



Overall Positive and Negative Behavior Observed in Institutionalized Infants and Young Children

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ABSTRACT

The present study was an observational study undertaken to study the interpersonal interactions between the caregiver and infant in a government child care institution of children from birth to 30 months in order to understand the interactional or attachment patterns of caregivers with children in different informal settings like feeding, sleeping, playing etc. video clippings from SishuVihar were analyzed for caregiver infant interactions using observational behavior software.

The study revealed that the infants and young children expressed very less positive and negative behavior. Infants from birth to 6 months of age express more positive and negative behaviour than the young children of 7-30 months of age. The duration for which the behaviour exhibited was also more in birth-6 month's infants. The overall positive behaviour like care giving, holding, making eye contact, smiling and vocalization was found to be less in caregivers of 7-30 months age.

KEYWORDS :

INTRODUCTION

All aspects of human functioning are, at least in part, a product of an individual's developmental history. Nature and nurture, genetic endowment and experience interact in response to contemporary external conditions and mental and motivational states, to determine the survival, health and development of children (Rutter, 1989). The care that children receive has powerful effects on their survival and growth. Developmental care refers to the behaviours and practices of caregivers (mothers, siblings, fathers and child care providers) to provide food, health care, stimulation and emotional support necessary for children's health, survival, growth and development. There is extensive literature on the effects of early caregiver-child relationships on social and psychological outcomes, particularly on later cognitive development, social competence and behavioural adjustment.

Infants have intrinsic abilities to recognize emotional states in others and to be expressive in reciprocal ways. The imitation of human actions is the first bridge between the infant and others. It serves dual functions: differentiating others and providing an early means of communication with them. The caregiver simplifies and personalizes the child's experience so that it occurs in a form that the child, at her current level of development, is able to use. The caregiver complements and extends the child's capacity. Caregiver and infant engage in rounds of smiling, looking at one another and alternating their communicative signals in a dialogue. People respond to babies in feedback loops, initiated and adjusted in response to the infant's ongoing behaviour. Across many dimensions of child and caregiver behaviour, unique adaptations in the behavioural systems of both people prepare them for a relationship on which the infant is dependent for her development. Early caregiver-child interactions play a profound role in the development of self regulation, cognitive development, language acquisition, and socioemotional adjustment. The quality of psychosocial care provided to the young child is reflected in the caregiver's responsiveness, warmth and affection, involvement with the child, and encouragement of autonomy and exploration.

Institutionalized Children's Development

In general, studies suggest that infants and young children who are raised in institutions as typically operated develop more poorly than children who are raised at home and have not been institutionalized. The research, which is fairly substantial, tends to focus on outcomes such as a child's physical growth and general behavioral development as measured by standardized tests that include cognition, language, personal-social, motor and adaptive behaviors.

Infants and young children raised in orphanages are, on average, more than a standard deviation below the mean of non-institutionalized children raised at home on measurements of height, weight,

head circumference and general behavioral development and it is found that orphanage-raised children well below those levels.

McCall et al. (2012) suggested that young children raised in institutions where quality interactions with their caregivers are not prevalent are particularly at risk of experiencing such outcomes. When interactions with children in orphanages improve, many of their outcomes tend to improve as well. Steps that led to improved caregiver-child interactions in Russian Federation orphanages, for example, were followed by improvements in children's physical development, even without changes in their nutrition. A large body of research shows behavioral and mental development markedly improved when institutionalized children were given sensory and perceptual stimulation, with or without a social component, and interventions were implemented to improve the social and educational nature of caregiver-child interactions.

Research evidence found that the nature of children who are placed in institutions contributes to the substantial developmental delays and display of atypical behaviors. Few studies have examined children's development when they enter an institution and found higher rates of low birth weight, prematurity, low Apgar scores and other perinatal risk factors that lead to poor developmental outcomes when the conditions children are raised in are poor. On the other hand, few studies report finding such risk factors among children who leave institutions to live with advantaged adoptive families.

OBJECTIVE: To study the positive and negative behaviour of the institutionalized infants and young children

SAMPLE: Child care institution by name SishuVihar-run by Department of Women Development and Child Welfare, Government of A.P. Yusufiguda, Hyderabad has been selected for the study as institutionalized children of SishuVihar would have yielded rich data for this study. The infant caregiver interactions were selected for the study in order to study different aspects of interactional patterns of caregivers with children in various settings such as feeding, playing and sleeping.

For the present study 80 recorded video clippings were taken from closed circuit cameras. But only 72 video clippings of infant-caregiver interactions in various day care settings were considered as 8 video clippings were not having visual clarity. So they were disregarded and only 72 video clippings, each of 10 minutes duration were considered for the present study.

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES USED

Method of data collection

Since the interactions between infant and caregivers had to be observed in natural settings where natural behaviours were to be coded from the cc-cameras, the investigator has to select the recorded videos from cameras and code the interactions between infant and caregiver. The behavior is coded for about 10 minutes of duration in 72 natural informal settings.

