

UPDATES AND IDEAS
FOR A LEVEL
PSYCHOLOGY

No.5 - 10 Articles on
Developmental Psychology:
Social and General
Development

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1. CHILDREN IN THE PLAYGROUND: INSIDE/OUTSIDE PERSPECTIVES

Judith Rich Harris (1998) proposed that parental influences on children have been greatly overemphasised, and it is the peer group that is more important. The peer group's influence can be seen in the playground at all ages, and in the development of "children's cultures".

In the playground, children are playing together which can be seen as a "skilled interactional accomplishment" (Littleton and Miell 2005). In other words, play allows children to learn how to interact. This can be studied from "outside" (observation by adult researchers) or from "inside" (asking the child to describe their experiences and thoughts). This is not where the research takes place, but the perspective taken. "Inside" means a first person perspective (ie: the behaving person), and "outside" is a third person perspective (ie: the observer)(Stevens 1996).

STUDYING FROM THE OUTSIDE

Usually through the observation method, adult researchers record in detail the behaviour and interpret what is happening (table 1.1).

ADVANTAGES

1. Allows use of scientific or controlled methods like structured observations.
2. Make sense of the behaviour beyond what children are able to explain.
3. Experienced observers can spot different behaviours, like the difference between real and play fighting.
4. Overcomes problems of trying to get at the subjective experience of children.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Adults are interpreting the behaviour of the child.
2. How to interpret ambiguous actions or where two observers disagree about the meaning.
3. Do not ask children what the behaviour meant to them.
4. General problems with the observation method, like observer bias or participant reactivity.

Table 1.1 - Advantages and disadvantages of studying children's playground behaviour from "outside".

One example of a problem relates to children appearing to fight in the playground: "play fighting can look like real fighting" (Littleton and Miell 2005). Smith et al (1999) added that the difference is evident to children and to trained adult observers because play fighting is "often indexed by laughter and smiling". But the distinction can be blurred including "cheating".

"Cheating might occur when 'play conventions' are used in such a way as to harm another when they have readily assumed or 'consented' to adopt an inferior position in a play context. In such cases.. public humiliation of a play partner may be used to display dominance and, perhaps, to increase the status or reputation of the 'cheat' within their peer group" (Littleton and Miell 2005 p104).

So observing behaviour from the outside can be difficult because of the potential ambiguity of actions, which children themselves can struggle to understand. In other words, when is a fight in fun or in seriousness? Littleton and Miell (2005) quoted the case of an observation of a group of boys in a Mexican village where the actions turn from play to anger for no apparent reason. The boys are pushing and grabbing each other with as much force during the playing as when it becomes serious. But, for an unclear reason, one boy becomes angry and the play fighting changes.

STUDYING FROM THE INSIDE

This type of research involves asking children about their views on their behaviour - how it felt to them and what it meant. It is based around interviews and questionnaires (table 1.2).

Taking an insider perspective in research means using self-reported data. In one example, Blatchford et al (1990) interviewed over three hundred children from thirty-three inner London schools about all aspects of school, including break-time. The first set of individual structured interviews took place at the age 7-11 years (junior school). Structured interviews meant that the same questions were asked to all the children, and most questions had forced choice answers (which is easier to score). The children were interviewed at sixteen years old (secondary school).

Not surprisingly, what children did at break-time changed with age; from playing games to talking. Children develop their understanding of social interactions in the adult-free environment of the playground. It is not always positive (eg: teasing and bullying).

ADVANTAGES

1. Listen to what the individual involved in the behaviour says, and the meaning they place on it.
2. The only way to gain access to the subjective experience of children.
3. Does not involve interpretations from observations; researchers interpret what the child says.
4. Interviews and questionnaires allow the researcher to focus on what they want, whereas observation depends upon what is happening at the time.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Not possible with younger children, who are pre-lingual, or when language is not sufficient to describe events.
2. "You can only infer what another person is experiencing from his or her words and actions and on the basis of knowledge of the context and awareness of one's own personal experience. It is not always easy to communicate the quality of personal experience, let alone ensure that someone else appreciates what you mean" (Stevens 1996 p60).
3. Problems with interviewing; eg: interviewer-interviewee interaction.
4. Problems with questionnaire design; eg: wording of question can influence answer given.

Table 1.2 - Advantages and disadvantages of studying children's playground behaviour from inside.

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2. TWO RESEARCH METHODS USED IN STUDYING MORAL DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDREN

Maccoby (1980) defined moral development as the "child's acquisition of rules which govern behaviour in the social world and, in particular, the development of a sense of right and wrong, how the child begins to understand values that guide and regulate behaviour within a given social system". So moral development includes the thoughts about moral issues (moral judgments) as well as behaviour.

Moral development has been studied in two main ways - through experiments and moral dilemma stories.

EXPERIMENTS

The use of the experiment to study moral development allows the researcher to see how the child actually behaves in a particular situation. This is moral behaviour. The researcher is able to control the variables in order to see their effect on the child's behaviour (table 2.1).

Lie-Telling Behaviour

Talwar et al (2004) investigated one part of moral development - children's lie-telling behaviour. The parents of 137 3-11 year-olds acted as confederates (table 2.2) of the experimenters as their children were tested. The child and parent waited in a room containing a sign marked "Do Not Touch" next to a puppet in a glass case. There were three conditions:

- The parent touches the puppet and it appears to break; they say, "Oh my goodness, I have broken the puppet". The parent tells the child not to report this. The child is questioned about the event in the presence of the parent ("parent present condition");
- As above but the parent is not present during questioning of the child ("parent absent condition");
- The puppet is broken before the child arrives in the room, but is still told by the parent not to report it when questioned without the parent present ("child absent condition").

STRENGTHS

1. Studying actual behaviour rather than what the child says about their behaviour.
2. Isolate and control variables to see their effect on behaviour.
3. Only method that allows researchers to establish cause and effect relationships.
4. Measure behaviour accurately.
5. Standardised procedure allows the comparison of participants.
6. General strengths of the experimental method like replicability.

WEAKNESSES

1. Laboratory experiments are artificial situations, and the child may behave differently to their normal behaviour.
2. Ethical concerns, particularly with "resistance to temptation" experiments.
3. Not able to effectively study unseen processes like moral thoughts or intentions.
4. Narrowness of independent and dependent variables means that the wider context of behaviour is often ignored.
5. Measures behaviour for short periods only.
6. Risk of experimenter effects.

