**Early life predictors of joint attention**

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Joint attention, which is the ability to *coordinate* and *share* attention about objects or events, is an important social capacity which emerges during infants’ first year of life. Previous research has identified factors inherent to the infant (such as emotional expression) and factors related to infant experience (such as maternal interaction style) which have been linked to the development of an individual’s joint attention skills. However, much less is known about the factors which predict infants being motivated to use those skills to actually engage in joint attention events with others. Previous research has not implemented rigorous operational definitions of joint attention events, has neglected investigation into some basic social experience variables, and has focused on western, industrialised, educated, rich, and democratic (WEIRD) populations. In this study we explored whether factors which have been related to joint attention skills in the past, as well as those which have not been studied before, are linked to whether mother-infant dyads will engage in joint attention when presented with a novel stimulus. We looked at whether factors intrinsic to the infant, and infant early life experience at 3-, 6-, 9- and 11-months predicted joint attention engagement at 11- and 15-months in infants from the UK and Uganda. Joint attention events were measured during a naturalistic experiment where an erratically-moving laser light was presented on the ground close to the mother-infant dyad. We found that neither infant age, sex, nor cultural group predicted joint attention engagement. Other factors investigated were also not associated with the likelihood of infants engaging in joint attention events. This included factors inherent to the infant (e.g., expression of emotion, general cognitive development, communication development, and age of reaching physical milestones) and aspects of early social experience (e.g., mother interaction style, amount of social interactions). Whilst methodological issues may have contributed to these null results, this study highlights the possibility that engagement in joint attention events may not be supported by the same factors which facilitate infants’ individual joint attention skill development.