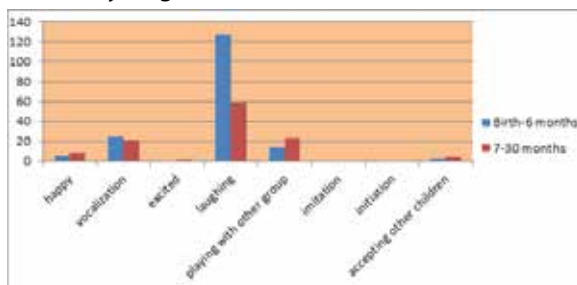
Analysis pattern

The data in the form of coding scheme were transformed from the recorded video to computer using observation behavior software as mentioned above and further empirically analyzed using statistical measures such as frequencies, percentages, will be applied for data analysis to find out the interactions between infant and caregiver in different informal settings.

Table 1: Frequency distribution of positive behavior observed in institutionalized infants and young children

S.no	Behavior Observed	Total number of observations	Total duration of observations (in mins)	Birth-6 months		7-30 months	
				Frequency (NO)	Duration (h:m:ss)	Frequency (NO)	Duration (h:m:ss)
1.	Happy	72	720	06	0:02:31	09	0:04:09
2.	Vocalization	72	720	24	0:32:33	21	0:20:37
3.	Excited	72	720	00	Nil	01	0:00:30
4.	Laughing	72	720	127	5:05:22	59	1:30:44
5.	Playing with group	72	720	14	0:33:02	23	0:43:38
6.	Imitation	72	720	00	Nil	00	Nil
7.	Initiation	72	720	00	Nil	00	Nil
8.	Accepting other children	72	720	02	0:00:37	04	0:01:08

Fig-1 Positive behavior observed in institutionalized infants and young



children

The results of observational study reveals an astonishing fact that in total of 72 observations recorded infants from birth-6 months age showed happiness only 6 times that also for a very short duration of 2 minutes and young children of 7-30 months age reflected happiness 9 times with duration and only for 4 minutes of the total 720 minutes. Vocalization in all institutionalized infants was found to be very less and they did not show any type of excitement. It was interesting to observe that infants from birth-6 months laughed more times than 7-30 month young children. Another important observation of the study was positive behavior like imitating, initiation, accepting other children, playing with group was found either absent and even if present in older infants that too for a very short duration.

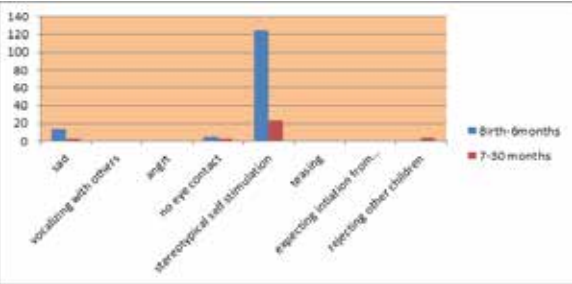
Table 2: Frequency distribution on negative behavior observed in institutionalized infants and young children

S.no	Behavior Observed	Total number of observations	Total duration of observations (in mins)	Birth-6 months		7-30 months	
				Frequency (NO)	Duration (h:m:ss)	Frequency (NO)	Duration (h:m:ss)
1.	Sad	72	720	13	0:15:05	03	0:12:01
2.	Vocalizing with others	72	720	00	Nil	00	Nil
3.	Angry	72	720	00	Nil	00	Nil
4.	No eye contact with the caregiver	72	720	05	0:12:20	03	0:13:04
5.	Stereotypical self stimulation	72	720	125	6:58:14	23	1:00:09
6.	Teasing	72	720	00	Nil	00	Nil
7.	Expects others to initiate first	72	720	00	Nil	00	Nil
8.	Rejecting other children	72	720	00	Nil	04	0:10:01

The results of the study clearly indicate that infants in institutional setting didn't show much of any negative behavior except for being sad and stereotypical self stimulation. These two behaviours were also found more in infants from birth-6 month's age than the older infants.

In observations of clippings revealed that the infants were not even maintaining eye contact with the care givers. Other negative behaviors like teasing, rejecting other children, anger, expecting others to initiate first were not found in these infants. The above results were similar to the study of Johnson *et al.* (2006) reviewed 17 studies concerning the development of children who have been raised in institutions, and found existence of more social and behavior problems in residential care children than compared with other children. Evidence of negative social or behavioural consequences for children raised in institutional care was reported in 16 (94%) of the studies highlighting the problem with anti social conduct, social competence and peer/ sibling interactions. One in ten children who spent their early lives in poor conditions, often deprived of interaction with others, were found to show 'quasiautistic' behaviours such as face guarding and /or stereotypical self stimulation/ comfort behaviours, such as body rocking or head banging.

Fig-2 Negative behavior observed in institutionalized infants and young



Children
CONCLUSION

The study revealed that the infants from birth to 6 months of age expressed more positive and negative behavior than the young children of 7-30 months of age. The duration for which the behavior exhibited was also more in birth-6 month's infants.

Infants of 7-30 months showed very low or no positive and negative behaviour. It was felt that as the infants age was increasing their emotions were suppressed and most of them were found be passive with less expression.

The observational study further revealed that infants of birth-30 months showed positive behaviours like smiling and vocalizing more than other positive behaviours like being happy, showing excitement, imitating. Infants from birth-6 month's age exhibited more positive behavior for longer duration than the infants of 7-30 months age. The institutionalized infants from birth-30 month's age did not show any of negative behavior except for self stimulation

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