Table 2.1 - Strengths and weaknesses of the use of the experiment to study moral development.

STRENGTHS

1. Child more comfortable with parent than stranger adult.
2. Parents happy to give consent for child's participation in the experiment if they part of it.
3. Confederates allow researchers to control complex situations and set up difficult scenarios to test.

WEAKNESSES

1. Parents may have deviated from script and influenced child's behaviour (similar to the experimenter effect).
2. Conflicts for children of parents saying one thing in the experimental situation (ie: encourage to lie) and another at home (not to lie).
3. Confederates involve deception of participants.

Table 2.2 - Strengths and weaknesses of using the parent as a confederate in the experiment.

The children were interviewed twice, and between the interviews there was a discussion about truth and lies (known as a competency assessment with child witnesses). The key question in the interviews was "Did your mum (dad) break the puppet?". Most children were honest despite the parents' attempt to coach them to lie (table 2.3).

| GROUP: | PARENT PRESENT | PARENT ABSENT | CHILD ABSENT |
|------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| FIRST INTERVIEW | 67 | 80 | 51 |
| SECOND INTERVIEW | 96 | 89 | 69 |

Table 2.3 - Percentage of children answering "Yes" to "Did your mum (dad) break the puppet?".

The number of children being honest increased after the discussion about truth and lies, and most particularly in the parent present condition.

There are ethical concerns with this experiment; ie: getting the parents to encourage their children to lie. The children were told the truth at the end of the experiment, and the parents joined in a general discussion on truth and lies.

Co-Operative Behaviour

One type of moral behaviour is pro-social or co-operative behaviour. This has been studied using the "Madsen technique" (Madsen 1971). This involves experimental apparatus specially designed for children to work together (table 2.4). There is a box containing a reward for the children to open, but it can only be opened by co-operation (pulling the different strings together). The children are either offered a joint reward or individual rewards, and this influences the level of co-operation.

The "Madsen technique" has been used in different cultures and societies: for example, children in the USA are less co-operative than other cultures like Korea, and generally rural children are more co-operative than urban ones (Smith and Bond 1993).

STRENGTHS

1. Removes any prior learning and all participants start as equal.
2. Allows researchers to study and control exactly what they want.

WEAKNESSES

1. Involves artificial task that participants may not take seriously.
2. Difficult to know what to expect as no previous research with apparatus. It takes time to evaluate its validity.

Table 2.4 - Strengths and weaknesses of using specially designed experimental apparatus.

"Resistance to Temptation" Experiment

Burton et al (1961) is typical of the design of "resistance to temptation" studies used with children. Here seventy-seven four-year-olds from private nursery schools in the Boston area, USA, were tested.

The experimenters created a bean bag game where the children had to throw bean bags at a target from a set distance. If they hit a hidden wire, it turned on a light and rung a bell. In fact, the target-hitting success was controlled by a hidden experimenter. The children were taught the rules of the game and offered toys as prizes if they hit the target three times.

Then the experimenter had to leave the room, and the child was told to continue playing. The hidden experimenter watched to see if the child cheated (eg: moving closer to throw) as this was the only way to hit the target enough times to win the prize.

Whether the child cheats in the game when alone, or to what degree was measured and then correlated with questionnaire data on child-rearing. The aim was to see whether or how long the children could exercise self control (delay gratification) and not cheat at the game as the prizes were very attractive.

This type of experiment is used less often today, mainly because of ethical concerns:

- Deception - The child was deceived about how the game works. There was no skill involved, it was controlled by the hidden experimenter;
- Psychological distress - The child was deliberately excited by the attractiveness of the prizes offered. However, when the experimenter returned, the children played the game again and all won to "reduce any guilt that might have been aroused by cheating, to relieve feelings of failure for noncheating Ss [subjects], to

avoid reinforcing cheating.." (p693);

- Behaviour change - The child was encouraged to cheat, particularly as they are shown how to lock the door when the experimenter leaves;
- Parental consent - It is not specified in the method section whether the parents knew fully what the game involved. They consented to take part in the study because parental questionnaires were also collected.

MORAL DILEMMA STORIES

This method is used to study moral judgments and insight. It is what the child thinks about right and wrong. It is a good way to understand the child's moral reasoning, and concepts like justice and fairness using hypothetical scenarios (table 2.5).

STRENGTHS

1. Study moral judgments and reasoning about right and wrong.
2. Listen to what the child says rather than adult researchers interpreting the behaviour.
3. Use the same stories with different age groups to show the stages of moral development.
4. Less ethical concerns than experiments.
5. There is usually not a right and wrong answer, but it is how the child reaches their decision that the researchers find interesting.
6. Hypothetical stories help children to think about issues without experiencing them.
7. Can be used in one-to-one interviews or in group discussions.

WEAKNESSES

1. Stories may be too complex for children to understand.
2. Children may not be able to communicate their thoughts fully - ie: depends on language ability.
3. Low predictive validity - what children say is not what they necessarily do; ie: measures attitudes not behaviour.
4. Scoring of answers can be subjective and not standardised.
5. Some stories not relevant to children's lives today.
6. Concentrates on logical thoughts and ignores emotions.
7. Some dilemma stories have Western cultural bias.

Table 2.5 - Strengths and weaknesses of the use of moral dilemma stories to study moral development.

Classic Dilemma Stories 1: Jean Piaget

Both Piaget and Kohlberg used moral dilemma stories as their main research methods of children's moral reasoning.

Story 1

A little boy who is called John is in his room. He is called to dinner. He goes into the dining room. But behind the door there was a chair, and on the chair there was a tray with fifteen cups on it. John couldn't have known that there was all this behind the door. He goes in, the door knocks against the tray, "bang" to the fifteen cups and they all get broken.

Story 2

Once there was a little boy whose name was Henry. One day when his mother was out he tried to get some jam out of the cupboard. He climbed up on a chair and stretched out his arm. But the jam was too high up and he couldn't reach it and have any. But while he was trying to get it, he knocked over a cup. The cup fell down and broke.

Is one of the boys naughtier than the other? (Piaget 1932).

Classic Dilemma Stories 2: Heinz

Kohlberg used this famous story in his research:

In Europe, a woman is dying from cancer. One drug might save her, a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The druggist was charging 2000 dollars, ten times what the drug cost him to make. The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but he could only get together about half of what the drug cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said "No". The husband got desperate and broke into the main's store to steal the drug for his wife (Kohlberg 1969).

