



Full length article

Temperament differences between institution- and family-reared toddlers



O. Kochukhova^{a,*}, A.A. Mikhailova^b, Ju.O. Dyagileva^b, S.A. Makhin^b, V.B. Pavlenko^b

^a Department of Psychology, Uppsala University, Box 1225, 75142, Uppsala, Sweden

^b V.I. Vernadsky Crimean Federal University, Simferopol, Crimea

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this study was to compare the temperamental properties (i.e. Surgency/extraversion, Negative affectivity, Effortful control) of institution-reared (IR) and family-reared (FR) toddlers, aged between 17 and 37 months, living in Simferopol, Crimea. The results demonstrated significantly lower Surgency and higher Negative affectivity scores in the institution-reared toddlers. At the same time, in IR children Surgency scores depended on children's age, the older the children were, the higher scores they were assigned. No such relation was found for FR toddlers. Further, level of Negative affectivity in IR group depended significantly on amount of time that children spent at the institution; more time resulted in higher Negative affectivity scores. We could not find any differences between IR and FR children in Effortful control.

The study results suggest different developmental patterns for Surgency and Negative affectivity in IR and FR children and are discussed in terms of potential impact it may have on further personality development.

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1. Introduction

Studies of children raised in institutions demonstrate many developmental deviations from a number of medical problems, physical delays (Albers, Johnson, Hostetter, Iverson & Miller, 1997; Dobrova-Krol, Van Ijzendoorn, Bakermans-Kranenburg, Cyr, & Juffer, 2008), difficulties with social functioning (Bos et al., 2011; Zeanah, Smyke, Koga, Karlson, & Budapest Early Intervention Project Core Group, 2005), and higher levels of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (Zeanah et al., 2009) to deficits in cognitive function (Belalov, Dyagileva, Pavlenko, & Kochukhova, 2014; Nelson et al., 2007) and impaired motivational and emotional domains (Berens & Nelson, 2015; Dobrova-Krol et al., 2010; Karel & Freeman, 1994; The St. Petersburg-USA Orphanage Research Team, 2008; Zeanah et al., 2009). Institutional care is usually characterized by the high children-to-caregiver ratio, rotating caregiver shifts in combination with regimented day routines (Dobrova-Krol et al., 2008; Zeanah, Smyke, & Settles, 2006). Besides, caregivers usually do not show individualized care and demonstrate low investment in children (McCall et al., 2012). Thus, institutional environment can be characterized by an early physical and psychological neglect as well as by inability of the caregivers to provide children with adequate social experience. Even when children are adopted out of the institutional environment, they still demonstrate impairments in social behavior,

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: olga.kochukhova@psyk.uu.se (O. Kochukhova).