

# Attachment Styles of Children Raised in Nursery vs. Those Who are Raised in the Family in Iran

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**Abstract**—In studies on psychological health and children's personality development and in researches on emotional distresses, children's behavioral disorders associated with mother deprivation, are known as the major cause of mental disorders. Therefore, for identification of children's attachment styles in nursery's children are of significant importance. For this purpose, to compare the attachment styles between children of nursery with those provided care by their families, the Separation Anxiety Test (SAT) of Slough and et al was administered on 72 children (36 in nursery and 36 family-cared). The results indicated, almost half of children in both groups have insecure attachment styles. Tendency ratio of both groups of children towards Secure and Ambivalent Insecure styles are almost the same. However the avoidant style of attachment in children of nursery is more than those provided care by their families. The children under family care compared to the children of nursery, in the situations of separation from their mothers in the first day of school and sleeping in their room, have shown more self reliance.

**Keywords**—Attachment style; Separation Anxiety Test (SAT); Children; Nursery; Emotional and Behavioral Disorders.

## I. INTRODUCTION

**C**OGNITIVE and normal social development of flourishing personality in children is affected by their past and the situation in which they are grown. Bowlby [1], points to mother-child cooperation and recognizes that the major result is the creation of affective attachment between mother and child.

Attachment security predicted specific aspects of early conscience development [2]. It is a protective factor for future mental health [3]. Secure attachment, is necessary to have a child with stable and adaptive personality. Significant evidence shows that those methods that a child adopts for future life with new experiences is due to his/her attachment quality to mother. This principle is considerable in cognitive development, curiosity and problem solving strategies. The existence of such a relationship induces the children to seek comfort in presence of their mothers especially when they feel fearful or insecure. Bowlby believes what is necessary for a child's mental health is the experience of a warm, cordial and continues communication with his/her mother or her permanent surrogate mother [4]. The researches done by Bowlby [1], [4] Ainthworth [5], [6], Minkulincer and et al [7] and Cassidy [8], [9], [10] have approved of the vital significance of attachment in child's cognitive, affective and

social development and provides evidence for its extensive effects on child's research changes and its applications in different areas.

Children with secure attachments are more confident and successful with peers, have fewer conflicts with friendships with peers, have fewer behavior problems in school. The conclusion is that children use early attachments as prototypes for later relationships and interactions [11], [12], [13], [14], [15].

Researches Conclusions support Bowlby's hypothesis that individual differences in attachment security can be stable across significant portions of the lifespan and yet remain open to revision in the light of experience [16]. Change in attachment security is meaningfully related to changes in the family environment [17].

The investigations done on children's mental health and their personality development have both found that deprivation of a child from maternal care and/or inconstancy in child's relationship with the attachment figures are the major causes of psychoneurosis and personality disorders [4], [18], [19], [20]. Bowlby [4], Marcovitch and et al [21], and Chisholm [22], in their studies have reported that insecure attachment styles are more prevalent among the children of nursery.

Residential care affected all aspects of the infants' development and was linked to a high rate of disorganized attachment [23]. The group raised in a communal setting in the Kibbutz showed a higher incidence of no autonomous attachment representations and less competent coping with imagined separations than did the other groups [24].

Often forgotten, however, is the extent to which cultural beliefs and norms play a role in the interpretation of the acceptability of individual characteristics and the types and the ranges of interactions and relationships that are likely or permissible? This special issue comprises four sections in which culture is examined insofar as it relates to the aforementioned levels of social analysis: "Emotional Development," "Parenting and Parent-Child Relationships," "Social Cognition and Social Relationships," and "Social and Emotional Adjustment and Maladjustment." Each section is followed by a commentary [25].

Therefore the present study seeks to answer the question of whether there is difference between styles of attachment in children of nursery and those who receive care from their home in Iran. To provide mental health for children being looked after in nursery and provide appropriate practices in

these centers, it is necessary to have valid data regarding deprivation of mother's presence, responsiveness and longer period of absence on child attachment style.