Friendship Dilemma Stories

Selman (1980) used moral dilemma stories related to friendship in order to make sense for the children. For example:

Kathy and Debby have been friends since five. A new girl, Jeannette, moves into the neighbourhood, but Debby dislikes her because she considers Jeannette a show-off. Later Jeannette invites Kathy to go out one day when Kathy has promised to play with Debby. What should Kathy do?

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3. CHILDREN AS YOUNG CONSUMERS: "CONSUMER SOCIALISATION"

The process of socialisation involves children learning the norms of their society and culture. It varies from "table manners" to the accepted meanings underpinning the world. Being raised in a consumer society socialises children into the norms of that society. There are different aspects to this process related to the understanding of advertising and brands, and the meaning of possessions.

UNDERSTANDING ADVERTISING

The process of "consumer socialisation" is relatively new in history, but the second half of the twentieth century has seen the vast increase in marketing and advertising. John (1999) has suggested three stages of children's understanding of advertising similar to stages of cognitive development:

i) Perceptual stage (3-7 years old) - Children view adverts at face value as funny and interesting. Understanding of a promotional message occurs by the end of the stage.

Children as young as six have a conception of what is "cool" (fashionable) and not (Pole et al 2006 quoted in Williams 2006).

ii) Analytical stage (7-11 years old) - By seven years old children understand adverts are designed to persuade, and distinguish them from other programmes. There is a recognition of brand names and development of the concept of shopping.

iii) Reflective stage (11-16 years old) - This stage sees a "heightened awareness of other people's perspectives, along with a need to shape their own identity and conform to group expectations, results in more attention to the social aspects of being a consumer, making choices, and consuming brands" (John 1999 p187).

MEANING OF POSSESSIONS

Research on the meaning of possessions have linked them to the perception of the self.

Kemptoner (1991 quoted in Phoenix 2005), using questions with different age groups of Californians (both children and adults), found differences in most valued possession. Pre-teens valued toys that gave comfort and security, whereas adults identified objects associated with social relationships and identity. This change in

preference appeared in the mid-teens.

Furby (1978) explored the meanings of possessions in the US and Israel. One hundred and fifty US participants (30 each from five groups - kindergarten, 6-7 years old, 10-11 years old, 16-17 years old, and 40-60 years old), and 120 Israeli were interviewed. Pre-teens emphasised the positive affect associated with valued objects in both samples. Older teens in the US related their valued objects more to social power and status.

BRANDS AS SYMBOLS OF STATUS IN ADOLESCENCE

Anderson (2004) interviewed forty adolescents and adults in Liverpool about personal possessions that "say something about you". Adolescents chose more branded goods, and referred to brands more when talking about themselves. A product like a mobile phone type provides a sense of belonging with other owners of the same make, but also individuality with specific ringtones. The participants were then asked to rate individuals in photographs wearing certain brands. The adolescents described "brand personalities" in positive and negative ways depending on the products. Overall the adolescents were very conscious of brand signals.

Not everybody admits to being concerned with buying brands. But "Positioning yourself against brands does, however, influence what young people can do as much as being determined to buy brands" (Phoenix 2005 p237). In other words, denying brands emphasises their importance in the social world.

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4. GROWING UP IN THE UK IN THE 21ST CENTURY - NOT NICE?

Many aspects of childhood and child development occur in similar ways over time, whether it is the 20th or the 21st century. But child development does occur in a social context, and many behaviours are affected by the culture and the society where the children are growing up. So children growing up in the UK in the early 21st century will have similarities to children growing up in the early 20th century, for example, but, at the same time, there will be clear differences.

It is also difficult to accurately assess the experience of childhood today, particularly when popular opinion tends to focus upon the negative aspects of "youngsters today". However, three reports that appeared in 2007 can be used to try and understand aspects of the experience of childhood today.

1. Commercialisation of Childhood

The charity, "Compass", produced a report entitled "The Commercialisation of Childhood" which painted a negative picture:

Bombarded with images of how they should look and what they should own, children struggle to keep up, suffering from stress; anxiety; increasingly lower satisfaction with themselves and their lives; and poorer relationships with others. Across the country there are record levels of mental health problems in children, with boys displaying symptoms of conduct disorders like bullying and fighting and girls suffering from eating and emotional disorders (Williams 2007 p5).

The report is focused upon advertising and marketing of products fighting for the £30 billion child-oriented market, and the effects it has upon children: "Marketers exploit children's emotional vulnerabilities and use "being cool" to sell" (p4).

The report was the launching of a campaign to allow children to be children before they are consumers as 70% of three-year-olds recognise the McDonalds symbol while only 50% of them know their own surname.

2. Sexualisation of Girls

The Compass report also highlights the concern of children growing up too soon: for example, girls being sold lacy underwear before secondary school. This topic was highlighted in a US report from the American

Psychological Association (APA, Task Force on the Sexualisation of Girls 2007).

The report emphasises two key concerns about the sexualisation of girls:

i) Sexual objectification - "made into a thing for others' sexual use, rather than seen as a person with the capacity for individual action and decision-making" (p2); eg: print advertisements that portray women as little girls with pigtails in sexual poses;

ii) Adult sexuality inappropriately imposed upon children - eg: magazines instructing pre-adolescent girls how to look sexy to get a boyfriend.

The report summarised a wide range of research including the consequences of psychological problems in adolescence and young adulthood.

3. General Well-Being

UNICEF (2007) produced a report comparing the lives and well-being of children in twenty-one industrialised nations under six different headings using forty separate indices. The report received publicity because the UK is rated last overall, and the USA next to last with the Netherlands and Sweden top.

The six categories of child well-being were (and where the UK rated on each one):

- Material well-being - (UK 18th, Sweden 1st) eg: number of children living in low income families;
- Health and safety - (UK 12th, Sweden 1st) eg: infant mortality rate;
- Educational well-being - (UK 17th, Belgium 1st) eg: literacy achievements;
- Family and peer relationships - (UK 21st, Italy 1st) eg: number of single parents;
- Behaviours and risks - (UK 21st, Sweden 1st) eg: amount of time spent by parent talking to child;
- Subjective well-being - (UK 20th, Netherlands 1st) eg: experience of physical violence.

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5. CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN THE THIRD WORLD: DEPRIVATION OR NORMALITY?

By Western definitions, most children in poorer countries are maltreated or neglected. But care needs to be taken because much of this behaviour is a product of the world system (Gans 1973) rather than of "bad" individuals most of the time.

