

Revision Notes



ATTACHMENT

Specification

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- **Caregiver-infant interactions in humans: reciprocity and interactional synchrony. Stages of attachment identified by Schaffer. Multiple attachments and the role of the father.**
- **Animal studies of attachment: Lorenz and Harlow.**
- **Explanations of attachment: learning theory and Bowlby's monotropic theory. The concepts of a critical period and an internal working model.**
- **Ainsworth's 'Strange Situation'. Types of attachment: secure, insecure-avoidant and insecure-resistant.**
- **Cultural variations in attachment, including van Ijzendoorn.**
- **Bowlby's theory of maternal deprivation. Romanian orphan studies: effects of institutionalisation.**
- **The influence of early attachment on childhood and adult relationships, including the role of an internal working model.**



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Caregiver-Infant Interactions

What is an attachment?

A close two way emotional bond between individuals in which each individual sees the other as essential for their own emotional security.

Caregiver-Infant Interactions

Reciprocity

This develops by about three months. The interaction is reciprocal, when each person responds to the other's signals.

Interactional Synchrony

The infant and the mother mirror the actions and emotions of each other in a synchronised way.

Evaluation of Caregiver-Infant Interactions

Observations

When observing infant interactions it can be difficult to know what is merely a hand movement and what is a direct interaction (Gratier 2000).

Importance

Feldman (2012) points out that synchrony and reciprocity simply describes behaviours. But they do not tell us the developmental purpose of them.

Validity

The observations are well controlled and filmed from multiple angles. This enables inter-rater reliability as more than one observer can watch. Also, the babies don't know they're being observed and so do not change their behaviour.



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Stages of Attachment

Schaffer & Emerson's Glasgow Babies

Studied 60 Glasgow babies from working class backgrounds. They visited every month for the first year and then again at 18 months. They measured the babies' attachment by asking the mother questions about separation and stranger anxiety.

Schaffer & Emerson's Stages of Attachment

Stage 1: Asocial

The baby is recognising and bonding with its caregiver. It responds to objects and humans in a similar manner. There is some preference for familiar adults, in that those individuals find it easier to calm them. Babies seem to be happier in the presence of these individuals.

Stage 2: Indiscriminate Attachment

Babies display a preference towards people compared to inanimate objects. They recognise and prefer familiar humans. Usually accepts cuddles and comfort from any adult and they do not usually show separation anxiety or stranger anxiety.

Stage 3: Specific Attachment

The majority of infants start to display stranger anxiety and separation anxiety. Formed a specific attachment, this is the person who best responds to the infants needs and signals.

Stage 4: Multiple Attachments

Infants start to have secondary attachments with people it sees on a regular basis. 29% of infants had a secondary attachment within a month of forming a specific attachment. By the age of one year the majority of infants have formed multiple attachments.



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Stages of Attachment

Evaluation of Schaffer's Stages

Earlier Attachment

Carpenter (1975) found that two week old infants looked at faces for longer when it was accompanied with the mother's voice rather than an unfamiliar one.

This suggests that infants are attached to their mothers at an earlier age than Schaffer and Emerson suggested.



Culture

Van Ijzendoorn found that culture plays a part in how and when we form attachments and with whom.

In many non western societies, babies have multiple carers, as this is the norm and so multiple attachments are formed earlier.

Asocial Stage

Young babies have poor coordination and are pretty much immobile in the first few weeks.

Therefore, it can be difficult to make any judgements about the purpose of behaviour.



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Role of the Father

What is the Father's Role?

Not Important

Grossman (2000) found the quality of attachment with the mother was important when examining adolescent attachments, but the quality of the fathers was not.

Multiple Attachment

Schaffer & Emerson (1964) found that 75% of babies have attached to their fathers by the age of 18 months, becoming an important secondary attachment to the mother.

Play Role

Grossman et al. (2002) found that the quality of father's play with their babies was linked to the quality of attachment in adolescence, suggesting a play role rather than an emotional role.

Primary Caregiver

Fathers have the potential to be a primary attachment figure. Field (1978) filmed reactions of infants to fathers and found that primary caregiving fathers spent more time interacting, smiling, imitating and holding infants, similar to mothers.

