. Koster et al. (1998) noted that teachers need support to manage their emotional challenges. Supervision can promote personal growth and facilitate broader changes within schools. Effective supervision helps teachers gain confidence and professional autonomy, laying the foundation for meaningful change.

In this article, we measured levels of avoidance and anxiety among Slovenian elementary school teachers and compared these with Riley's findings from primary school teachers in Australia. Therefore, in line with previous research, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 1: There are no differences in levels of avoidance and anxiety between Australian and Slovenian primary school teachers.

Hypothesis 2: There are no differences in levels of avoidance and anxiety among Slovenian primary school teachers based on their years of experience in their current positions.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1. Procedure and Participants

Data for this research was collected via an online questionnaire created using the *1ka* tool. The study focused on primary school teachers in Slovenian schools and was conducted in 2019. We gathered responses from 779 respondents, representing approximately 3.73% of the total population of primary school teachers in the country.

Primary school education in Slovenia is compulsory over a nine-year period, as stipulated by the Constitution, and is funded by public resources. Children typically begin their education at the age of six (Eurydice, 2019). In the 2018/2019 academic year, there were 186,328 children enrolled in primary schools (SORS, 2019a), supported by a workforce of 20,900 professionals, including teachers, managers, counsellors, and principals (SORS, 2019a).

The sample in our research consisted of 78.7% respondents holding a university degree or higher, while 20.0% had other forms of education, and 1.3% reported having completed upper secondary education. Most respondents were either married (65.1%) or in a partnership (30.4%), with the remaining 4.5% in other categories. The majority of participants were female (90.6%), while males comprised 9.4%. The median age was 44, with a range from 38 years in the first quartile to 52 years in the third quartile. In terms of residence, 48.9% came from rural areas and 51.1% from urban areas across all statistical regions of Slovenia. Most respondents were teachers in primary education (42.9%) or lower secondary education (49.0%). Years of service in their current employment ranged from 9.5 in the first quartile to 25 in the third quartile, with a median of 17 years.

### 2.2. Measures

We employed the Experiences in Close Relationship Questionnaire revised for teachers (ECR-RT), originally developed by Fraley et. al. (2000) and adapted for teachers by Riley (2013). This instrument assesses adult attachment styles across two orthogonal subscales: Anxiety and Avoidance, each measured by 18 items. Responses are provided on a 1–7 Likert scale, where 1 indicated strong disagreement and 7 indicates strong agreement. Each scale's possible scores range from 18 to 126. Both subscales demonstrated good internal consistency (Anxiety;  $\alpha = 0.90$ ; Avoidance;  $\alpha = 0.88$ ). The Slovenian version of the questionnaire exhibited similar internal consistency (Anxiety;  $\alpha = 0.90$ ; Avoidance;  $\alpha = 0.89$ ). The questionnaire was translated into Slovene, and items were reconciled in collaboration with a group of experts.

Exploratory factors analysis identified two factors: the first corresponding to an anxiety attachment style, explaining 20.01% of the variance, and the second corresponding to an avoidant attachment style, explaining 15.05% of the variance.

## 3. Results

The descriptive analysis revealed that the mean score for anxiety among participating primary school teachers was 43.33 (SD=17.29, Median = 40, Min = 18, Max = 99) and the mean score for avoidance was 51.11 (SD=16.97, Median = 40, Min = 18, Max = 99). Anxiety and avoidance were moderately correlated (Pearson's  $r = 0.499$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

We compared the Slovenian results with those from the Australian sample (Riley, 2013). Slovenian primary school teachers exhibited higher anxiety (Pupil  $t(778) = 0.829$ ,  $p = 0.407$ ; Australian teachers:  $M = 42.82$ ,  $SD = 14.13$ ) and avoidance scores (Pupil  $t(778) = 2.216$ ,  $p = 0.034$ ; Australian teachers:  $M = 49.82$ ,  $SD = 14.35$ ), with only the avoidance difference being statistically significant.

We analysed teachers' attachment styles based on selected variables: age, gender, and marital status. Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1. Our analysis found no significant correlation between age and either anxiety (Pearson's  $r = -0.039$ ,  $p = 0.277$ ) or avoidance (Pearson's  $r = 0.047$ ,  $p = 0.192$ ).

Table 1  
Descriptive statistics (M and SD) for observed variables.

