



PSY.ATT8 The Influence of Early Attachment on Later Relationships

AQA 7182 · Calculators not allowed · about 50 minutes

Total Marks

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Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Answer ALL questions. Show all your working.

- 1** Outline the concept of an internal working model as it relates to attachment and later relationships. Refer to its role as a cognitive-emotional template formed in early attachment relationships.

Outline the concept of an internal working model as it relates to attachment and later relationships.

(Total for Question 1 is 4 marks)

- 2** Explain the continuity hypothesis in attachment theory and what it predicts about stability between early attachment and later relationships, including allowance for later change.

Explain the continuity hypothesis in attachment theory.

(Total for Question 2 is 4 marks)

- 3** Outline Hazan and Shaver's Love Quiz study (1987). Describe the method used, the volunteer sample, and the main findings linking self-reported infant attachment type to adult romantic attitudes and behaviour.

Outline Hazan and Shaver's Love Quiz study, its method and main findings.

(Total for Question 3 is 6 marks)

- 4** Outline the key result from Bailey et al.'s study on intergenerational transmission of attachment and what that result suggests about the influence of mothers' attachment history on infant attachment classifications.

Outline Bailey et al.'s finding on intergenerational transmission of attachment.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

- 5** Application: Read the scenario and identify which infant attachment type best fits, then justify your choice. Scenario: A 10-year friendship group contains a child, Yusuf, who is very clingy to the teacher whenever the group is given a new activity. Yusuf often seeks reassurance, becomes visibly upset when a friend leaves the room, and his friendships are intense but unstable. Relate Yusuf's behaviour to an attachment type and explain.

Apply attachment knowledge to the scenario describing Yusuf and identify the likely infant attachment type.

(Total for Question 5 is 4 marks)

- 6** Explain two methodological criticisms of Hazan and Shaver's Love Quiz study that affect how far its findings can be generalised to the wider population.

Explain two methodological criticisms of Hazan and Shaver's Love Quiz study that limit generalisability.

(Total for Question 6 is 6 marks)

- 7** Outline and explain Bailey et al.'s evidence for intergenerational transmission of attachment and evaluate one strength and one limitation of using this kind of evidence to support continuity between generations.

Outline Bailey et al.'s evidence for intergenerational transmission of attachment and evaluate one strength and one limitation.

(Total for Question 7 is 6 marks)

- 8** Explain why much of the evidence linking early attachment to later relationships is correlational or retrospective, and state one consequence of this for claims about the continuity hypothesis.

Explain why the evidence is often correlational or retrospective and a consequence for the continuity hypothesis.

(Total for Question 8 is 4 marks)

- 9** Identify and briefly explain one ethical or conceptual criticism that arises if the continuity hypothesis is interpreted deterministically, for example as implying that early attachment irrevocably fixes later relationship outcomes.

Identify and explain one criticism of deterministic interpretations of the continuity hypothesis.

(Total for Question 9 is 4 marks)

- 10** State the year Hazan and Shaver published their Love Quiz study that linked self-reported infant attachment to adult romantic styles, and name the instrument they used to gather data.

State the year of Hazan and Shaver's Love Quiz and the data collection instrument used.

(Total for Question 10 is 2 marks)

- 11** Explain two practical implications for counselling or education that follow if early attachment does influence later relationships, drawing on the continuity hypothesis and intergenerational transmission evidence.

Explain two practical implications for counselling or education from attachment continuity and transmission evidence.

(Total for Question 11 is 4 marks)

- 12** Discuss the influence of early attachment on childhood and/or adult relationships. In your answer, make reference to the continuity hypothesis, internal working models, Hazan and Shaver, intergenerational transmission evidence, and methodological and conceptual evaluation points.

Discuss the influence of early attachment on childhood and/or adult relationships.

(Total for Question 12 is 16 marks)

Mark scheme · PSY.ATT8 The Influence of Early Attachment on Later Relationships

Question 1

- **M1** states that an internal working model is an internal mental representation of the self and others formed from early caregiver interactions oe
- **M1** explains it acts as a template for expectations about relationships and how to behave in them oe
- **A1** gives an example, e.g. a securely attached child expects caregivers to be responsive and later expects trust and intimacy in friendships or romantic relationships oe
- **A1** notes that it influences both cognitive beliefs and emotional responses in later relationships oe
- **Answer: An internal working model is an internal representation of the self, others and relationships formed from early caregiver interactions; it serves as a template shaping expectations, emotions and behaviour in later friendships and adult romantic relationships, for example a securely attached child developing expectations of trust and reciprocity.**

Question 2

- **M1** states that the continuity hypothesis predicts stability in patterns of attachment from infancy to later relationships oe
- **M1** explains this stability is thought to arise because the internal working model formed with the primary caregiver is carried forward oe
- **A1** gives an implication, e.g. a securely attached infant is likely to form trusting friendships and stable romantic relationships later in life oe
- **A1** notes that the hypothesis allows for some change, for example through later corrective experiences or life events oe
- **Answer: The continuity hypothesis predicts that early attachment patterns tend to be stable and influence later relationships because the internal working model formed in infancy guides future expectations and behaviour, though later experiences can modify this template.**

