International Journal of Business, Human and Social Sciences
ISSN: 2517-9411
Vol:3, No:6, 2009

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

Narges Razeghi

***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

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

Table I
Statistical Characteristics of Children in Nursery Provided Versus Those Provided Care by Their Families

Groups	Family care		nursery's children			
Styles	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**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	-	-

**P< 0/01

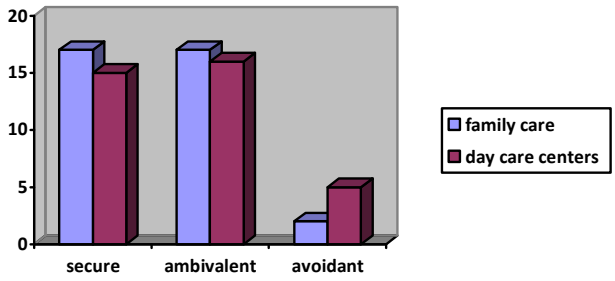

Fig. 1 frequency distribution of attachment styles of family care children and nursery's children

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".

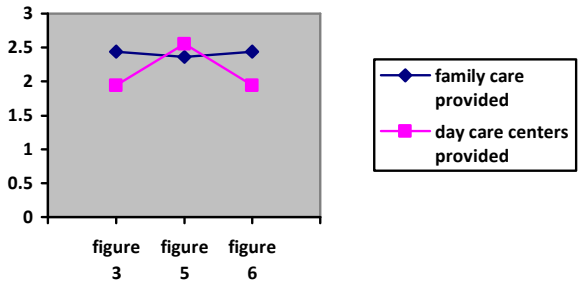

Fig. 2 shows mean score of Family Care children and Nursery's children in each picture related to the aspect of Self-reliance

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

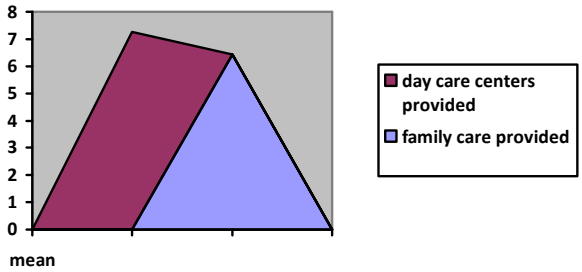

Fig. 3 shows mean scores of Family Care children and nursery's children in the aspect of avoidant

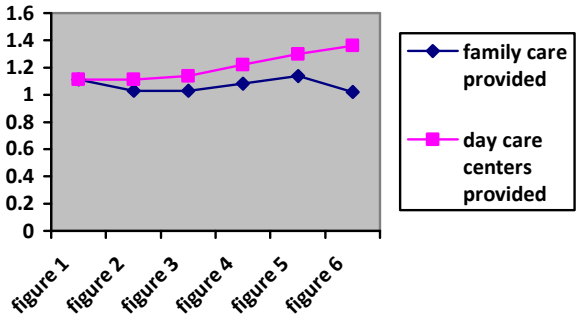

Fig. 4 shows mean score of Family Care children and nursery's children in each picture related to avoidant

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.

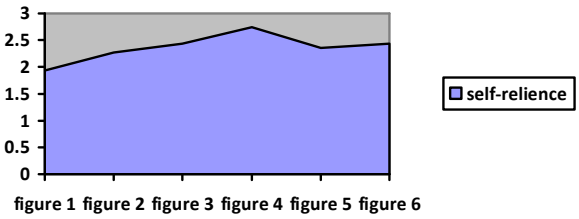

Fig. 5 shows mean responses of children under family care in each 6 picture in self-reliance aspect

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. Normaly 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.