<b>Gender</b>	Female, M (SD)	43.03 (17.39)	50.74 (16.18)
	Male, M (SD)	46.30 (16.09)	54.75 (17.02)
<b>Marital status</b>	Living with partner, M (SD)	43.17 (17.43)	51.01 (16.94)
	Other, M (SD)	46.77 (13.81)	53.40 (17.81)
Male teachers ( $n = 73$ ) scored higher on both anxiety and avoidance compared to female teachers ( $n = 706$ ) (Table 1), though only the difference in avoidance is statistically significant (Welch's $t(90.301) = 1.642$ , $p = 0.104$ for anxiety and Welch's $t(89.305) = 2.010$ , $p = 0.047$ for avoidance).			

Due to the small number of participants in some marital status categories, we combined those who were married or in common-law relationships ( $n = 744$ ) into one category, with all other responses grouped into a second category ( $n = 35$ ) (Table 1). The latter group scored higher on both dimensions compared to those living with a partner, but these differences were not statistically significant (Welch's  $t(39.279) = 1.488$ ,  $p = 0.145$  for anxiety and Welch's  $t(36.951) = 0.779$ ,  $p = 0.441$  for avoidance).

We also examined differences in anxiety and avoidance based on years of service at the current workplace, comparing those with less than five years to those with more than five years. The shorter tenure group reported lower anxiety and higher avoidance scores compared to their more experienced counterparts at current workplace. However, the difference was not statistically significant (Welch's  $t(208.158) = -0.841, p = 0.401$  for anxiety and (Welch's  $t(205.924) = 0.552, p = 0.582$  for avoidance).

#### 4. Discussion

Our aim was to adapt the ECR-RT questionnaire for the Slovenian teacher population to study teachers' attachment styles. Additionally, we sought to investigate differences and comparisons between Australian and Slovenian teachers' adult attachment styles in primary schools.

When comparing our results with those from Riley's (2013) study, we found that the mean anxiety scores for Slovenian and Australian elementary school teachers did not differ significantly, while Slovenian teachers exhibited higher levels of avoidance. Thus, our hypothesis 1 was partially confirmed. Riley (2013, 2009) interprets the Australian findings as indicative of an insecure attachment style, specifically a fearful type attachment, as referenced in the research by Brennan et al. (1998) and Fraley et al. (2000). This may suggest that teachers struggle to express and recognize emotions in their relationships, which can hinder their ability to establish emotional connections with pupils. When faced with emotional stress, they may block out material that feels threatening (Fraley et al., 2000; Cassidy & Shaver, 2008), potentially resulting in emotional intensity in classroom interactions. Additionally, studies indicate that teachers often do not openly express anger in conflict situations; instead, they may harbour hostility (Mikulincer, 1998; Cassidy & Shaver, 2008). This dynamic can leave pupils' emotions unresolved, as children require a mature adult to provide reassurance (Tronick, 2007; Siegel, 2014). Teachers with a propensity for avoidance may feel anger and aggression towards pupils (Riley, 2013) but might not express these feelings openly (Mikulincer, 1998, Cassidy & Shaver, 2008), reflecting a less developed capacity for affect regulation (Riley, 2009; Cozolino, 2013; Erzar & Kompan Erzar, 2011).

It is noteworthy that avoidance is prevalent among teachers. Riley (2009) posits that teachers may choose their profession in search of an unconscious corrective experience. These underdeveloped emotional skills, stemming from their primary relationships, may lead teachers to seek better interactions with children than they received from their caregivers. In working with vulnerable

or neurologically immature children and adolescents, this presents an opportunity for teachers' personal development.

Comparing mean values by gender, we found that male teachers scored higher than female teachers on both anxiety and avoidance in Slovenia but not in Australia (Riley, 2013). However, Slovenian male teachers exhibited significantly greater avoidance than their female counterparts, a noteworthy finding that we cannot generalize due to the smaller number of male respondents. Generally, gender differences in attachment styles are not significant (Cassidy & Shaver, 2008).

Our results indicated no correlation between age and anxiety. In contrast, Riley (2013) found that experience reduced anxiety more than age, suggesting that anxiety decreases as teachers gain work experience. In our Slovenian sample no differences in levels of avoidance and anxiety were found based on their years of experiences in their current positions. Therefore hypothesis 2 was confirmed. While our study did not specifically measure years of experience as Riley's did – a limitation – it is important to recognize that over the course of time, teachers in Australia became less avoidant and anxious, which is vital for personal growth in professions involving children. Given the high quality of the Australian educational system, it is possible that the differences may be attributed to structural disparities, emphasizing the need for greater support for teachers to develop safe relationship models in their interactions with children.

Riley (2013) additionally noted that avoidance also decreased with age, while we did not observe a similar trend in the Slovenian sample. A possible explanation could be that Slovenian teachers prefer not to get too involved in relationships even after more years of working in one school. This distance could help them avoid possible bad and painful feelings. This could be related to their experience of engagement in relationships which are not good enough to make a correction experience possible or to develop less avoidant strategies and not being afraid of being disappointed, misunderstood or hurt. However, to confirm this explanation would require additional research questions to observe teachers' other relationships.