Question 3

- **M1** identifies the method: a self-report 'Love Quiz' distributed via a newspaper, asking about childhood attachment and current romantic experiences/attitudes oe
- **M1** states sample detail: volunteer adults who completed the questionnaire (self-selected sample) oe
- **M1** reports a main finding: adults who described a secure childhood attachment reported more trusting, longer-lasting relationships oe
- **M1** reports a main finding: adults who described insecure-avoidant infant attachments reported less trust and emotional distance, while those describing insecure-ambivalent reported anxiety about relationships oe
- **A1** links findings to the continuity hypothesis: adults' self-reports supported the idea that early attachment patterns influence adult romantic styles oe
- **A1** notes the study used correlational, self-report measures, so evidence is of association rather than causation oe
- **Answer: Hazan and Shaver used a self-report Love Quiz with volunteer adults to ask about childhood attachment and current romantic attitudes. They found that self-described securely attached individuals reported more trust and longer relationships, avoidant respondents reported emotional distance, and ambivalent respondents reported anxiety, supporting the continuity hypothesis though based on correlational self-report data.**

Question 4

- **M1** identifies the method or sample element: studied mothers and their infants, using the Adult Attachment Interview and the Strange Situation to classify attachment oe
- **M1** reports the key result: there was a significant association between mothers' attachment classifications and their infants' attachment classifications oe
- **A1** explains implication: mothers who reported insecure attachments to their own parents were more likely to have infants classified as insecure oe
- **A1** notes this suggests a possible intergenerational transmission of attachment patterns via caregiving behaviour or internal working models oe
- **Answer: Bailey et al. found that mothers' adult attachment classifications were significantly associated with their infants' attachment classifications; mothers who reported insecure attachment histories were more likely to have infants classified as insecure, suggesting intergenerational transmission through caregiving or internal working models.**

Question 5

- **M1** identifies insecure-ambivalent (anxious) attachment as the best fit cao
- **A1** justifies with reference to clinginess and seeking reassurance, showing anxiety about separation and relationships oe
- **A1** links intense but unstable friendships to the anxiously attached internal working model, expecting inconsistent responsiveness from others oe
- **A1** may refer to difficulty with separation and emotional hyperactivation as characteristic of ambivalent attachment oe
- **Answer: Insecure-ambivalent (anxious) attachment. Yusuf's clinginess, frequent need for reassurance, distress at separations and intense but unstable friendships fit the anxiety and hyperactivation typical of ambivalent attachment.**

Question 6

- **M1** identifies volunteer/self-selected sampling as a limitation, e.g. people who respond to a newspaper Love Quiz may differ systematically from the general population oe
- **A1** explains consequence: this may inflate the proportion of people interested in relationships and bias the pattern of reported attachment types, reducing external validity oe
- **M1** identifies reliance on retrospective self-report about childhood attachment as a limitation oe
- **A1** explains consequence: memory bias and reconstruction of childhood experiences may produce inaccurate classification, weakening the link between early attachment and adult reports oe
- **M1** identifies social desirability or current relationship state influencing responses as a limitation oe
- **A1** explains consequence: adults may answer according to their current feelings or cultural expectations about love rather than their actual infant experience, confounding the results oe
- **Answer: Hazan and Shaver used a volunteer newspaper sample and retrospective self-report. The self-selected sample may be biased towards people interested in relationships, reducing external validity, and retrospective reports are vulnerable to memory bias and social desirability, so adult reports may not accurately reflect infant attachment.**

Question 7

- **M1** outlines methodological detail: used the Adult Attachment Interview with mothers and the Strange Situation with infants to obtain attachment classifications oe
- **M1** states the key finding: there was a statistical association between mothers' attachment classifications and their infants' attachment classifications oe
- **A1** explains strength: using established, validated measures (Adult Attachment Interview and Strange Situation) provides systematic, standardised assessment supporting the reliability of the observed association oe
- **M1** identifies a limitation: the association is correlational and cannot establish causation between mothers' own attachment history and their infants' attachment oe
- **A1** explains consequence of limitation: other factors, such as current family stress, genetics or social support, could account for the similarity, so transmission mechanisms are not proven oe
- **A1** offers an implication or qualification, e.g. longitudinal or experimental intervention evidence would be needed to strengthen causal claims about transmission oe
- **Answer: Bailey et al. used validated assessments for mothers and infants and found a significant association between mothers' attachment classifications and their infants' classifications. A strength is the use of standardised measures increasing reliability; a limitation is that the correlation cannot prove causation and alternative factors might explain the similarity, so intergenerational transmission remains probable but not definitively demonstrated.**