Inconsistent Research

Some researchers examine fathers as a primary figure and some as secondary. Meaning we cannot simply answer 'what is the role of the father?'

Real-World Application

Parents can be reassured that fathers can be effective primary caregivers if the mother wants to work.

Father's Role Not Important

MacCullum & Golombok (2004) found children in single/same sex parent families do not develop any differently.



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Animal Studies

Lorenz's Geese (1952)



Aim

To investigate how attachments form in geese.

Procedure

- Took a large clutch of goose eggs
- Placed half of the eggs with a goose mother, the other half were put in an incubator, where the first moving object they would see would be Lorenz

Findings

When the geese hatched Lorenz imitated a mother goose's quacking sounds, upon which the young birds regarded him as their mother and followed him accordingly. The other group followed the mother goose. When mixed together the two groups separated to go to their respective 'mothers' - half to the goose, and half to Lorenz. This was called imprinting – where species that are mobile from birth attach to the first moving object they see.

Conclusion

Imprinting has a critical period during when it can occur. Depending on the species, it could occur as early as one hour after hatching, the strongest responses occurred between 12 and 17 hours after hatching, and that after 32 hours the response was unlikely to occur at all. Once imprinting has occurred it cannot be reversed, nor can a gosling imprint on anything else.



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Animal Studies

Evaluation of Animal Studies

Real World Application

Harlow's research has good practical application to society, for instance, the field of social work, where we now understand how important it is for a baby to be placed with adoptive families as early as possible in order that they can attach securely.

It also informs zoo keepers how important attachment figures are for animals in breeding programmes.

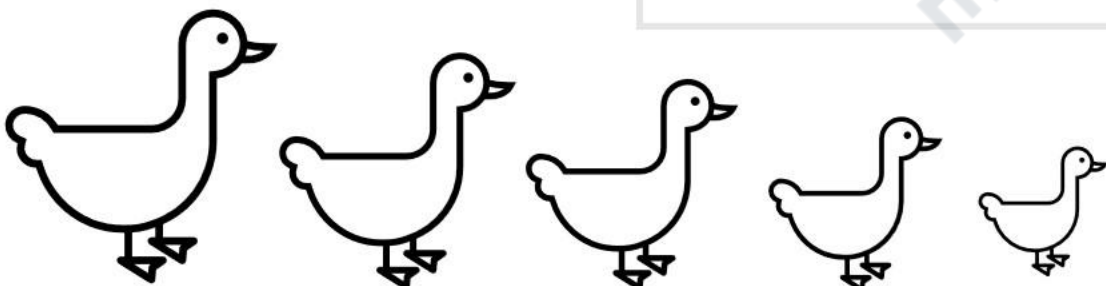
Generalisability

It is difficult to generalise findings from animals to human beings. Attachment in humans may be different to the attachments animals form as human babies are more defenceless when born and need a greater degree of care than monkeys.

Critical or Sensitive?

Sluckin (1966) conducted research with ducklings and successfully imprinted them onto himself but he kept one duckling in isolation for five days. That duckling was still able to imprint.

Rather than a critical period there was a sensitive period when imprinting was best to occur but attachments could still be formed later.



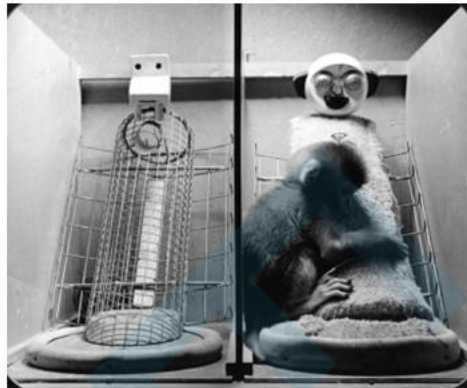


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Animal Studies

Harlow's Monkeys (1958)



Aim

To investigate whether food or comfort was more important in forming a bond in monkeys.

Procedure

- He reared 16 baby monkeys with two wire model 'mothers', one of which was covered in cloth.
- In the first condition the wire mother dispensed milk and in the second condition the cloth mother dispensed milk.