REFERENCES

[1] Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and Loss*. Vol. I: Attachment. London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis.
[2] Laible,Deborah J., Thompson, Ross A. (2000). Mother–Child Discourse, Attachment Security, Shared Positive Affect, and Early Conscience Development. *Child Development.* Volume 71, Issue 5: Pages: 1424-1440.
[3] Niccols, Alison. (2008). 'Right from the Start': randomized trial comparing an attachment group intervention to supportive home visiting. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. Volume 49 Issue 7, Pages 754 – 764].
[4] Bowlby, J. (1973). *Attachment and Loss*. Vol: II Separation, Antiety and Anger. London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis.
[5] Ainthworth, M. D. (1973). The development of infant – mother attachment . in B. Call Well & H. Ricciuti (Eds), *Review of Child Development Research* (Vol: 3). Chicago : University of Chicago Press.
[6] Ainthworth, M. D. S., Blehar, M. C., Waters, E. & wall, s. (1978). *patterns of attachment*: apsychological study of the strange situation. Hillsdale, N. J.: Erlbaum.
[7] Mikulincer. Mario. (1998). Adult attachment style and affect regulation: strategic variations in self-appraisals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psycholo*gy, 75, 2, 420-435.
[8] Cassidy, J. (1990). Connection between family and peer relationships. Paper presented at the preconference on peer relationships. *Meeting of the society for research in child development*, Seattle.
[9] Cassidy, J., Marvin, R. S. (1992). *Attachment organization in preschool children*: Procedures and coding manual.
[10] Cassidy, J. & Berlin, J. (1994). The insecure/ambivalent patterns of attachment: Theory and research. *Child development*, 65, 977-991.
[11] Feeney, J.A., & Noller, P.(1996). *Adult attachment*. Thousand Oaks, CA: sage.
[12] Feeney, J.A., & Kirkpatrick, L. A. (1996). The effects of adult attachment and presence of romantic partners on physiological responses to stress. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 70, 255-270.
[13] Mayseless, O. (2004). Home-leaving to military service: Attachment concerns, transfer of attachment functions from parents to peers, and adjustment. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 19, 533-558.
[14] Granot, D., & Mayseless, O. (2001) Attachment security and adjustment to school in middle childhood. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 25, 530-541.
[15] Scharf, M., & Mayseless, O. (2001). The capacity for romantic intimacy: Exploring the contribution of best friend and marital and parental relationships. *Journal of Adolescence*, 24, 379-399.
[16] Everett Waters, Susan Merrick, Dominique Treboux, Judith Crowell, Leah Albersheim. (2000). Attachment Security in Infancy and Early Adulthood: A Twenty-Year Longitudinal Study. *Child Development.* Volume 71, Issue 3, Pages: 684-689.
[17] Waters, Everett, Weinfield, Nancy S., Hamilton, Claire E. (2000). The Stability of Attachment Security from Infancy to Adolescence and Early Adulthood: *General Discussion. Child Development.* Volume 71, Issue 3: 703-706.
[18] Cooper, M. Lynne. Shaver, Philip, R., & Collins, Nancy L. (1998). *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74, 5, 1380-1397.
[19] Fisher, L; Ames, E; Chisholm, K & Savdie, L. (1997). International *Journal of Behavior Development*. Vol 20, 63-82.
[20] Thompson, Susan, Lenore. (2001). The social skills of previously institutionalized children adopted from Romania. *Dissertation Abstracts International*. Section B: The sciences and engineering. Vol 61 (7-B), 3906.
[21] Marcovitch, Sh; Goldberg, s; gold, A; Washington, J. (1997). Determinants of behavioural problems in Romanian children adopted in Ontario. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*. United Kingdom: Psychological Press, Vol 20(1), 17-31.
[22] Chisholm, K. (1998). A three year follow up of attachment and indiscriminate friendliness in children adopted from Romanian orphanages. *Child development*, Vol 69 (4), 1092-1106.
[23] Panayiota Vorria, Zaira Papaligoura, Judy Dunn, Marinus H. van IJzendoorn, Howard Steele, Antigoni Kontopoulou, and Yiasemi Sarafidou. (2003). Early experiences and attachment relationships of Greek infants raised in residential group care. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. Volume 44 Issue 8, Pages 1208 – 1220.
[24] Miri Scharf. (2001). A "Natural Experiment" in Childrearing Ecologies and Adolescents' Attachment and Separation Representations. *Child Development.* Volume 72, Issue 1,Pages: 236-251.
[25] Rubin, Kenneth. H. (1998). Social and Emotional Development From a Cultural Perspective. *Developmental Psychology*. 34, 4 , 611-615.
[26] Slough, N. M., Goyette, M., Greenberg, M. T. (1988*). Scoring indices for the seattle Version of the separetion anxiety test*. University of washington.
[27] Rutter. Michael, Colvert, Emma., Kreppner , Jana., Beckett , Celia., Castle, Jenny., Groothues, Christine., Hawkins, Amanda., O'Connor , Thomas. G., Stevens, Suzanne. E. and Sonuga-Barke, Edmund.J.S. (2006). Early adolescent outcomes for institutionally-deprived and non-deprived adoptees. I: Disinhibited attachment. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. Volume 48 Issue 1: 17 – 30.
[28] Moss, Ellen; Cyr, Chantal; Bureau, Jean-François; Tarabulsy, George. M & Dubois-Comtois, Karine. (2005). Stability of Attachment During the Preschool Period. *Developmental Psychology*. 41, 5, 773-783.
[29] Erel, Osnat; Oberman, Yael. & Yirmiya, Nurit. (2000). Maternal Versus Nonmaternal Care and Seven Domains of Children's Development. *Psychological Bulletin*. 126, 5, 727-747.
[30] Mazaheri, M. A. (1999). Attachment from a systematic view point: A study in Iranian families. *Unedited P.H.D thesis*. London University.
[31] Khanjani, Z. (1999). Study of relation in temporary separations during day time and signs of sickness in mothers by attachment establishment & emergence of behavioraly social problems in preschool level .*Unedited P.H.D thesis. College of Psychology & Education*. Tehran University.
[32] Nina Koren-Karie. (2001). Mothers' attachment representations and choice of infant care: center care vs. home. *Infant and Child Developme*nt. Volume 10, Issue 3, Pages: 117-127.
[33] Yvonne M. Caldera, Sybil Hart. (2004). Exposure to child care, parenting style and attachment security. *Infant and Child Development.*Volume 13, Issue 1, Pages: 21-33.
[34] Lieselotte Ahnert, Megan R. Gunnar, Michael E. Lamb, Martina Barthel. (2004). Transition to Child Care: Associations with Infant–Mother Attachment, Infant Negative Emotion, and Cortisol Elevations. *Child Development*. Volume 75, Issue 3, Pages: 639-650.

Ms Narges Razeghi was born in Tafresh (Iran). She received the BSc degree in Psychology from Azad University, Central Tehran Branch (Iran) in 1998 and the MSc degree in Psychology and Education of Exceptional Children from the same University, in 2002, July. She joined Azad University of Tafresh in 2003 as a lecturer.