

Psychology

The Tizard and Hodges Study (1978)

Definitions

- Attachment :- The act attaching, or state of being attached; close adherence or affection; fidelity; regard; an/ passion of affection that binds a person; as, an attachment to a friend, or to a party.
- Deprivation :- The act of depriving, dispossessing, or bereaving; the act of depositing or divesting of some dignity.
- Privation :- The state of being deprived or destitute of something, especially of something required or desired; destitution; need; as, to undergo severe privations.

Findings and Conclusion of the Tizard and Hodges Study

The aim of Hodges and Tizard's study was to examine the effect of institutional upbringing on later attachments. Two comparison groups were also studied. Hodges and Tizard compared their group of children, from a children's home with, groups of children who had been with their families throughout their lives. One comparison group was drawn from the London area, and was made up of 16-year-old children who were matched one for one with the ex-institutional children on the basis of sex, position in the family, whether they were from one- or two-parent families, and the occupation of their family's main income earner. The other comparison group consisted of a same-sex school friend (of the same age) for each of the ex-institutional children.

Five main methods were used to collect data on all the teenagers:

- An interview with the teenage children.
- An interview with the mother of the teenage children, often with the father present.
- A self-report questionnaire concerning 'social difficulties'.
- A questionnaire completed by the children's schoolteacher about their relationships with their fellow students and their teachers.
- The Rutter 'B' scale which is a type of psychometric test, which identifies psychiatric problems such as depression.

At the age of sixteen the vast majority of the adoptive mothers felt that their child was deeply attached to them. By contrast only a half of the restored children were described as 'deeply attached'. Adopted teenagers, or adolescents, were also more often to be attached to their father than the restored group.

Ex-institutional children had greater problems with siblings than a comparison group.

There were no differences regarding the number of contacts with opposite sex friends, or whether the teenager currently had a relationship, like a boyfriend or girlfriend, compared to non-institutionalised children.

However, ex-institutional children had poorer relationships with peers than the comparison group. Teachers rated the ex-institutionalised group as more often argumentative, less liked

by other children and, as bully's, of other children more than the comparison group. According to their mothers, the ex-institutional teens were less likely to have one set best friend.

Hodges and Tizard argued that their findings demonstrate that children who are deprived of close and lasting attachments to adults in their first years of life can make such attachments later, although this does depend on the adults concerned and how much they care for the attachments.

Hodges and Tizard offer an explanation for why the adopted children were more likely to overcome some of the problems of early institutional upbringing better than the restored children. The financial situation of the adoptive families was often better, they had on average fewer children to provide for, and the adoptive parents were particularly highly motivated to have a child and to develop a relationship with that child. The biological parents in Hodges and Tizard's sample seemed to have been 'more ambivalent about their child living with them'.

A Criticism of the Hodges and Tizard Study

It would depend on where the institutionalised children were bought up as in the quality of their home. If they were bought up in a small home, where children are close to each other they would make more connections at a younger age, than children that grew up in a large home. The care wouldn't be as personalised as it would at a smaller home.