Findings

The monkeys preferred to cuddle the cloth-covered mother to the wire one. When they frightened the monkeys with a noisy mechanical object, they ran to the cloth covered mother even if it didn't dispense milk. The monkeys showed dysfunctional behaviours when introduced to other monkeys. They were aggressive and less sociable. They struggled with mating, and some killed their own offspring.

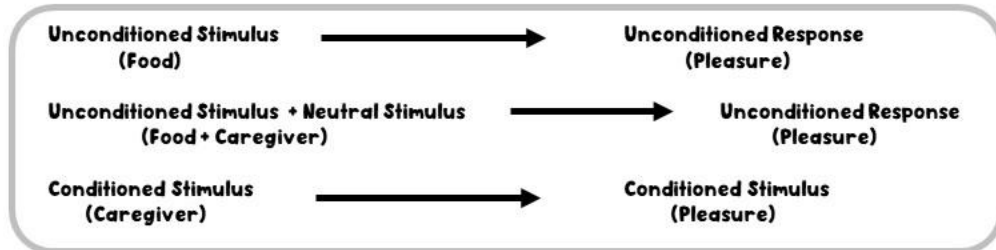
Conclusion

Attachment is more concerned with warmth and emotional security than food. Early deprivation of a real comforting mother leads to irreversible damage (90-day critical period in monkeys).



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Theories of Attachment



Learning Theory of Attachment

Classical Conditioning

The baby forms an association between the mother (neutral stimulus) and the feeling of pleasure that comes from being fed (unconditioned response) as they are paired together. The mother becomes the conditioned stimulus as she elicits a feeling of pleasure on her own.

Operant Conditioning

Crying causes the caregiver to feed/comfort the baby, so the crying behaviour is reinforced. The caregiver is negatively reinforced as the baby stops crying when given food/comfort.

Secondary Drive

Hunger is a primary drive as it is innate. The primary drive is generalised to the mother as she provides food and so attachment is the secondary drive.

Evaluation of Learning Theory

Animal Research

Both Harlow and Lorenz suggest food is not the most important factor in forming attachment.

Evolutionary Theory

Bowlby stated that we have an innate drive to attach, regardless of food.

Schaffer & Emerson

39% of babies attached to the person who did not feed them but who interacted with them.



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Theories of Attachment

Bowlby's Evolutionary Theory

Attachment is an **innate** mechanism that increases the chances of survival for the baby. They use **social releasers** (crying, smiling etc.) to initiate interaction between it and the mother. As the baby has **neotenic** features (looks cute) it encourages the mother to care for the baby.

The baby attaches to one primary caregiver, known as **monotropy** or **monotropic bond**. It then creates an **internal working model** of relationships, based on the monotropic bond, which it uses as a template for future relationships. This should happen during the **critical period** of around 2.5 years and has to happen during the **sensitive period** of 5 years.

Evaluation of Learning Theory

Love Quiz

Hazan & Shaver (1987) found that love experience and attitudes towards love (internal working model) were related to attachment type.



Temperament Hypothesis

Kagan (1984) proposed that some children are innately more likely to seek attachments and form close relationships. Bowlby did not take these individual differences into account.

Hodges & Tizard (1989)

Found that close relationships and attachments could be formed later in life and early deprivation could be reversed





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Types of Attachment

Ainsworth's Strange Situation

Aim

To observe 106 infants aged between 9-18 months and assess them for quality of attachment.

Procedure

- Explored 5 behaviours; Exploration behaviour, proximity seeking behaviour, stranger anxiety, separation anxiety and reunion behaviour.

- There were 8 stages:

Stage 1 – Mother and child enter

Stage 2 – The child is encouraged to explore by the mother

Stage 3 – Stranger enters and attempts to interact with child

Stage 4 – Mothers leaves leaving stranger and child

Stage 5 – Mother enters and the stranger leaves

Stage 6 – Mothers leaves

Stage 7 – Stranger returns

Stage 8 – Mother returns and interacts with child

Findings

Children were classified as follows:

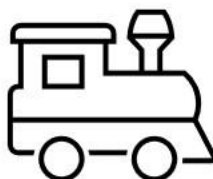
60-75% Secure

20-25% Avoidant insecure

3% Resistant insecure

Conclusion

The way the mother acts towards the child and the child's needs will have an impact on the child's behaviour. This is called the Maternal Sensitivity Hypothesis.





