

Erasmus University Rotterdam, the Netherlands
CSC PhD 2015 Project Description

School/Department:	Erasmus School of Economics, Department of Marketing, Erasmus University, Rotterdam
Project Title:	Attachment Styles Explain Performance of People in Business Organizations
Abstract:	<p>Current turbulent business environments require its employees to continuously work on current projects in teams but also to undertake entrepreneurial actions such that their firm thrives. An important question we seek to study is “why do some employees thrive while others fail to reach their potential?</p> <p>To answer this question we focus on people’s attachment system which is a psychological attention system activated when people experience negative emotions (stress) as they feel a lack of proximity from caring others who might provide them with neuroception of safety cues and support in case of need. This in turn motivates them to seek proximity. Literature distinguishes between three fundamental and universal attachment styles in humans which differ to the degree of activations in case of stress: secure (normal activation), avoidant (hypoactivation), and anxious (hyperactivation).</p> <p>Attachment systems are formed through developmental trajectories at an early age during interaction with caretakers (e.g., mothers, grandparents) and are hard wired systems affecting social interactions in many domains during adulthood but a) not much is known about how these hard wired systems operate in the biological/neuro-scientific sense (the underlying neural mechanisms just are beginning to be understood) and b) therefore it is not known why and how people with different attachment styles might contribute to business teams in idiosyncratic ways (e.g., our own research indicates that avoidant employees contribute well to firms due to their self-reliance and balanced interpersonal styles, compared to secure and anxious styles which are often unbalanced, unstable, and dysfunctional).</p> <p>The study consists of three different pillars: 1) <u>Attachment styles as capabilities</u>: using fMRI we assume that people’s attachment styles reflect different hardwired systems allowing them to detect and respond to social stimuli optimally. Using Diffusion Tensor Imaging (DTI) we expect to uncover different neural networks corresponding to different attachment styles. We have a substantial experience using fMRI methods on professionals.</p>

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	<p>2) <u>Using hyperscanning to uncover brain activations</u>: hyperscanning allows two people to be placed in two fMRI scans, while they that interact with each other allowing their coordinated attention and coping behavior to be studied simultaneously. We expect that when people with different attachment styles interact (e.g., anxious with avoidant) that they exhibit different attention behaviors towards stimuli. Thus far our team has already used dual EEG as a method to study joint attention.</p> <p>3) <u>Endocrinological correlates</u>: based on endocrinology we study teams engaged in tasks composed of people with heterogeneous/homogenous attachment styles and conjecture that cortisol/testosterone levels vary according to team compositions. Our team has already studied cortisol and testosterone levels of people during tasks involving teams in competitive environments.</p>
Requirements of candidate:	<p>Master degree: Yes</p> <p>Background: The student should have a background in life sciences (such as neuroscience or genetics) or psychology. He or she is willing to learn new techniques such as fMRI or endocrinology.</p> <p>The Ph.D. student should have high performance in his or her studies, must show emotional stability, be persistent and able to work in teams.</p> <p>Prior to acceptance, the candidate should meet the ERIM qualifications: IELTS > 7.5 TOEFL > 100, GMAT of GRE top 15%, see http://www.erim.eur.nl/doctoral-programme/phd-in-management/admissions/admission-requirements/</p> <p>Prior to acceptance, the supervisor will interview the candidate.</p>

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<p>Supervisor information:</p>	<p>Professor Willem Verbeke, Ph.D., Erasmus School of Economics.</p> <p>Verbeke@ese.eur.nl http://www.willemverbeke.nl/en/intro</p> <p>In collaboration with Professor Harm Krugers, University of Amsterdam; Professor Jan Van Strien, Erasmus University; Professor Rick Bagozzi, University of Michigan; Professor Arnold Bakker, Erasmus University; Professor Martinus Ijzendoorn, Erasmus MC; Professor Tsachi, Ein-Dor, Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya; Professor Pascal Vrticka, Max Planck Institute, Leipzig; Professor Gert Flik, University Nijmegen; Professor Ruud van den Bos, University Nijmegen; and Professor Marion Smits, Department of Radiology, Erasmus MC.</p> <p>Bibliography Supervisor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “The role of attachment styles in regulating the effects of dopamine on the behavior of salespersons,” <i>Frontiers in Human Neuroscience</i> (2014), With Bagozzi, R. P., & van den Berg, W. E. ▪ “Salespersons as internal knowledge brokers and new products selling: discovering the link to genetic makeup,” <i>Journal of Product Innovation Management</i> (2014), with Berg, W. E., Bagozzi, R. P., Worm, L., Jong, A., & Nijssen, E. ▪ “Introduction to special issue: sales and innovation,” <i>Journal of Product Innovation Management</i> (2014), with Jong, A., & Nijssen, E. ▪ “I am resting but rest less well with you” The moderating effect of anxious attachment style on alpha power during EEG resting state in a social context,” <i>Frontiers in Human Neuroscience</i> (2014), with Pozharliev, R., Van Strien, J. W., Belschak, F., & Bagozzi, R. P. ▪ “Dynamic incentive effects of relative performance pay: a field experiment,” <i>Labour Economics</i> (2014), with Delfgaauw, J., Dur, R., & Non, A. ▪ Bagozzi, R. P., & Verbeke, W. J. (2014). An emerging
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