The experience of children in the Third World is different to that of the West, not necessarily because the problems are unique, but that they are so common. Three such experiences are considered here.

1. Child Labour

Generally there are a number of types of child labour (Morice 2000):

i) Within the family including children who accompany their parents to outside work;

ii) Children "placed" outside the home including bonded labour and apprenticeships;

iii) Child wage-earners;

iv) Street-children (who have usually left the family).

Yet, in some cases, rather than being passive exploited individuals, "there are many working children who have become their families' de facto breadwinners, and who are perfectly well aware of and derive legitimate pride from this fact" (Schlemmer 2000 p4).

Another twist to the issue of child labour is that parents may be "grateful" to an employer who keeps their child "off the street", and gives an "apprenticeship" (Schlemmer 2000). The idea of labour for the child's own good is also evident in the family - the ubiquitous caring for younger siblings by girls, for example. "The brutality of exploitation may be found within as much as outside the domestic environment" (Schlemmer 2000 p10). This, and other activities like housework or chores, is child labour in one sense.

The International Labour Office (ILO) has attempted to deal with the ambiguities of child labour by making a clear distinction between "children working in socially and personally useful ways - working for pocket money, doing household chores, helping in the family business during the school holidays - and children whose working conditions should be regulated or eliminated" (Black 1993

p16). Alvim (2000) called the latter the "socially invisible".

The greatest concern is over those children "prematurely leading adult lives" and working in conditions which are damaging to "their physical or mental development" (Black 1993). The effect upon the child's development seems to be key as to whether the labour is right or wrong.

Child labour is also a risky business. Taracena and Tavera (2000) interviewed thirty-six child workers in Mexico city in four types of employment, and found that the risks for child workers were very high in some cases (table 5.1).

TYPE OF WORKERS:

| SUPERMARKET | SALES | SERVICES | PERFORMANCE |
|---|----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Help shoppers pack up goods and take to car park for tips | Selling chewing-gum, food, drink | Shoeshine, car wash, windscreen-cleaners, porters | Singers, musicians, fire-eaters |

MAIN AGE (yrs):

| | | | |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| 14-15 | 8-15 | 12-15 | 9-14 |
|-------|------|-------|------|

RISKS:

| | | | |
|------|----------------------------------|---|--|
| None | Pollution Accidents - some | Pollution Accidents - some Violence - all | Pollution Accidents Violence Drugs - all |
|------|----------------------------------|---|--|

(After Taracena and Tavera 2000)

Table 5.1 - Types of employment of child workers in Mexico city.

A common manifestation of child labour around the world is in the form of bonded labour. Bales (2002) estimated that 27 million people (children and adults) worldwide are in bonded labour or similar forms of "modern slavery".

Basically, an adult receives a monetary loan which is repaid by the child's labour. But it is not as simple as that because the cost of the child's needs (eg: food) or fines for poor work are added to the loan. Thus the period of the bonded labour is continually increased. The debt can also be passed down through generations (Bales 2002).

Children in this situation are not necessarily

pledged to do a precise job: "They must be ready to respond to the employer's every command and, in many domestic situations, particularly in the countryside, they are expected to remain available night and day to work in the fields or at the workshop, domestic service, running errands or working for a third party on the master's behalf" (Bonnet 2000 p181).

The overwhelming feeling for such children must be hopelessness because there is no escape from the daily grind, nor in terms of a future date to look forward to. Their lives are placed in "suspended animation" (Bonnet 2000).

Many of the children from bonded labour become the cheap adult migrant workers: "ready for anything, open to any sort of work and all sorts of exploitation" (Bonnet 2000 p191).

Bonded labour of children and adults is justified as local custom, caste or class differences, economics, or beneficial for both sides. Bales (2002) quoted a bond owner in India as he justified the practice: "they are from the Kohl caste.. you can't just give money away.. It is a father-son relationship; I protect them and guide them" (pp73-74).

2. Poverty

A key impact on children is made by poverty. Poverty is associated with poor parental mental health, greater family conflict, and negative parent-child interactions (Marks et al 2002). All of these factors affect the child in different ways.

For example, poor children are more likely to suffer from psychiatric disorders among other disadvantages compared to richer children, as shown in a study in Ontario, Canada of over 3000 children (Offord 1991) (table 5.2).

| | POOR CHILDREN* | MIDDLE CLASS CHILDREN |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Diagnosed psychiatric disorder | 31.6 | 13.8 |
| Poor school performance | 29.7 | 13.3 |
| Social impairment | 11.9 | 11.6 |
| Chronic health problems | 30.1 | 17.6 |
| Teacher-identified conduct disorders | 15.6 | 2.6 |

(* Annual family income less 10 000 Canadian dollars)

Table 2 - Percentage incidence of problems between children from poor and middle class families.

The effects of poverty are greater in the preschool years than middle childhood, and the longer the child living in poverty, the greater the negative outcomes (Brooks-Gunn et al 1999).

Research has attempted to explain the mechanisms by which poverty leads to childhood problems. It is difficult to isolate poverty from other negative variables like family conflict, but one possibility is that low income creates economic pressures leading to parental conflict. This conflict affects the child itself, or leads to inattention from parents, or produces harsh parenting, and these create the negative outcomes for the child (Conger et al 1997).

A variation of living in poverty is the case of children working or living on the street. Studies in a number of countries showed that streetchildren are highly vulnerable to abuse and victimization.

3. Living in Conflict Situations

Many children around the world are living in situations of armed conflict and war. This situation clearly has consequences for the children.

For example, 88% of Iraqi children had Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder one year after experiencing bombing while in a shelter during the Gulf War, and 79% two years after the event (Karam and Bou Ghosa 2003).

Somasundaram (2002) has studied children in the civil war in North East Sri Lanka, both those who become child soldiers and schoolchildren generally. Of a group of over 600 adolescents in Vaddukoddai (North Sri Lanka), each child had experienced an average of four war-related stressors, like detention, displacement, or witnessed violence. Thirty-one per cent of the adolescents were diagnosed as having Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and 21% depression.

Among 305 younger schoolchildren in the same area of Sri Lanka, the biggest problems were sleep disturbances (88%), separation anxiety (40%), and hyperalertness (50%).

This study also looked at the recruitment of child soldiers in the North East Sri Lankan civil war. Two main groups of causes were outlined:

i) Push factors - for example, brutalisation of children by Sinhala security forces (15% of 600 disappearances in 1996 in Jaffna were children); deprivation - families encourage children to join to guarantee the children food as a soldier;

ii) Pull factors - for example, a shortage of older men; the construction of a "martyr culture".