Given these observations, we believe that Slovenian teachers require support in understanding and managing their distress in order to develop less avoidant and anxious relationship strategies. Such support would promote a more emotionally and socially mature approach to interactions, reducing levels of avoidance and anxiety and enhancing their sense of security. Mindfulness methods have been shown to reduce stress, depression, and anxiety in teachers (Gold et al., 2010).

Research indicates that individuals with an avoidant attachment style often employ evasive defences (Berant et al., 2001, Cassidy and Shaver; Mikulincer, 1998; Cassidy & Shaver, 2008), which may lead teachers to avoid unnecessary conflicts. Avoidant individuals tend to be overly cautious, fearing exposure to conflict and dissatisfaction, often hesitating to express negative emotions due to concerns about rejection (Birtchnell, 1988). This tendency is coupled with heightened anxiety, which can inhibit empathy. As a result, they may struggle to focus on others' needs during stressful situations, hindering their ability to provide support (Marvin & Britner, 1999). Their insecurity, combined with difficulties in emotional regulation and inhibited empathy, prevents them from creating a safe and nurturing environment for pupils. Cozolino (2013) and Porges (2017) emphasize that institutions often overlook the essential role of security in educational settings, despite its critical importance. One of the possible ways to support teachers would also be in providing supervision groups. The supervisor's adaptation or responsiveness to the supervisee's learning needs, professional issues and dilemmas, as well as providing support and stress regulation, would contribute to the supervisee's growth (Kovačević Tojnko & Rožič, 2022).

## 5. Conclusion

Secure relationships in the classroom are essential for both teachers and pupils to develop their personalities fully. Our research indicates that Slovenian teachers display high levels of anxiety and avoidance, which may hinder their ability to cope maturely with their own and their pupils' emotions. These elevated anxiety and avoidance levels also complicate cognitive development. Teachers have the potential to evolve towards a more secure model in their relationship with pupils, but they must recognize the importance of safe and relaxed interactions, along with professional support. In Australia, supervision of preservice teachers on professional experience is a key component of professional experience, widely considered to be the most valued aspect of preservice teacher training (Griffiths et al., 2021). This support is crucial to the development of high calibre teachers who are a pivotal component of a quality education system, considered central to a nation's prosperity (White et al., 2010).

### 5.1. Theoretical implications

This study contributes to theoretical understanding by translating the ECR-RT methodological tool into Slovenian and utilizing it for the first time on a large Slovenian sample. This will facilitate its use in future research. The findings indicating high avoidance and anxiety among Slovenian teachers, consistent

with Riley's (2013) results for Australian teachers, raise concerns, as those teachers may lack the necessary emotional capacity needed to regulate both their own feelings and those of their pupils (Cozolino, 2013).

### 5.2. Practical implications

This study has several practical implications. The translation, statistical evaluation, and application of the ECR-RT methodological tool for Slovenia allow for its use in measuring teachers' attachment styles in future studies. Given that our findings indicate teachers have generally high levels of avoidance and anxiety, which could adversely affect their well-being and their relationships with pupils, it is essential to implement appropriate support programmes regularly. Such programmes could enhance recognition and regulation of emotions and supervision, thereby reducing anxiety and avoidance levels. This would foster more relaxed teacher-pupil relationships, which are critical for individual development. Past research has shown that supervision among teachers and principals effectively prevents stress and burnout, contributing to personal and professional growth (Kobolt & Žorga, 1999). However, such practices are still not standard in the educational system. Our results emphasize the urgent need for teacher education programmes at both secondary school and university levels to incorporate courses on self-awareness or mindfulness techniques. This is vital information for policy makers involved in developing teacher education policies and programmes.

### 5.3. Limitations

Further research utilizing the questionnaire is warranted due to the lack of similar studies. We did not collect data from secondary school teachers in Slovenia, but exploring this demographic would provide valuable insights. This topic merits further investigation as current results – despite a large sample – do not fully clarify the characteristics of the teacher population working with children and pupils. This information is crucial for guiding policy development aimed at improving the education system and providing support for teachers, as the classroom atmosphere and the well-being of pupils, who are particularly vulnerable, depend significantly on their teachers' attachment styles.

