

To what extent do Cross cultural variations affect the development of Attachment?

There are two main types of attachment. they are secure and insecure attachment, under insecure attachment comes avoidant and resistant attachment, this could be due to the carer being rejecting or inconsistent. This means of measuring attachment was tested by Ainsworth and Bell in 1970. They found that most children in the uk are securely attached however 12% have an insecure/avoidant attachment and 17% have a insecure/resistant attachment. They found that attachment can be measured. They did there experiment using the strange situation, this observational testing was simple and a recognised technique. They found that children that were securely attached at 18 months were still well attached at 6 years old. They also discovered that 3 categories did apply to participants. Mains at Al in 1985 thought Ainsworth and Bells experiment was valid, however Bates et Al in 1985 thought that it was invalid as a Childs attachment style at one year old did not predict problematic behaviour when children were older, also they were unaccustomed to strangers.

Grossman et Al in 1985 studied attachment behaviour in Germany using the strange situation test, They claimed that the children were attached to their mothers like British children were but they just didn't show it in the same way as British children did. As shown by Sagi et al and Ainswoth and Bell, German children have the highest percentage for anxious and avoidant attachment among 3 other countries.

Van Ijzendoorn and Kroonenburg in 1988 investigated cross-cultural variation in attachment types, by conducting in meta-analysis, using 32 studies that had the strange situation test to measure attachment in 8 different countries. A mix of western and non-western were chosen. Secure attachment was again found to be the most common in all countries. However there are criticisms of the study as it may not be valid and ethical to compare children from different countries as cultures vary.

The biological view of attachment sees the importance of the 'critical period' of all children within any culture; attachments must be made within a certain timeframe. An ethnologist named Konrad Lorenz, who valued the importance of imprinting for survival, studied this.

In 1969, Bowlby claimed that monotrophy attachment was the best kind, and that it was the basis for all other relationships. He claimed that children on needed one special car giver in order to

develop an internal working model, however this idea was refuted by Howes et Al. Schaffer and Emerson study backed up Bowlbys theory. They found that although infants do form multiple attachments, they appear to have one primary attachment. Ainsworth studied a tribe in Uganda and found that childcare involved multiple caregivers but the infants still formed one primary attachment. Tronick et Al studied another different culture, a tribe from Africa and again found that children were breastfed by different women but still slept with their mother, by the age of 12 months the infants still showed preference to their mother, this suggests that attachments may form before birth, in the mothers womb . In contrast a study by Fox showed that maternal attachments may be reduced as children in other cultures have to divide their attention among many so therefore had less interest in any one individual. Thomas claimed that multiple attachments were needed as different caregivers benefit Childs different needs, for example, as studied by Parke, 1981, fathers are needed for a Childs play, as it is physically stimulating and a mother is needed for comfort.

The development of attachment depends on the culture there is no right or wrong way, as every culture has its differences for a reason and believes their way is the best. Although the world has its cultural variations, there still are a high percentage of children developing securely, as shown from research by Sagi et Al.