Thabet et al (2002) assessed 91 Palestinian children exposed to home bombardment and demolition during the Al Aqsa Intifada, and 89 controls exposed to other political violence in Gaza. The data were collected in January and February 2001. The exposed group had greater levels of "severe" and "very severe" Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder compared to the controls (59% vs 25%). But the control group had more anticipatory anxiety, and cognitive expressions of distress.

While Bhutta (2002) has argued that children in Afghanistan in the last 25 years have experienced malnutrition and disease among the highest in the world, as well as death and injuries from landmines and artillery, and psychological scars.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child defines child soldiers as below eighteen years of age.

Between 1998 and 2001 children were being used as soldiers in nearly half of 178 countries (Mazurana et al 2002). As 40 000 child soldiers were demobilized between 2001 and 2004, 30 000 more children were drawn into new conflicts (Veale and Stavrou 2007). Many of these children will have been abducted and forced into fighting.

Veale and Stavrou (2007) interviewed ten formerly abducted child soldiers in Acholi (northern Uganda). The seven males and three females had been abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) to fight against the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF). The age of abduction varied from 12 to 17 years old, and the length of time in the LRA from three months to three years. All the participants had been returned to their community for at least two years. For ethical reasons, the children were not asked about any killings or atrocities that they may have been involved in committing.

The interviews were divided into three parts - the abduction, life in the LRA, and re-integration into their community.

i) Abduction

"Ultimately, child abduction is a military strategy aimed not just at individual children but also at the social control of the collective Acholi society. The fear generated by this strategy infiltrates the daily life and imagination of the whole community" (Veale and Stavrou 2007 p281).

The abduction moment was vivid in the memory of all the respondents; eg: "It was in 1996. I was still asleep. It was approaching 6am. The rebels of the LRA stormed in

and forced me out and forced me to join the captives. They were about fifteen in number" (p281)("John"; age at abduction 14, interviewed at 18 years old).

ii) Life in the LRA

The initiation experience was terrifying for the respondents: "Every moment of the first few days were lived in a paralysis of fear as he ("Francis") beaten, witnessed 'them' killing other people and not knowing if he himself would be killed" (Veale and Stavrou 2007 p282).

The brutality of the experience was real: "There was a lot of killing of children. Whoever tries to escape will be killed, for walking ahead, you will be killed, and even for a minor mistake children will be severely tortured" (p282)("Francis"; age at abduction 15, interviewed at 23 years old).

"They beat us all the time. Even when you tell them you are sick. They asked us to beat other children if they have done something wrong. Other children were asked to beat me" (p282)("Peter"; age at abduction 16, age at interview 20 years old). The girls experienced "systematic sexual abuse".

There was a "spiritual" initiation ceremony led by the LRA leader, Joseph Kony, which involved smearing shea butter oil on the abductees. Kony claims to be possessed by many spirits, including one that stops the bullets of the enemy.

After the initiation came the training as a soldier: "Before you are trained and given a gun, you are treated as a captive, and they are always beating them. But when I became a soldier and I had a gun in my hand, at least the level of mistreatment" (p284)("Francis").

The aim of the LRA was an ingroup identity for the abductees. In other words, to "convert" them to the cause by making the children feel part of the group. But the interviewees "resisted incorporating an ingroup identity while participating in the daily activities of the LRA as if they were fully engaged participants. Exiting the LRA is extremely dangerous, but the young people kept the idea of escape alive. It is an ultimate expression of resistance and agency in a context designed to foster extreme powerlessness" (Veale and Stavrou 2007 p286).

iii) Return to their community

Returning to their own community, either through escape from the LRA or an UPDF amnesty, was obviously joyful, but re-integration had its problems. There was ambivalence: "In the village, they treat me like a

brother. But some people do not like seeing you. They call me rebel" (p286)("Victor"; age at abduction 17, age at interview 22 years old). It should not be forgotten that many of the child soldiers were involved in atrocities towards their communities as forcibly recruited LRA soldiers. Former abductees were faced with "multiple and sometimes contradictory social positions" on their return.

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6. CHILDREN'S UNDERSTANDING OF NATIONAL IDENTITY

Barrett (2005) distinguished a number of aspects of the development of national identity in children (table 6.1):

- i) Awareness of categories of people which are given labels;
- ii) Inclusion of self in a particular category or categories;
- iii) Attribution of importance to that category;
- iv) Personal sense of belonging to that category and emotions involved (eg national pride, shame);
- v) Assessment of who belongs to a particular national group;
- vi) Ingroup favouritism and outgroup discrimination.

For Jean Piaget, the development of national identity fitted with his theory of general cognitive development. During the pre-operational stage (particularly up to five years old), children will have little knowledge of their national group and may not even be able to name their own country.

| <u>ASPECTS OF NATIONAL IDENTITY</u> | <u>EXAMPLE</u> |
|---|--|
| Awareness of categories of people | British, English, Scottish, Welsh |
| Inclusion of self in category | I am English and British |
| Attribution of importance to category | Being English more important than British |
| Personal sense of belonging | I am English because I was born in England |
| Assessment of who belongs to a national group | They are not English because they were not born in England |
| Ingroup favouritism and outgroup discrimination | I like English people, but not Spanish |

Table 6.1 - Aspects of national identity.

At approximately seven years old, the child moves into the concrete-operational stage which would be manifest as an awareness of differences between national groups. Movement into the formal-operational stage after eleven years old would be associated with more abstract understanding of national groups (Piaget and Weil 1951).

In the concrete-operational stage, the world is seen as black and white. Thus there is a polarization in attitudes between the ingroup (all positive) and the outgroup (all negative). Aboud (1988) preferred to see this change as around six years old.

The polarization of attitudes declines as the child reaches the formal-operational stage, and is able to deal with grey areas: ie both the ingroup and outgroups have positive and negative characteristics.

This cognitive-developmental approach of Piaget sees the development of national identity as universal among children of all national groups because it is based upon general cognitive development. The alternative view is that socialisation (social learning) creates the child's understanding of national groups.

RESEARCH ON ASPECTS OF NATIONAL IDENTITY

Development of National Self-Categorisation

National self-categorisation is the combination of aspects of categories (i) and (ii) in table 6.1 above. It is linked to cognitive development, particularly in terms of the awareness of different categories of people.