## II. METHODOLOGY

To compare children attachment styles under protection at nursery with children under protection of their families, the Seattle version of the Separation Anxiety Test was used. To attain the stated end casual – comparative investigation, Separation Anxiety Test [26] was used on 72 children (36 children under care and protection of nursery and 36 children under protection of family) to compare impact of day care provided versus family provided supports. Descriptive statistical technique was used to describe the data and a number of statistical analysis methods were used for analysis of data, as follows: 1)Tests of proportion 2)Two-way Analysis of Variances with repeated measurements on one factor 3)Tuckey Follow up Test 4)One-way Analysis of Variance with repeated measurements

## III. RESULTS

As indicated in tables 1 and 2 data by 99% confidence show that the avoidant attachment style was noticed more in the children residing in nursery compared to those who live with their families.

Classification of children in secure and insecure groups has shown that 47% of children under family care and 42% of children under protection of nursery had secure attachment styles. 44% of nursery group and 47% of family care group

TABLE I

STATISTICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN IN NURSERY PROVIDED VERSUS THOSE PROVIDED CARE BY THEIR FAMILIES

Groups	Family care		nursery's children			
Styles	Frequen cy	Percent	Frequen cy	Percent	Z	P
Secure	17	47/22	15	41/67	1/004	-
Ambivalent	17	47/22	16	44/44	0/511	-
Avoidance	2	5/56	5	13/89	2/627	0/01
Total	36	100	36	100	-	-

have shown ambivalent attachment style. 14% of nursery group had insecure avoidant style. However only 6% of family care group were avoidant.

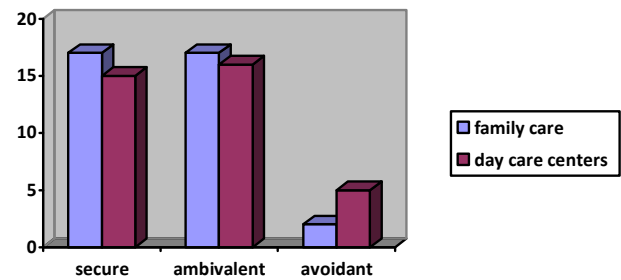


Fig. 1 frequency distribution of attachment styles of family care children and nursery's children

According to figure 2 children who were under care of family have more self-reliance in comparison with children who were raised in nursery in situations “figure 3: Separation from mother in first day of school” and “figure 6: Sleeping in self room”.

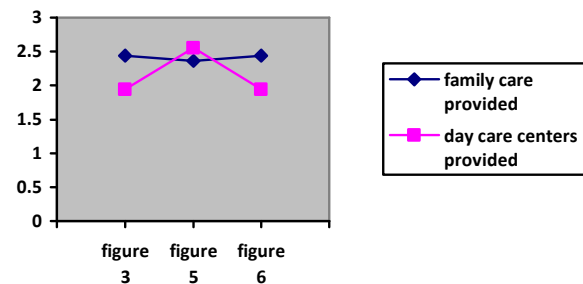


Fig. 2 shows mean score of Family Care children and Nursery's children in each picture related to the aspect of Self-reliance

Figures 3 and 4 show that in nursery's children, total scores of avoidant dimension was higher than those provided care by their families.

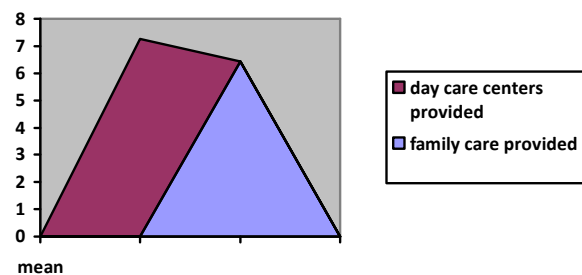


Fig. 3 shows mean scores of Family Care children and nursery's children in the aspect of avoidant

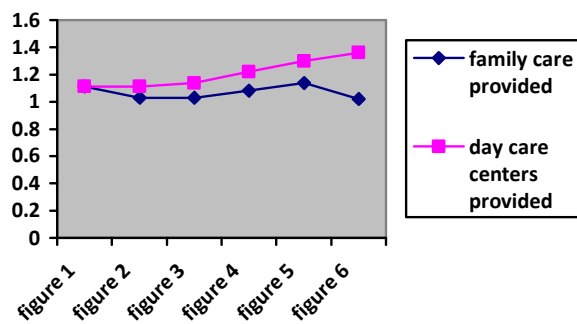


Fig. 4 shows mean score of Family Care children and nursery's children in each picture related to avoidant

According to figure 5, To the contrary of what expected reviewing the scores of children who were raised in the families showed that this group have more self-reliance in figure 4 ( i.e. parents were going on a trip for 2 weeks) in comparison with other pictures.