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Types of Attachment

Attachment Types

Type A (Insecure-Avoidant)

Shows willingness to explore, indifference to mother's departure and did not seek comfort from her when she returned. Also rejected the stranger's attempts to comfort them but had little stranger anxiety. Kept a distance and avoided closeness. Mother was uninterested in the infant, not caring for their needs.

Type B (Secure)

Used mother as safe base and showed moderate distress when she left. Welcomed her back on her return. Moderate stranger anxiety and treated them very differently to their mother. Mother was sensitive to the child's needs.

Type C (Insecure-Resistant)

Explored less than others and very upset at separation. Not easily comforted when the mother returned as was angry at her. Alternated between seeking closeness and wanting distance. Had high stranger anxiety. Mother interested in the child but misunderstood it's needs.

Evaluation of Ainsworth's Strange Situation

Type D

Soloman & Main (1986) argue that simply putting infants into 3 categories is reductionist. They found a 4th attachment type (type D disorganised),

Ethnocentric

Cross cultural research suggests that the Strange Situation uses Western values to judge attachment types, which is an imposed etc.

Validity

The laboratory setting was unfamiliar, so the mothers may have behaved differently than when they were at home.



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Cultural Variations

Van Ijzendoorn & Kroonenberg (1988)

Aim

To investigate how attachment types vary across cultures.

Procedure

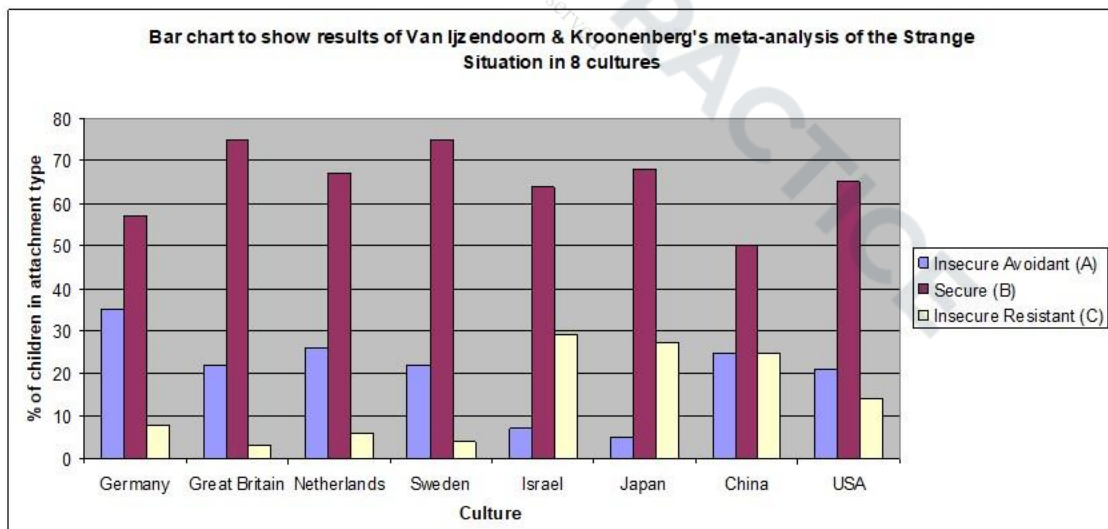
- Completed a meta-analysis on 32 studies using Ainsworth's Strange Situation of over 2,000 babies
- Attachment types both between and within cultures was studied

Findings

Secure attachment was the most common in all cultures. Germany had the highest number of avoidant children and Japan had very few avoidant children but a high proportion of resistant children. There was 1 and a half times more variation within cultures than between cultures.

Conclusion

Caregiver and infant interactions were similar around the world with some intra-cultural variation. This could be due to mass media.





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Cultural Variations

Evaluation of Van Ijzendoorn and Kroonenberg (1988)

Culture or Countries?

The study compares countries rather than cultures. Within each country there are many different subcultures. This is supported by the fact that the researchers found more variance within cultures than between cultures.