Piaget investigated this development with younger Swiss children in Geneva. Piaget and Weil (1951) found that under fives did not know what country they lived in. At five and six years old, children knew the name of the country, but did not perceive themselves as Swiss.

But this research was asking the children questions which can be difficult, particularly for younger children. Barrett (2005) described using cards containing terms like "English", "European", or "Londoner", and the children had to choose which applied to themselves. Using this technique, children as young as six years old named correctly their national group and described themselves with it.

Importance Attached to National Identity

Using the card choice technique, children were asked to rank the cards they had chosen as applied to themselves. Two development patterns emerged (Barrett 2005):

i) National identity important

Children with this pattern showed a consistency in ranking national identity as important at whatever age between 6-15 years old. For example, Basque-speaking children in the Basque country in Spain always placed high importance on their Basque (national) identity (Reizabel et al 2004).

ii) National identity grows in importance

Children at six years old did not rank their national identity as important, but, by the age of 12, it had become important. This pattern was found in a study of Ukrainian children (Pavlenko et al 2001).

The importance attached to national identity also varied depending upon where the children lived in their country. For example, children from Moscow placed greater importance of their Russian identity than those children from a provincial city (Riazanova et al 2001).

Ethnicity is also a factor here. Barrett (2005) questioned white English, second-generation English-born Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and black African 11-16 year-olds. The white English adolescents placed greater importance on both a British and an English national identity than the other groups.

Finally, language spoken at home is important. In the Basque country, children from homes speaking Basque placed emphasis on their Basque identity, while children from Spanish-speaking homes emphasised their Spanish identity (Reizabel et al 2004).

Reizabel et al (2004) studied 246 children from four age groups (6, 9, 12 and 15 years old) growing up in the Basque country (Spain) in three different households - where Basque was spoken only, where Spanish was the only language, or where both languages were used.

The children's self-categorisation was measured using cards, and open-ended questions. The national identity was measured with another set of cards using terms like "very Spanish", "a little bit Basque" or "not at all Spanish". This was followed by the allocation of terms (eg "honest", "dishonest") to the different national groups.

With the self-categorisation, the Basque-speakers and bilinguals were more likely to choose "Basque" as most important (39.1% and 40.3% respectively) compared to Spanish-speakers (14.4%). Of the latter group, only 11.3% chose "Spanish" as most important compared to none of the other groups.

The different linguistic groups showed clear patterns in their national identities. The Basque-speakers identified more as Basque than Spanish-speakers (table 6.2).

| <u>RESPONSE CHOSEN</u> | <u>SPANISH-SPEAKERS</u> | <u>BASQUE-SPEAKERS</u> | <u>BILINGUALS</u> |
|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Not at all Spanish* | 7.2 | 33.7 | 36.1 |
| Very Spanish | 37.1 | 11.6 | 16.4 |
| Not at all Basque | 14.4 | 4.6 | 3.2 |
| Very Basque | 43.3 | 85.1 | 74.8 |

(* Other choices were "a little bit", "don't know", and "other")
(After Reizabel et al 2004)

Table 6.2 - Percentage of replies based on language spoken at home.

"It is unlikely that the mere fact of speaking a particular language itself is the causal factor that determines the importance that the child attributes to their national identity. Instead, it seems much more likely that the child's use of language is a consequence of the ideological choices and value systems of his or her parents" (Barrett 2005 p199).

These variations in the development and importance of national identity challenge any simple universal model of how national identity forms. It cannot be a product of cognitive development only, rather part of socio-cognitive development. In other words, the role of socialisation is more important than biological factors.

Assessing Who Belongs to a National Group

Children use different criteria by which to assess who is a member of a particular national group.

Carrington and Short (1995) asked 8-12 year-old children living in Britain the question, "What makes a person British?". The majority (65%) answered "born in Britain", followed by "speak English as first language" (32%), then "place of residence". When children in the USA were asked about being American, the majority chose birthplace again (64%), but followed by "place of residence" (ie living in the USA) (31%), and "having papers" (legal citizenship). "Speaking English as first language" did not feature (Carrington and Short 2000).

Part of seeing the world divided into national groups is the existence of national stereotypes. At five or six years old, children report the typical characteristics (usually physical) of the major national groups around them. The descriptions become more detailed (including traits and habits) and of more national groups by ten years old (Barrett 2005).

For example, English children at 5-7 years old had simple descriptions for French and Spanish people (eg: brown/suntanned), but nothing for Germans and Italians. By 8-10 years old, children produce detailed descriptions of all four groups (eg: French: brown/suntanned, strong, speak French, peaceful) (Barrett and Short 1992).

Ingroup Favouritism/Outgroup Discrimination

The next aspect of national identity is the emotional component: ie liking or disliking other national groups. Children prefer their own national group (ingroup favouritism) from six years old onwards based on a variety of research methods in different countries (Barrett 2005).

But this does not mean that children dislike other national groups (outgroup discrimination), they simply like them less than their own group. Where children do show outgroup discrimination, it is usually with "traditional historical enemies of the child's own country": eg Greek children towards Turkish or English children and Germany (Barrett 2005). Not surprisingly, the media plays a key role in how children learn about other national groups.

The child's strength of sense of their own national identity had no relationship to degree of outgroup discrimination in some studies (eg: among British, Spanish and Italian 6-15 year-olds; Barrett et al 2004), but it did among Dutch children 10-12 years old (Verkuyten 2001).

Ingroup favouritism and outgroup discrimination is not an automatic stage as children grow up as shown by Barrett et al (2003).

Barrett et al (2003) recruited 307 English children (aged 5.7 - 11.9 years) (151 boys and 156 girls) from schools in Fleet, Hampshire. They were divided into three age groups (young, middle, and old) based on school years. There were three experimental conditions for the attribution task - (i) attributing characteristics to English people alone, (ii) attributing characteristics to English and American people, and (iii) attributing characteristics to English and German people.

The attribution of characteristics were achieved by

using sixteen cards (including adjectives like "clean", "dirty", "clever" and "stupid") which the children fitted onto a board with headings (eg "English", "American", "both", "neither"). Then the children had to choose from other cards containing self-descriptive characteristics, and place them in order of importance. This was known as the relative subjective importance (RSI) task.

The RSI task showed that the importance of national identity did not change over the age groups, but specific characteristics did:

The relative importance of the English, European and religious identities increased with age, the relative importance of the age, local and ethnic identities decreased with age, while the relative importance of gender identity first decreased then increased with age..(Barrett et al 2003 p202).