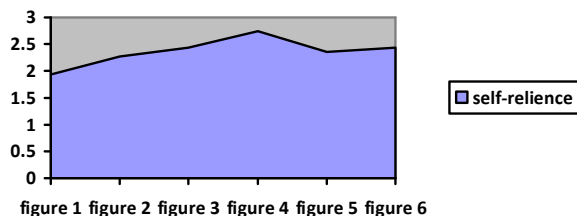


Fig. 5 shows mean responses of children under family care in each 6 picture in self-reliance aspect

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Disinhibited attachment constitutes clinical pattern that is strongly associated with an institutional rearing [27]. Findings of the present study have shown that in contrast to what is expected secure and ambivalent attachment styles are almost the same in both groups and only the avoidant style is higher in the children at the nursery. This result makes two assumptions: either the situation in nursery have been improved as a result of changes that have been occurred in welfare organization (Following changes have been occurred in Iran's nursery: giving opportunities to children to be raised in the families, reducing size of classes, employing fixed and stable educators, having a screening procedure for psychological health of teachers and educators in the institution.) or the quality of care in children under family care is not suitable. Moss and et al In their article "Stability of Attachment during the Preschool Period" [28], conclude that shift from security to insecurity during the Preschool Period is associated with the most dramatic decline in interactive quality with mother, lowest marital satisfaction, and greatest likelihood of

severe attachment related family events, namely, loss and parental hospitalization. Families of children who changed from security to organized insecurity, presented levels of care giving and marital dissatisfaction that fell between those of stable secure children and secure children who changed toward disorganization.

However, care in nursery alone will not lead to insecure attachment. Several factors are necessary to be combined and interacted with each other. A series of meta-analyses was conducted on findings from 59 studies to examine the linkage between maternal versus non maternal care, 7 indices of child behavior, and 10 potential moderators. Although it cannot be concluded that non maternal care has no impact on children, most of the analyses suggest that in and of itself, or in interaction with one factor at a time, non maternal care does not affect child development [29]. Consistent with attachment theory and respecting to observed clinical evidences, it's worth mentioning that anxiety and avoidant is more considerable in children under protection of nursery compared to children under family care. More research in this field is strongly needed.

In this study, distribution of attachment categories in family care sample is comparable to other similar studies. Normally numerous reports in different studies have shown a 50% to 56% secure attachment styles [30]. Results of Mazaheri's study also show that almost half of preschool children in Iran have insecure attachment style, in the above study 29 % of children were classified as avoidant insecure & 18% as ambivalent insecure. In the present study 44% of children under care of their families have ambivalent attachment styles and only 6% of these were diagnosed as avoidant insecure. These findings are in congruence with results of Mazaheri's research. Khanjani's study [31] reveals that at lower ages daily separation of mother from her child places the child in danger of insecure attachment.

Results indicate that more Day-care than Home-Care mothers are classified as insecurely attached. These results highlight the contribution of maternal emotional characteristics to the effects of diverse child care arrangements on infant development [32]. It has been suggested that the effects of parenting style on attachment security are moderated by quantity of exposure to child care [33]. Attachments remained secure or became secure if mothers spent more days adapting their children to child care [34], However Further research is required.

The last Finding of the study (scores in children under family care) shows that contrary to what is expected, this group in picture 4 (i.e. parents were going on a trip for 2 weeks) have more self-reliance in comparison with other pictures. Furthermore, Mazaheri [29] in his study on Iranian children did not find sever separation in this picture. Perhaps it can be explained on the basis that

children in Iranian families are seldom left alone for two weeks and in case those parents face such a situation from long time, they make settle for the child. It is less seen that parents allocate time for themselves alone in Iran, and for this reason children rarely experience such a situation. Therefore it can be concluded that responses of children to picture 4 is probably counted as a kind of avoidance as two weeks is a long time for separation from parents and children are evasive in talking about that and prefer to talk about the gifts that receive from their parents.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to acknowledge Islamic Azad University, Tafresh Branch, for kind cooperation and financial support.

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