Psychology in Health and Social Care Assignment 1

ASSIGNMENT NO: LCHS4010

STUDENT NAME: MARIA DALIA BOA MORTE

STUDENT ID: 2429427

LECTURER'S NAME : Farah

Scenario 1

You are a practitioner in an early years nursery setting. You are supporting a 3-year-old child named Amira who has recently joined the nursery. Amira is showing signs of anxiety when left by her carers, limited verbal communication, and difficulty engaging in group play. Your role is to understand her developmental needs and contribute to a support plan that promotes her emotional, social, cognitive, and physical wellbeing.

Bowlby's Attachment Theory

"Bowlby was interested in understanding the anxiety and distress that children experience when separated from their primary caregivers."(VERYWELL MIND 2025)

Bowlby's attachment theory explains how the bond between the child and their main caregiver (usually a parent) shapes the child's emotional and social development. Bowlby believed that children are naturally born with the need to stay close to their caregiver for safety and comfort. When parent providing care and love the child feels secure to trust others. But if the caregiver is absent and unresponsive, the child may grow up feeling anxious or unsure about relationships.

Bowlby's attachment theory shows how strong, loving relationships help children feel safe and confident so having a warm and stable relationship early on helps children grow and learn better.

John Bowlby's Attachment Theory emphasizes the importance of early emotional bonds between a child and their caregiver.(simply psycology 2025)

Apply the theory to Amira's situation

According to Bowlby's attachment theory, Amiras behaviour can be explained by her need to form a secure attachment with her carers. Since she has recently joined the nursery, she may feel anxious and unsettled because she has been separated from her main attachment. "**Secure attachments foster confidence and resilience, while insecure attachments may lead to difficulties in relationships and emotional regulation"(Early years tv 2024)**

This anxiety and limited communication could be signs that she is still developing trust and security in her new environment. Bowlby that a strong, secure attachment helps children feel safe to explore, play and learn. Therefore, Amira needs consistent, sensitive support from practitioners who respond normally to her needs, helping her build a sense of safety and belonging.

Practical strategies and interventions that could support Amira's development

Based on Bowlby's attachment theory, Amira needs to feel safe and secure before she can confidently explore and learn in the nursery. A key person should build a trusting relationship with her by offering consistent care, comfort, and reassurance, especially during drop off times. Gradually increasing the time she spends away from her carers and keeping routines predictable can help reduce her anxiety. Allowing her to bring a toy from home or comfort object and also encouraging gentle participation in small group activities will also support her confidence. Regular communication between practitioners and her family ensures consistency and helps Amira develop a secure base, which is vital for her emotional and social development. "**Forming an attachment is something that develops over time for a child" (NSPCC LEARNING 2021)**

Biological and environmental influences

Both biological and environmental factors play an important role in shaping a child's psychological development. Biological influences, such as genetics, brain development, and temperament, affect how a child responds to the world and manages emotions.-. Environmental influences, like family relationships, parenting style, culture, and early life experiences, shape how these traits are expressed and developed. For example, a child with a naturally shy temperament may become more confident if they grow in a supportive naturing environment. This shows that development is the result of an ongoing interaction between what a child is born with and the experiences they have as they grow."**While biological and environmental influences are distinct, they interact dynamically in shaping early childhood development. "(CARE LEARNING 2024)**

Evaluation of the usefulness and limitations of Bowlby's theory

Bowlby's theory is useful in health and social care because it helps practitioners understand why children like Amira may feel anxious when separated from their main carers and shows the importance of building secure attachments through consistent care and routines. It highlights how early relationships affect emotional and social development, guiding support strategies in the nursery."**This includes recognising signs of developmental delays that might stem from biological causes and identifying environmental stressors that could impact a child's well-being."(CARE LEARNING 2024)** However, the theory has limitations because it focuses mainly on the primary caregiver and may overlook other important influences like fathers, peers, or a child's temperament. It can also seem rigid, suggesting early attachment problems always lead to difficulties, when children can still develop security later with supportive environments.

References

- McLeod, S. (2025). *John Bowlby's Attachment Theory*. [online] Simply Psychology. Available at: https://www.simplypsychology.org/bowlby.html.
- Brodie, K. (2024). *John Bowlby's Attachment Theory and Developmental Phases*. [online] Early Years TV. Available at: https://www.earlyyears.tv/john-bowlbys-attachment-theory-and-developmental-phases/.
- National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (2021). *Attachment and child development*. [online] NSPCC Learning. Available at: https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-health-development/attachment-early-years.
- Care Learning (2024). *1.1 Define The Terms: Biological, Environmental - Care Learning*. [online] Care Learning. Available at: https://carelearning.org.uk/qualifications/level-3-diploma-eyp/unit-313-needs/1-1-define-the-terms-biological-environmental/.
- Cherry, K. (2025). *What is attachment theory?* [online] Verywell Mind. Available at: https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-attachment-theory-2795337.