The findings from the attribution task was that the attribution of positive characteristics to the outgroup and the attribution of negative characteristics to the ingroup increased with age (table 6.3). This contradicts the idea that ingroup favouritism and outgroup discrimination inevitably increases with age. The findings are due to an increase in attribution of positive characteristics to the outgroup rather than a decrease in negative attributions.

| <u>AGE GROUPS:</u> | <u>YOUNG</u> | <u>MIDDLE</u> | <u>OLD</u> |
|---|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| <u>English</u> Positive Negative | 6.62 2.24 | 7.00 2.42 | 5.76 3.12 |
| <u>American</u> Positive Negative | 4.50 2.28 | 5.56 3.31 | 6.38 2.72 |
| <u>German</u> Positive Negative | 3.46 3.39 | 4.55 3.39 | 5.97 3.22 |

(After Barrett et al 2003)

Table 6.3 - Mean numbers of positive and negative adjectives attributed to different national groups (out of 8) based on age groups of children.

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7. STUDYING POPULARITY IN CHILDHOOD

When children are making friendship choices, there will be popular children (chosen by many), unpopular/rejected children (disliked by others), and neglected children ¹ (not disliked but not chosen as friend; ie: ignored)(Asher 1990) ².

Berk (2008) divided popular and rejected children into sub-types:

- Popular-prosocial children - "popular children who combine academic and social competence";
- Popular-antisocial children - these are popular children who are "'tough', athletically-skilled but defiant, trouble-causing boys" and "relationally aggressive boys and girls who are admired for their sophisticated but devious social skills";
- Rejected-aggressive children - rejected children with high rates of conflict, aggression, hyperactive and impulsive behaviour. They may show hostile attribution of innocent behaviour by peers;
- Rejected-withdrawn children - timid children with social anxiety. Their social awkwardness makes them an especial target for bullying.

A child's popularity in terms of peer relationships can be seen at two levels - their social status among peers in the classroom, and their individual friendships (George and Hartmann 1996).

It is possible to distinguish between characteristics of popular and unpopular children. For example, popular children are friendly towards others, physically attractive, and good at specific skills. Unpopular children are lacking in social skills, socially withdrawn, and often physically disabled (Salmon and West 2000). But some of the characteristics may be the cause of the popularity/unpopularity or a consequence of it.

In primary schools, 10-24% of children are classed as popular, 10-22% as rejected, 12-20% as neglected, and the remainder as average (Kim 2003).

¹ Neglected children are not necessarily unhappy about their social status, and they can join in when they want because they have the appropriate social skills (Berk 2008).

² Berk (2008) included the category of "controversial children". They show a combination of hostile, disruptive and bullying behaviour with positive, prosocial acts. Though disliked by some peers, they have many friends because of their positive behaviour.

The popularity status remains for many years (eg: Coie and Dodge 1983; five-year longitudinal study).

STUDYING POPULARITY

Children's popularity can be studied in different ways.

For example, Voss and Mulligan (2000) studied ninety-two short adolescents (over 25% smaller than the average height) compared to 117 matched controls (average height) at age 14-15 years using a questionnaire. The shorter pupils reported significantly more "time spent alone at break - at least once a week" (10% vs 2%), and being bullied significantly more currently (23% vs 4%).

Multi-method studies show that unpopular or rejected children are not a homogeneous group. In other words, they are not all without friends. Schneider (1999) asked children to nominate those classmates seen as socially withdrawn. Interviews with the socially withdrawn children found that they had high quality close relationships which they valued more than non-withdrawn children.

The most common method used to study popularity is sociometry. This method analyses the interaction within a group. Group members are asked to rate others in the group, and from their responses, a sociometric matrix can be drawn (hypothetical example in figure 7A). Table 7.1 lists the strengths and weaknesses of sociometry.

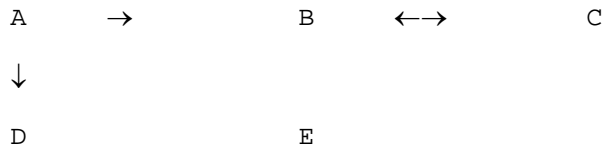
STRENGTHS

1. Shows pattern of social relationships in a group.
2. Easy to administer.
3. Easy to understand for children.
4. Can also show relationships within sub-groups of the main group.

WEAKNESSES

1. Limited to small groups only, or else becomes very difficult to draw sociometric matrix.
2. Choices of friends on paper not necessarily same as real life.
3. Shows only likes and dislikes, and not inbetweens.
4. Ethics of children naming negative choices (ie: people they don't like in their class).

Table 7.1 - Strengths and weaknesses of sociometry.



A = neglectee
 A/D and A/B = unilateral choice
 B = star (popular)
 B/C = mutual pair/reciprocated
 E = isolate (no choices either way)

Figure 7A - Simple hypothetical sociometric matrix.

George and Hartmann (1996) investigated friendship networks among 227 9-10 year-olds in eleven classes in Salt Lake City, Utah. The children rated each classmate for degree of liking on a five-point scale (1 = really don't like; 5 = really like). This produced a popularity score for each child, and allowed the researchers to divide the child into three groups for analysis of the data - popular (top 25% in each class; n = 66), unpopular (bottom 25%; n = 53), and average (remainder).

The three groups of children nominated similar numbers (11-12) of unilateral friends. These are liking choices which are one-way. But for "reciprocal friends" (two-way liking choices), there were significant differences. The popular children had an average of 4.67 friends compared to 1.42 for unpopular children (and 3.06 for the average group). Put another way, 68% of popular children had reciprocal friends and only 39% of unpopular children.

The friends of unpopular children were also different in being younger (ie: lower year at school), less within the same class, and more likely to be unpopular as well.

SOCIAL COMPETENCE

Social competence is the ability to interact with peers and using the appropriate social skills in a given social situation.

Social competence of children can be measured using a number of criteria (which, in theory, can be taught to unpopular children) including (Kim 2003):

- Successful entry behaviour for joining an established play group;
- Acceptance of others' entry into play situation;
- Demonstration of positive emotions towards peers. These include smiling, comforting, turn-taking, sharing, and

helping.

Table 7.2 shows examples of these three behaviours as shown by popular and unpopular children (Kim 2003).

