P: longitudinal studies have more value than cross-sectional studies
E: the study on Romanian orphans adopted before and after age 2 were followed the children until they were 15.
E: although they take a long time to carry out, the benefit is large. Without studies like this we may conclude that there are major effects due to early institutional care whereas these studies show that the effects may disappear after sufficient time and with high quality care.

The influence of early attachment

Hazan and Shaver study (1987):
A: Wanted to see influence of early attachment on later adult relationships.
P: Placed a love quiz in an American publication consisting of questions about current attachment experiences and early attachment history in order to identify current and childhood attachment type. Quiz also asked about attitudes towards love, an assessment of the internal working model. 620 responses analysed.
F: The attachment style in adulthood was similar to that of childhood. 56% were securely attached, 25% avoidant and 19% resistant. Found positive correlation between attachment type and love experiences. The securely attached adults defined their experiences as happy, friendly and trusting. Their relationships, on average, endured 10 years, compared to 5 to 6 years for other attachment types.
C: Link between a person’s internal working model and their attachment type e.g. securely attached can determine their future relationships

Behaviours influenced by the internal working model:
Childhood friendships - securely attached infants were highest rated for social competence later in childhood, were less isolated and more popular. This is due to a positive internal working model, which causes them to have high expectations that others are more friendly, enabling easier relationships with others.
Mental health - lack of attachment during critical periods will result in lack of an internal working model. Children with attachment disorder have no specific attachment figure, the lack availability to interact and relate with others and often experience severe neglect thus internal working model required for good mental health.
Romantic relationships - without internal working model, individuals lack a reference point to form relationships with others.

P: Another weakness is that most studies of the influences of early attachment on later relationships lack validity.
E: For example, many assessments of early attachments and current day attachments rely on the use of questionnaires and interviews (self-report methods) as a means of categorising participants as a specific attachment type.
E: This is a weakness because this data is retrospective (data that relies on the participants memory i.e. they are reporting events from the past that will be used as data in an experiment), there is a high chance that the data being collected in these studies is inaccurate and therefore calls into question the validity of the research findings.

P: The internal working model may not be important to development.
E: Zimmerman assessed infant attachment type and adolescent relationships to parents and found very little relationship to them.
E: This suggests that Bowlby may have put too much importance on the internal working model that doesn’t influence later relationships.

P: Bowlby may have exaggerated the significance of the quality of early attachment on future relationships.