Question 8

- **M1** explains that longitudinal studies are time-consuming and expensive, so many studies rely on correlational snapshots or adults' retrospective reports of childhood attachment oe
- **A1** explains that retrospective self-report is vulnerable to memory distortion and current relationship state influencing recall oe
- **M1** states the consequence: correlational/retrospective evidence cannot establish causality between early attachment and later relationship outcomes oe
- **A1** explains that this weakens strong continuity claims, because third variables or reverse causation could account for associations oe
- **Answer: Because longitudinal research is costly and slow, many studies use correlational designs or adults' retrospective reports. These methods are vulnerable to memory bias and confounding variables, so they cannot prove that early attachment causes later relationship patterns; therefore claims of strict continuity must be qualified.**

Question 9

- **M1** identifies a criticism: deterministic interpretation may lead to stigma or fatalism about individuals labelled as insecurely attached oe
- **A1** explains consequence: parents or children might be blamed or resigned to poor relationship outcomes, reducing opportunities for intervention and support oe
- **M1** identifies conceptual criticism: ignores plasticity and later experiences that can modify internal working models oe
- **A1** explains consequence: deterministic claims overlook evidence that therapy, supportive relationships or life events can change attachment-related expectations and behaviour oe
- **Answer: A deterministic reading risks stigma and fatalism, potentially blaming parents or making people resign themselves to poor relationships, and it ignores evidence for plasticity, for example that later supportive relationships or therapy can alter internal working models and improve outcomes.**

Question 10

- **B1** 1987 cao
- **B1** a self-report 'Love Quiz' / questionnaire distributed via a newspaper oe
- **Answer: 1987; a self-report 'Love Quiz' questionnaire distributed via a newspaper.**

Question 11

- **M1** identifies implication 1: early parent support and parenting programmes could improve later relationship outcomes oe
- **A1** explains how: interventions that teach sensitive responsiveness or enhance parental mental health may alter caregiving patterns and infants' internal working models, reducing risk of insecure attachment oe
- **M1** identifies implication 2: counselling and relationship therapy can target internal working models and attachment-related expectations in adults oe
- **A1** explains how: therapeutic approaches that address attachment beliefs and provide corrective emotional experiences can help people form healthier adult relationships despite early insecurity oe
- **Answer: Implications include offering parenting support programmes to promote sensitive caregiving and prevent insecure attachment, and using counselling or therapy to help adults revise maladaptive internal working models so they can form healthier relationships.**

Question 12

- **Level 4** (13-16): Knowledge of the influence of early attachment is accurate and detailed. Discussion is thorough and evaluative, integrating evidence from studies such as Hazan and Shaver and Bailey et al. Evaluation addresses methodological limitations and alternative explanations and is consistently applied to the evidence. Application to childhood and/or adult relationships is clear and developed. Specialist terminology is used accurately and the answer is coherent.
- **Level 3** (9-12): Knowledge is clear with some detail. Discussion includes evaluation and some integration of evidence but may be less wide ranging or partly descriptive. Application to relationships is present but may be uneven. Terminology is used appropriately and the answer is organised.
- **Level 2** (5-8): Knowledge is present but limited. Discussion/evaluation is superficial or one-sided. Application to relationships is attempted but not well developed. Use of terminology is inconsistent and answer may lack clear structure.
- **Level 1** (1-4): Knowledge is minimal and answers are likely to be brief or fragmented. Discussion/evaluation is limited or absent. Little or no application is made to relationships and specialist terms are missing or used incorrectly.
- **Level 0** (0): No creditable content.
- **Indicative content:**
 - AO1: The continuity hypothesis predicts that early attachment patterns are generally stable and shape later relationships via internal working models which act as templates for expectations about self and others.
 - AO1: Hazan and Shaver (1987) used the Love Quiz and reported associations between self-reported infant attachment type and adult romantic styles: secure linked to trust and longer relationships, avoidant to emotional distance, ambivalent to anxiety about relationships.
 - AO1: Bailey et al. provide evidence for intergenerational transmission, finding associations between mothers' adult attachment classifications and their infants' Strange Situation classifications.
 - AO2: Application could include examples where secure early attachment fosters positive peer friendships in childhood and more stable romantic relationships in adulthood, while insecure patterns can predict relationship difficulties such as avoidance or anxiety.
 - AO3: Methodological evaluation: many studies are correlational or retrospective, so causation cannot be established; Hazan and Shaver used self-selected volunteers and retrospective recall, introducing sampling and recall biases; Bailey et al. are correlational and other factors could account for parent-child similarity.
 - AO3: Further evaluation: strengths include use of standardised measures like the Strange Situation and Adult Attachment Interview, and longitudinal studies that do exist provide stronger evidence for stability over time.
 - AO3: Alternative explanations include temperament and genetics, social learning from modelling, and current relationship experiences that can modify the internal working model, weakening deterministic continuity claims.
 - AO3: Practical and ethical implications: supports parenting interventions and therapy targeting attachment beliefs, but deterministic interpretations risk stigma and underplay human resilience and change.
 - AO3: Conclude by weighing evidence: overall there is reasonable support for an influence of early attachment on later relationships, but the size and causal nature of that influence is moderated by methodological limitations and subsequent life experiences.