3.6 Maternal Deprivation and the Effects of Institutionalisation: 30-minute Pack

AQA 7182 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions.

1 Outline Bowlby's maternal deprivation hypothesis as it relates to early attachment formation, naming the proposed critical period and the long term consequences of prolonged early separation or deprivation.

(Total for Question 1 is 6 marks)

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2 Discuss the effects of deprivation and/or institutionalisation on attachment, with reference to theory and empirical evidence.

(Total for Question 2 is 16 marks)

3 A social worker examines a small dataset from an adoption clinic showing age at adoption (months) and a simple measure of disinhibited attachment behaviour scored 0 to 10 at age 4 (higher = more disinhibited). The six children's data are: Child A: adopted at 3 months, score 1; Child B: 5 months, score 2; Child C: 8 months, score 5; Child D: 12 months, score 7; Child E: 18 months, score 8; Child F: 2 months, score 0. Using this dataset, answer the parts below.

(a) Calculate the mean disinhibited attachment score for the three children adopted before 6 months (Children A, B and F). Give your answer to 2 decimal places. **(3)**

(b) Using the full dataset, suggest briefly what the data show about the relationship between age at adoption and disinhibited attachment at age 4, and state one limitation of drawing conclusions from this small dataset. **(3)**

(Total for Question 3 is 6 marks)

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Mark scheme · 3.6 Maternal Deprivation and the Effects of Institutionalisation: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

states that continual emotional care from a primary caregiver is needed for normal psychological development oe	**M1**
identifies the critical period as about the first 2.5 to 3 years of life (often given as before 3 years) oe	**M1**
explains that prolonged separation or deprivation within the critical period can lead to long term harm such as affectionless psychopathy, problems with emotional development and intellectual delay oe	**M1**
links the absence of a warm, continuous relationship with impairment in forming future relationships oe	**A1**
mentions that short term separations are different and not necessarily damaging if substitute care is provided oe	**A1**
notes that deprivation refers to loss of existing attachment whereas privation refers to a failure to form an attachment in the first place oe	**A1**

Answer: Bowlby proposed that continuous emotional care from a primary caregiver is essential for normal development. There is a critical period in the first roughly three years; prolonged separation or deprivation in this period can cause lasting problems such as affectionless psychopathy, emotional and intellectual difficulties. Short term separations are less harmful if good substitute care is provided.

Question 2

Level 4 Knowledge of the effects of deprivation and institutionalisation is detailed and accurate. Discussion evaluates theory and evidence thoroughly, including strengths and limitations and clear, well-developed reference to studies such as Bowlby 44 Thieves, Rutter's ERA and Zeanah et al. AO2 application is applied appropriately. Arguments about implications for development and practice are well reasoned and balanced. Specialist terms are used accurately and the answer is coherent.	**13-16**
Level 3 Knowledge is mostly accurate with reasonable detail. Discussion includes relevant evaluation and some consideration of implications. Evidence is used to support points but may be uneven or partially developed. Some application to studies is present. The answer is organised and uses specialist terms appropriately.	**9-12**
Level 2 Knowledge is limited or partially accurate. Discussion is basic and evaluative comments may be superficial or one sided. Reference to studies may be brief or descriptive rather than analytical. Implications are mentioned but not well developed. Specialist terminology may be used inconsistently.	**5-8**
Level 1 Very limited knowledge and understanding. Answers may be lists of points about deprivation or institutionalisation with little or no discussion. Little or no use of relevant evidence. Specialist terms are mostly absent or used incorrectly.	**1-4**

Indicative content:

- AO1: Bowlby's maternal deprivation hypothesis claims continuous maternal care is essential, with a critical period roughly the first 2.5 to 3 years, and prolonged deprivation can lead to affectionless psychopathy, emotional and intellectual problems.
- AO1: Bowlby's 44 Thieves study reported an association between early prolonged separations and later affectionless psychopathy, but the study was retrospective and correlational.
- AO1: Rutter's ERA study found physical underdevelopment, cognitive delay and high rates of disinhibited attachment among Romanian adoptees, with much better recovery when adopted before about 6 months, suggesting a sensitive period for recovery.
- AO1: Zeanah et al.'s BEIP reported high rates of disorganised and disinhibited attachment in institutionalised children and showed that randomised placement into foster care improved attachment outcomes, especially when early.
- AO3: Evaluation points include methodological limitations such as retrospective data and correlational designs in early studies, and possible confounding variables in institutional studies such as malnutrition, prenatal factors and poor healthcare that could account for some outcomes.
- AO3: The ERA and BEIP studies offer stronger evidence, with ERA large longitudinal cohorts and BEIP using random assignment, increasing causal inference about institutional care effects and benefits of foster care.
- AO3: Individual differences and resilience: not all children show the same outcomes; some recover fully and some remain impaired, suggesting interaction with factors like age at adoption, quality of subsequent care, and genetic or temperamental factors.
- AO3: Real world implications include support for early intervention, prioritising early adoption or high quality foster care, and improvements in institutional practice such as lower child to caregiver ratios and consistent caregiving.
- AO3: Ethical considerations and practical limits: randomised interventions like BEIP raise ethical questions, and translating findings from Romanian institutions to other contexts requires caution because institutional conditions vary.
- AO3: Overall conclusion might balance that severe early deprivation and poor institutional care can harm attachment and development, but timely high quality caregiving can allow substantial recovery, and policy should aim to minimise time in poor institutions and provide early family placements.

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Question 3

(a) identifies the scores for children adopted before 6 months: A=1, B=2, F=0 oe **M1**

(a) calculates mean = (1 + 2 + 0) / 3 oe **M1**

(a) gives mean = 1.00 cao **A1**

(a) Answer: 1.00

(b) identifies the pattern: children adopted later tend to have higher disinhibited scores (e.g. scores increase for adoptions at 8, 12, 18 months) oe **M1**

(b) concludes this suggests later adoption is associated with more disinhibited attachment behaviour oe **M1**

(b) gives a limitation such as very small sample size, no statistical test, or other confounding variables not controlled (e.g. preinstitutional experience) oe **A1**

(b) Answer: The data suggest that children adopted later show higher disinhibited attachment scores, implying later adoption is associated with more disinhibited behaviour. However, the sample is very small and other factors such as preinstitutional experience are not controlled, so firm conclusions cannot be drawn.

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