## Literature

- Al-Yagon, M., & Mikulincer, M. (2004). Socioemotional and academic adjustment among children with learning disorders: The mediational role of attachment-based factors. *The Journal of Special Education, 38*, 111–123.
- Bartholomew, K., & Horowitz, L. M. (1991). Attachment styles among young adults: A test of a four-category model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 61*(2), 226–244. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.61.2.226>
- Bergin, C., & Bergin, D. (2009). Attachment in the classroom. *Educational psychology review, 21*, 141–170.
- Birtchnell, J. (1988). Defining dependence. *British Journal of Medical Psychology, 61*(2), 111–123. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8341.1988.tb02770.x>
- Bowlby, J. (1988). *A secure base*. Routledge.
- Braun, M., Hales, S., Gilad, L., Mikulincer, M., Rydall, A., & Rodin, G. (2012). Caregiving styles and attachment orientations in couples facing advanced cancer. *Psycho-Oncology, 21*(9), 935–943. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pon.1988>
- Brdar, S. (2017). *Načini kaznovanja v osnovni šoli, kot jih zaznavajo učenci*. Magistrsko delo. Univerza v Ljubljani, Pedagoška fakulteta.
- Brennan, K. A., Clark, C. L., & Shaver, P. R. (1998). Self-Report Measurement of Adult Attachment: An Integrative Overview. In J. A. Simpson & W. S. Rholes (Eds.), *Attachment theory and close relationships* (pp. 46–76). The Guilford Press.
- Cassidy, J., & Shaver, P. R. (Eds.). (2016). *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications*. Guilford Press.
- Cozarelli, C., Sumer, N., & Major, B. (1998). Mental models of attachment and coping with abortion. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 74*(2), 453–467. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.74.2.453>
- Cozolino, L. (2013). *The Social Neuroscience of Education*. W.W. Norton & Company.
- Edelman, G. (1987). *Neural Darwinism*. Basic Books.
- Erzar, T. & Kompan Erzar, K. (2011). *Teorija navezanosti*. Celjska Mohorjeva založba.
- Fraley, R. C., & Spieker, S. J. (2003). Are infant attachment patterns continuously or categorically distributed? A taxometric analysis of strange situation behavior. *Developmental Psychology, 39*(3), 387–404. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.39.3.387>
- Fraley, R. C., & Waller, N. G. (1998). Adult attachment patterns: A test of the typological model. In J. A. Simpson & W. S. Rholes (Eds.), *Attachment theory and close relationships* (pp. 77–114). Guilford Press.
- Fraley, R. C., Waller, N. G., & Brennan, K. A. (2000). An item response theory analysis of self-report measures of adult attachment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 78*, 350–365.
- Gillath, O., Karantzas, G. C., & Fraley, R. C. (2016). *Adult attachment: A concise introduction to theory and research*. Academic Press.
- Gold, E., Smith, A., Hopper, I., Herne, D., Tansey, G., & Hulland, C. (2010). Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) for Primary School Teachers. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 19*, 184–189. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-009-9344-0>
- Griffiths, M., Shean, M., & Jackson, D. (2021). Supervision in initial teacher education: A scoping review. *Issues in Educational Research, 31*(2), 476–497.
- Harms, P. D. (2011). Adult attachment styles in the workplace. *Human Resource Management Review, 21*, 285–296. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2010.10.006>
- Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 52*(3), 511–524. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.52.3.511>
- Immordino-Yang, M. H., & Damasio, A. (2007). We Feel, Therefore We Learn: The Relevance of Affective and Social Neuroscience to Education. *Mind, Brain, and Education, 1*(1), 3–10. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-228X.2007.00004.x>
- Karantzas, G. C., Feeney, J. A., & Wilkinson, R. (2010). Is less more? Confirmatory factor analysis of the Attachment Style Questionnaires. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 27*(6), 749–780. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407510373756>
- Kennedy, J. H., & Kennedy C. E. (2004). Attachment theory: Implications for school psychology. *Psychology in Schools, 41*, 247–259.
- Kesner, J. E. (2000). Teacher characteristics and the quality of child-teacher relationships. *Journal of School Psychology, 38*, 133–149.
- Klanšček Jeriček, H., Furman, L., Rožkar, M., Drev, A., Pucelj Koprivnikar, H., Zupanič, T., & Korošec, A. (2023). *Z zdravjem povezana vedenja v šolskem obdobju med mladostniki v Sloveniji. Izsledki mednarodne raziskave HBSC, 2022*. Nacionalni inštitut za javno zdravje.
- Kobolt, A., & Žorga, S. (1999). Modeli v superviziji. In Kobolt A., & Žorga, S. (Eds.), *Supervizija: proces razvoja in učenja v poklicu* (pp.186–216). Ljubljana: Pedagoška fakulteta.
- Koster, B., Korthagen, F. A. J., & Wubbels, T. H. (1998). Is there anything left for us? Functions of cooperating teachers and teacher educators. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 21*(1), 75–89.
- Kovačević Tojinko, N., & Rožič, T. (2022). Skupne značilnosti programov metasupervizije znotraj socialnega varstva v Sloveniji in njihove podobnosti z generičnim modelom supervizije. *Kairos – slovenska revija za psihoterapijo, 16*(3-4), 811-811.
- Main, M., Kaplan, N., & Cassidy, J. (1985). Security in Infancy, childhood and adulthood: A move to the level of representation. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 50*(1-2), 88–107.
- Main, M. (1993). Discourse, prediction, and the recent studies in attachment: Implications for psychoanalysis. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association, 41*, 209–244.
- Main, M. (1995). Recent studies in attachment: Overview, with implications for a clinical work. In Goldberg, S., Muir, R., & Kerr, J. (Eds.), *Attachment theory: Social, developmental, and clinical perspectives* (pp. 407–474). Analytic Press.
- Marvin, R. S., & Britner, P. A. (1999). Normative development: The ontogeny of attachment. In Cassidy, J., & Shaver, P. R. (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment* (pp. 44–67). The Guilford Press.
- Mitchell-Copeland, J., Denham, S., & DeMulder, E. K. (1997). Q-Sort Assessment of Child-Teacher Attachment Relationships and Social Competence in the Preschool. *Early Education and Development, 8*(1), 27–39. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15566935eedo801\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15566935eedo801_3)
- Pallini, S., & Baiocco, R. (2015). “Why Did You Want to See Me?”: Teachers’ Reactions to a Student’s Request as a Function of Teachers’ Personal Early Experiences of Attachment. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology, 176*(1), 26–37. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00221325.2014.997660>
- Porges, S. W. (2017). *The pocket guide to Polyvagal Theory*. Norton.
- Riley, P. (2009). An adult attachment perspective on the student-teacher relationship & classroom management difficulties. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 25*(5), 626–635.
- Riley, P. (2010). *Attachment Theory and the Teacher-Student Relationship: A Practical Guide*. Routledge.
- Riley, P. (2013). *To stir with Love*. Unpublished doctoral thesis.
- Rose, J., McGuire-Snickus, R., Gilbert, L., & McInnes, K. (2018). Attachment Aware Schools: the impact of a targeted and collaborative intervention. *Pastoral Care in Education. An International Journal of Personal, Social and Emotional Development, 37*(2), 162–184. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02643944.2019.1625429>
- Sher-Censor, E., Nahamias-Zlotolov, A., & Dolev, S. (2019). Special Education Teachers’ Narratives and Attachment Style: Associations with Classroom Emotional Support. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 28*, 2232–2242. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-019-01440-6>
- Siegel, D., & Payne Bryson, T. (2014). *Celostni razvoj otrokovih možganov*. Pogled.
- Sindikata vzgoje, izobraževanja, znanosti in kulture v Sloveniji – SVIZ (2023). *Pomanjkanje zaposlenih v vrtih in šolah*. [https://www.sviz.si/pomanjkanje-zaposlenih-v-vrtih-in-solah\\_1/](https://www.sviz.si/pomanjkanje-zaposlenih-v-vrtih-in-solah_1/)

