

# What is meant in psychology by the term attachment?

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The psychological explanation for the term 'attachment' is where you form an emotional bond to another person or object both physically and mentally. And to feel secure.

John Bowlby (1969) described it as a lasting psychological connectedness between human beings.

He also stated that early experiences in childhood have an important influence on development & behavior on the individual's life.

Attachment behavior is essentially a survival strategy from evolution for protecting infants from predators.

## Question 2

According to Bowlby, what harm is caused to an individual if he or she is deprived of an attachment bond in early childhood?

If the process of 'attachment' is 'interrupted', the individual may develop mental issues such as depression, behavioural issues, find it hard to make relationships, even goes as far as psychiatric disorders, dwarfism, acute distress or possibly death if the attachment bond is interrupted. From the 1940's - 1970's it was determined that a child must have a secure mother-child relationship if the infant was not to suffer any long term problems.

Bowlby did a case study on 44 juvenile thieves and to his amazement discovered that a majority of them had suffered some sort of separation from their mothers, possibly more than 6 months or more in the first critical 5 years of their lives. This was actually proven to be of a biased nature as

Bowlby did find that most of them had suffered some form of separation from their mothers and he presumed that this was the case of their delinquency. He also found that a small number of the juvenile thieves were unable to make "true" affection bonds. But these findings could be thrown out as Bowlby never had results from a "controlled group" to compare his findings.

Harlow did an experiment with this in mind with rhesus monkeys - "wire mother experiment". It was conducted in 1960 to show the devastating effects deprivation. His experiments were classed as unethical and cruel, but they uncovered truths which have had a heavy influence on our understanding of child development.

### Question 3

What factors appear to be necessary to bring about attachment?

Time and attention as well as the factor to attend to an infant immediately will bring out partial attachment. Sight is also an important factor as well. Jean Piaget proved that theory when he did a case study on infants aged between the age 8/9 months, by covering a toy with cloth to see if they would "look or search" for the object when it had disappeared out of sight.

Schaffer and Emerson (1964) noted that not only do infants form a solid attachment to their mother (or mother figures), but that a substantial amount of infants also made a close attachment to their fathers and older siblings.

Mary Ainsworth () had distinguished between infants who had successfully managed to make secure and insecure attachments.

The results showed that it was how the mother (or mother figure) showed sensitivity, i. e. detecting her infants signals, managing to interpret them and how the mother (or mother figure would react and respond appropriately).

#### Question 4

Describe and evaluate the evidence which has found that children can develop normally despite maternal separation?

Chibuccs & Kail (1981), found that there were 3 factors. It was as follows:- 1) how playful he was towards the baby

2) how much contact they have with the baby

3) Reads a baby signals

They noted that a mother would hold, smile, show more affection towards a child as well as routine physical care. The father would play more but it was more physical and that they would interact more with boys both physically and mentally than they did girls.

Kohen-Raz (1968), did a study on the kibbutz. It was noted that kibbutz children were equal in physical & mental skills to Israeli children, who were raised in private homes BUT were superior to Israeli children raised in orphanages.

Rabkin & Rabkin (1969) and Nahir & Yussen (1977) found that the kibbutz children could demonstrate several advanced characteristics than children raised at home, and that they also could show signs of recognition in how other children felt from an early age.

#### Question 5

Why do some people argue that animals should not be used in psychology experiments?

It has been noted that it's acceptable to perform experiments on animals especially primates as they are the closest relation to humans. Where performing experiments on human kind is would be considered as outrageous and unethical.

It's obvious that the experiments involving animals for psychological and behavioural experiments cause suffering but they shall be forth coming as it's funded by tax payer's money World Wide.

The experiments are aimed to help understand mental disorders and attachment disorders. Cahann only obtain results by watching human behaviour closely not under experimental circumstances.

#### Question 6

Describe and evaluate one study of visual perception in human infants.

Gibson & Walk - 1960 (visual cliff)

This was an experiment which consisted to measure depth perception where they attempted to get infants to walkover a glass plate suspended over a drop.

Gibson & Walk wanted to find out whether 6 to 14 month old infants could perceive depth. Babies have a natural sense of danger so the experiment was designed to see if they can see it's perfectly safe.

Case studies were placed each time in the middle of a table, where 1 side was replaced by glass to expose the “ danger”. Their mothers would then try to tempt the infant over both sides.

The results showed that if the case study (infant) had no depth perception then the glass drop wouldn't seem scary and they would just walk all over the table. Those that didn't have depth perception and could see the drop, they would automatically avoid it.