

AQA Psychology A-level

Topic 3: Attachment Essay Plans

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Question : Discuss research into the role of the father (16 marks)

AO1	<p>Explain the research into the role of the father :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grossman (2002) quality of father attachment was less important for teenager attachment type than the quality of the mothers. • Verrisimo et al (2011) better quality of father toddler relationship the more friends the child has at pre-school • Field (1978) filmed 4 month old babies and found that fathers can be primary caregivers and they were seen to adapt behaviours of mothers • Schaffer and Emerson (1964) study 75% infants formed secondary attachment with their fathers evident through separation anxiety
AO3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There's counter evidence undermining the secondary role of the father- Grossman 2002 fathers are more important in play and stimulation rather than nurturing. Same sex couples child also grows up to be functional implies that role of the father isn't significant. 2. Role of the father can have positive implications on psychology and the economy- Field (1978) fathers can be primary caregivers. This is good as mothers can come back to work sooner and it takes a pressure of them to nurse the baby for longer 3. No clear answer to why fathers can't form primary attachment- It may be due to gender stereotypes however it could be due to biology like oestrogen hormones or that they may be more nurturing. 4. Society biases may cloud research judgment- stereotypes such as 'fathers are more playful' cause observer bias.



Question : Discuss one or more explanations of attachment (16 marks).

AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can describe the learning theory as an explanation of attachment.—how classical conditioning, operant conditioning and drive reduction theory is involved. • Also could describe Bowlby’s monotropic theory as another explanation of attachment- describe the importance of internal working models.
AO3	<p>Evaluate learning theory :-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A limitation is that not all aspects of behaviour can be explained by conditioning. Complex behaviour involves innate predispositions and mental activity so behaviourist explanations are simplistic. 2. Furthermore there has been evidence showing that feeding has nothing to do with forming attachments. Harlow (1958) with his rhesus monkey experiments discovered that contact comfort is more important to infants than food, especially in frightening situations. This suggests that comfort and the quality of care is more important than food. <p>Evaluate Bowlby’s monotropic theory:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Monotropy is a socially sensitive idea. Feminists say it puts a burden on mothers setting up to be the ones to blame for any problems seen in the child. 4. A strength is that there is support for internal working models. Bailey et al (2007).



Question : Outline and evaluate research into maternal deprivation (16 marks).

A01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe what the maternal deprivation theory is- how prolonged separation from the mother can cause serious damage. • Describe the effects of maternal deprivation- both intellectual and emotional. • Could include supportive evidence – Bowlby’s 44 thieve study. • Could also describe the importance of critical periods.
A03	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The theory has real world applications. In the past, mothers were separated from their children in hospitals and visiting was discouraged. Bowlby’s theory has led to social change in child caring in hospitals whereby now mothers are not separated from their children. 2. Bowlby failed to properly distinguish between deprivation and privation. Rutter (1981) distinguishes between the two saying that privation is the failure to form an attachment in the first place whereas deprivation is the loss of an attachment after it has formed. Rutter argues that privation is more likely to lead to long term damage not deprivation as Bowlby’s theory states. 3. The critical period has been found to be more of a sensitive period. Jarmila Koluchova (1976) studied two boys that had been isolated from 18 months to 7 years. They were able to recover after they were looked after by two loving adults. This suggests that the effects of maternal deprivation are not permanent as Bowlby proposed. 4. There is support for Bowlby’s theory that maternal deprivation can have long-term effects. Bifulco et al (1992) studied women who experienced maternal deprivation due to either separation for more than a year or death. 25% of these women later experienced depression compared to only 15% of the control group.



Question : Discuss the effects of institutionalism of Romanian orphans (16 marks).

A01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the term institutionalism and the various effects of institutionalism e.g. mental retardation, disinhibited attachment, poor peer interactions. • Describe the various studies which have investigated the effects of institutionalism like Michael Rutter's English and Romanian Adoptee study and Bucharest Early Intervention Project.
A03	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The research has real life applications. Langton 2006 shown how it led to improvements in institutions. Now institutions understand that it is important for a child in an orphanage to have only one or two key caregivers and that is now a requirement in institutions. Therefore this prevents children from forming a disinhibited attachment. 2. Research has fewer extraneous variables than other orphan studies. This is as the children are not in the orphanage for other reasons such as trauma or loss but in there just because their parents could not afford to raise them. 3. However , the research has been criticised for lacking generalisability. The roman orphanages consisted of highly unusual situational variables whereby there are very poor standards of care and extremely low levels of intellectual stimulation. 4. Lastly, the long term effects are not clear. It could be that children with developmental problems recover when their older or it could be that children that are well now will experience problems in adulthood. This means valid conclusions cannot be drawn.



Question : Outline and evaluate Ainsworth's Strange Situation (16 marks).

<p>A01</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strange situation (SS) was developed by Mary Ainsworth in 1969. • Mention the behaviours used to judge attachment like-proximity seeking, stranger anxiety, separation anxiety e.t.c. • Outline the procedure of the SS which consists of 7-8 episodes that are around three minutes each. • Could also describe the findings of Ainsworth's study of 1978.
<p>A03</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is support for the predictive validity of the SS. For example Ward et al (2006) found that children with insecure-resistant attachment types develop mental health problems later when they're adults. On the other hand children with secure attachments are more successful in school and with relationships in adulthood. 2. The method has good inter-rater reliability. Bick et al (2012) found 94% agreement on attachment types. This suggests that there is less observer bias. 3. The SS has been criticised for not being generalisable to other cultures. Takahashi (1990) showed that SS is not suitable for Japan as mothers are rarely separated from their mothers . This means they show high levels of anxiety even if they may be secure. 4. Lastly, evidence has shown there should be one more attachment type. Main and Solomon (1986) found a disorganised attachment whereby the child displays an odd mix of resistant and avoidant behaviours. This suggests the SS is incomplete.