- Tronick, E. (2007). *The neurobehavioral and social-emotional development of infants and children*. W. W. Norton&Company.
- Verschueren, K., & Koomen, H. M. (2012). Teacher-child relationships from an attachment perspective. *Attachment & Human Development, 14*(3), 205-211. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616734.2012.672260>
- White, S., Bloomfield, D., & Le Cornu, R. (2010). Professional experience in new times: Issues and responses to a changing education landscape. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education, 38*(3), 181-193. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1359866X.2010.49329>
- Yip, J., Ehrhardt, K., Black, H., & Walker, D. O. (2018). Attachment theory at work: A review and directions for future research. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 39*(2), 185-198. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2204>
- Zakon o organizaciji in financiranju vzgoje in izobraževanja (ZOFVI). Uradni list RS, št. 16/07 - uradno prečiščeno besedilo, 36/08, 58/09, 64/09 - popr., 65/09 - popr., 20/11, 40/12 - ZUJF, 57/12 - ZPCP-2D, 47/15, 46/16, 49/16 - popr., 25/17 - ZVaj, 123/21, 172/21, 207/21, 105/22 - ZZNŠPP, 141/22, 158/22 - ZDoh-2AA in 71/23.
- Zalar, N. (2023). *Fizično kaznovanje otrok v šolah: pregled sprememb skozi čas in mednarodna primerjava*. Diplomsko delo. Univerza v Mariboru, Fakulteta za varnostne vede.