Rejected and neglected children show both similarities and differences in their behaviour which explain their unpopularity (Kim 2003)(table 7.3).

| <u>Behaviour</u> | <u>Popular Children</u> | <u>Unpopular Children</u> |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Entering play group | Direct initiation (eg: asking to join in). Recognising appropriate behaviour in order to join (eg: show agreement, give relevant information, use group-oriented statements). | Charge into group and disrupt it. Non-direct initiation (eg: hovering around an activity). Inappropriate behaviour (eg: disagreement, disrupting, self-oriented statements). |
| Acceptance of others | Positive towards newcomers (eg: accept others' initiations, give alternative ideas if reject peer's initiation). | Rejecting of newcomers (eg: say "no" without suggesting an alternative). |
| Positive emotions | Show positive emotions to playmates. | Say negative things to playmates (eg; use of threats). |

Table 7.2 - Differences between popular and unpopular children on three behaviours towards peers.

REJECTED CHILDREN

NEGLECTED CHILDREN

Similarities:

- i) Not welcomed by peers
- ii) poor social skills

Differences:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Aggressive-hostile towards peers (eg: taking away objects) ii) Verbal aggression (eg: teasing; use of threats) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Withdrawn behaviour (eg: play alone) ii) "Hovering behaviour" (eg: shy and anxious) iii) Few positive expressions iv) Dependent on adults for help and directions |
|--|---|

Table 7.3 - Rejection and neglected children: similarities and differences.

The idea of teaching unpopular children social skills is important, but it is not a guarantee of acceptance. "Reputation bias" can mean that unpopular children are rejected by their peers even when showing positive behaviours (Kim 2003).

Paley (1992) designed the classroom rule "You cannot say 'you cannot play'" to encourage entry into play groups and to overcome problems of rejection.

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8. THE AVON LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN

The Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC) is based upon women who were expecting a baby between 1st April 1991 and 31st December 1992 in the county of Avon (ie: Bristol area) (Golding et al 1996; 2001). There are nearly 14 000 mothers involved, and the study continues today. Many different aspects of behaviour and child development (including health) are studied with the children as they grow. Most longitudinal studies tend to be much smaller.

The longitudinal study concentrates on participants who are followed over a long period of time. It is very useful for developmental psychologists because it allows the researchers to follow the development of children over time. Experiments tend to study children at one particular instance.

The longitudinal study has other strengths as well as weaknesses (table 8.1).

STRENGTHS

1. Shows the sequence of events in development.
2. Shows behaviour change or stability over time.
3. Data can show individual differences as well as group means.
4. Can observe particular events in life (eg: first day of school) and the effects.
5. No cohort effects. Studies that compare two age groups involve the risk of confounding variables (factors that influence one group but not another - cohort effect). For example, if comparing intelligence of 20 year-olds and 70 year-olds using IQ tests, a cohort effect is that the older group are less familiar with such tests compared to the younger group, and this may account for their poorer scores.
6. Can be used to study child development, childhood into adulthood, and adult development.

WEAKNESSES

1. Time consuming and expensive.
2. Any mistake in design at the start of the study are hard to remove.
3. Problems of participant "drop-out" over time and the loss of data, particularly as many longitudinal studies have a small number of participants.
4. Repeated testing and study means that the participants are affected (ie: participant reactivity). Furthermore, participants knowing they are being studied may lead to changes in behaviour.

5. Risk of cross-generational problems. These are events specific to one generation (eg: World War II) which have an effect on the individuals.

6. Difficult to replicate.

Table 8.1 - Strengths and weaknesses of the longitudinal study method.

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9. ETHICS OF NON-EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH WITH CHILDREN

The concern about ethical issues when studying human behaviour in experiments is well discussed, and students and researchers are made fully aware of the issues. But in terms of non-experimental research, it is often assumed that ethical issues are less important, if not unimportant. Yet non-experimental research can have as much affect upon the participants as some experimental research.

Table 9.1 compares the ethical problems for two non-experimental methods used to study children - observation in a public place and interview/questionnaire with parents.

| OBSERVATION IN PUBLIC PLACE | INTERVIEW/QUESTIONNAIRE WITH PARENTS |
|---|--|
| 1. No informed consent (from parents). 2. No right to withdraw or right to non-participation in the research. 3. No debriefing after the research. 4. Strangers (researchers) watching children may be mistaken for individuals with sinister motives. | 1. Invasion of privacy with questions. 2. Stress of personal questions or embarrassment about answers. 3. Possible deception of true meaning of research. 4. Parents may be concerned that their answers will present them as "bad parents", and the fear of Social Services becoming involved. |

Table 9.1 - Ethical problems with two non-experimental methods of research.

10. META-ANALYSIS

Meta-analysis summarises other methods of research by statistically reanalysing them, and producing an overall score of difference or "effect size" (Wood 2000)

Meta-analysis is based on the comparison of group means using the "d" statistic. The "d" statistic is expressed in standard deviation units, which is assuming a normal distribution of behaviour.

Technically, Campbell (1996) defined "d" as the mean of group A divided by the standard deviation of A minus the mean of group B divided by the standard deviation of B. While Glass et al (1981) used the mean of experimental group minus mean of control group, then divided by standard deviation of control group.

EXAMPLE: Van Ijzendoorn (1995)

This research meta-analysed other studies of the relationship between the mother's attachment style and the child's behaviour in the "Strange Situation" (Ainsworth et al 1978) (and their attachment type). Generally, mothers with secure attachments were more sensitive towards their infants, and the infants are rated as type B (secure attachment) in the "Strange Situation".

Meta-analysis allowed the researcher to highlight the strength of the relationship between variables. For example, secure attached mothers and securely attached children is a stronger effect than insecurely attached mothers and insecurely attached children (Wood et al 2002).

PROBLEMS WITH META-ANALYSIS

Smith and Egger (1998) pointed out three problems with the use of meta-analysis:

i) Whether to include unpublished data or not. Another problem is that studies finding no significant differences are not published (known as the "file-drawer problem").

ii) What choice of outcome measures to use.

iii) Definitions of terms in each study may vary. "Each study gets exactly one 'vote' no matter how well done it is. Thus, a study using a large sample that is well controlled has the same weight as a study using a smaller sample that is more poorly controlled" (Rosenhan and Seligman 1995).

Sharpe (1997) listed two more problems in the form of:

a) "Apples and Oranges" - Meta-analysis can sometimes attempt to average different phenomena. It is important to include only studies of the same thing.

b) "Garbage in-Garbage out" - Including methodologically poor quality studies can obscure the results from good quality studies.

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