Large Scale Research

The study had a huge sample and significantly developed our understanding of different child rearing practices around the world.

Different Sample Sizes

18 out of the 32 studies were from the United States and Japan only had 2 studies. This distorts the overall findings and makes it difficult to make true cultural comparisons.

Korea

Jin et al. (2012) assessed 87 children and found that most infants were secure and, apart from one, the others were resistant. This is similar to Japan in the Van Ijzendoorn and Kroonenberg's study which could be because Korea has similar parenting styles to Japan.





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Maternal Deprivation

Bowlby's Theory of Maternal Deprivation

Bowlby proposed that continuous care from a mother is essential for normal psychological development, and that prolonged separation and **deprivation** of **emotional care** from this adult causes serious damage to emotional and **intellectual development**. If this deprivation of emotional care is for an extended period of time during the **critical period** then the damage is inevitable.

Effects on Development

Intellectual

Delayed intellectual development and low IQ. Goldfarb (1947) found children who stayed in an orphanage had **lower average IQ scores** than those fostered at age 12.

Emotional

Develop **affectionless psychopathy**. This is the inability to experience emotions towards others and is associated with criminality. They also lack the ability to form close long lasting relationships.

Evaluation of Bowlby's Theory of Maternal Deprivation

44 Thieves

Bowlby (1944) found that 14 out of 44 teenage thieves could be described as affectionless psychopaths and 12 of these had experienced prolonged separation from their mothers in the first two years of their life.

Privation

Rutter (1976) argues that Bowlby muddled deprivation with privation. Privation is when an attachment has never been formed.

Czech Twins

The Czech twins who were locked in a cupboard by their stepmother from the ages of 18 months to 7 years but were able to form a close attachment with two new loving parents.



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Effects of Institutionalisation

Romanian Orphans Research

Rutter et al. (2011)

The English and Romanian Adoptee Study has followed 165 Romanian orphans adopted in the UK for many years. Their physical, emotional and cognitive development has been assessed at a variety of ages. Initially, all showed **delayed intellectual development**. At 11, the mean IQ score for those adopted before the age of 6 months was 102, compared with those adopted between 6 months and 2 years who had a mean IQ score of 86, those adopted after 2 years had a mean score of 77. those adopted after the age of 6 months showed signs of a particular attachment style called **disinhibited attachment**. Symptoms includes; clingy, attention seeking directed to all adults even strangers.

Zeanah et al. (2005)

The Bucharest Early Intervention project assessed 95 Romanian orphans aged 12-31 months. Only 19% were classified as securely attached and 44% were disinhibited.

Evaluation of Orphan Studies

Real World Application

Has led to improvements in how we care for looked after children. I.E assigning key workers and a preference for foster care over institutions

Confounding Variables

High internal validity as these orphans did not suffer trauma or abuse before entering the institute unlike some other orphan studies

Lack of Data

The latest data only assess the orphans in their 20s. We do not know yet the long term effects or whether adopted children may catch up with the control group.



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Influence of Early Attachment

Attachment and Later Relationships

Internal Working Model

A baby's first attachment will form the template for their future relationships (Internal Working Model). If they had a loving secure relationship then they will form functional relationships later. Those who are avoidant will be distant in relationships and those who are resistant will be controlling or argumentative.

Relationships in Childhood

Securely attached children tend to go on to form quality friendships, whereas insecurely attached children have friendship difficulties (Kerns 1994). Myron-Wilson and Smith (1998) found that secure children were unlikely to be involved in bullying, avoidant were most likely to be victims and resistant were most likely to be bullies.

Relationships in adulthood

Hazan and Shaver (1987) found that those with secure attachments were most likely to have good and longer lasting romantic experiences. The avoidants tended to show jealousy and a fear of intimacy.

Evaluation of the Effect on Later Relationships

Causal Relationship

Just because there is a relationship between attachment type and later relationships, does not mean one caused the other.

Supporting Research

Bailey et al. (2007) found that most women had the same classification of attachment with their mothers as their own children.

Validity

There are problems with using retrospective data. Participants may not be honest with their responses about early attachment or cannot remember.