Unit 7

Personality, Plasticity and Self

Overview

In Unit 7 we will elaborate on themes that were discussed in Unit 6. In Unit 6 the focus was on the physical, cognitive, socio-emotional and moral milestones in infancy, early childhood, middle and late childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Personality was briefly mentioned while attention was given to defining and elaborating upon risk and protective factors. In Unit 7 pertinent questions that relate to developmental psychology will be examined. You will be presented with information and asked to reflect on the following questions. What is personality? Is personality stable over the lifespan? Who Am I? What is the relationship between the self and personality? Are attitudes, values and behaviour consistent over the lifespan? Is attitude change linked to perceptions of self, personality traits and **dispositional factors?** How is plasticity —the capacity for change –related to the stages of development? What can personality types such as the authoritarian personality or personality traits such as introversion or extroversion suggest about plasticity? How can an understanding of Maslow's hierarchy of needs inform national policy for at risk persons? In light of the emphasis on youth development work and social work in this course it is relevant to consider and to assess the effects of the actions of young people on the attitudes and behaviours of other groups in society and the role of young people as agents of change. The sub-topic attitude formation and attitude change was previously discussed in Unit 5 *Social Influence*. In this unit we will explore how the promotion of moral values as a key element in strategic policy planning may improve the social system. Special attention will be placed on the circumstances of young persons deemed by the social, legal or welfare systems to be disadvantaged or at risk and who are in need of support systems to give up risky behaviour and encourage risk-adverse behaviour and attitudes.

The coverage area for this unit is designed to help learners develop the competencies, knowledge and skills-set for YDWCYP0263 'Enable young people to become active and responsible citizens; YDWCYP0293 'Contribute to the development and implementation of a national youth policy';YDWCYP0323 'Assist young people with their personal development plans', YDWCYP0333 'Enable young people to develop their spiritual, ethical, moral values and beliefs' and YDWCYP0353 'Implement strategies to help young people to develop their team building and group facilitation skills.' After reading the unit material on personality and self you would be in a better position to apply the theories of growth and development documented here to assist persons who require

your professional skills. For example, you would have the skills-set to assist adults and young persons to recognize their roles as agents of change. You would be able to explain to young people how their actions impact upon individuals, groups and the community-at- large. Developmental psychology and personality offer guidance on how to support young people to realise their life plans and to correctly link life plans to learning, aspirations and development goals. A good on-line reference is C.G. Boeree (2006) which offers a comprehensive discussion of personality. It can be found at the hyperlink http:// webspace.ship.edu/cgboer/perscontents.html

Competencies

1. YDWCYP0263: Enable young people to become active and responsible citizens.
2. YDWCYP0323: Assist young people with their personal development plans.
3. YDWCYP0333: Enable young people to develop their spiritual, ethical, moral values and beliefs.
4. YDWCYP0513: Plan and implement programmes to promote healthy lifestyles among youth.

Key Concepts in Unit 7: personality, personality traits, self, identity, personality disorders, plasticity, temperament, authoritarian personality, extroversion, introversion, collective unconscious, behaviour modification, self actualization.

Structure of the Unit

This Unit is divided into two sessions as follows:

Session 7.1: Theories of Personality and Personality Disorders

*   Theories of personality (psycho-analytic, trait, behavioural learning, humanistic)
*   Personality disorders
*   The Self: Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Session 7.2: Applied Issues affecting young persons

*   The effects of actions of young people on the attitudes and behaviour of other groups in society
*   Acquisition of attitudes, values and moral development over the life span

Unit 7 Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit learners would be able to:

1. Discuss in the unit activities how knowledge of the self and personality discussed in this unit offers the potential for change in citizens;
2. Explain in tutorials how the theories of personality and personality traits documented in this unit can facilitate shaping and re-shaping of negative attitudes of negative values and beliefs in positive ways;

3. Critically assess how the actions of young people impact upon the attitudes and behaviour of other groups in the society when reading the recommended readings in this unit and completing the unit reflective activities;

4. Develop life plans for citizens that reflect their stage of development, personality traits and self-esteem and using the unit notes and share with course colleagues via the discussion forum;

5. Identify form the unit notes the role of self and personality in re-shaping undesirable behaviour;

6. Reflect on the key elements of Abraham Maslow hierarchy of needs discussed in the unit.

Theories of Personality and Personality Disorders

Introduction

What is the link between personality, self, plasticity, developmental psychology and facilitating the life goals of citizens? By the end of this Unit you will have an enhanced awareness of the support systems and interventions that will be required to empower citizens to transform their risky or undesirable behaviour into more protective or risk adverse ones. **Personality** is one of the most talked about topics in psychology and yet it is not fully understood. It is often described as one of the intrinsic factors underlying motivation and therefore one can extrapolate that personality type and personality traits might to some extent be responsible for people's success or lack of success, or limited success in life.

Scientific evidence reveals the following facts about personality. Personality type may contribute to heart disease. The Type A personality was first described by two cardiologists Myer Friedman and Ray Rosenman in 1974 and 1983 as being associated with competitive and constantly striving for achievement, a sense of time urgency, and hostility or aggression (Friedman & Rosenman, 1974, 1983 as cited in Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 399). Type A persons were perpetually comparing themselves to others and their goal is to win. They have regimented agendas and often try to complete tasks faster each time they undertake the task. A negative aspect of the Type A personality is that these persons have frequent conflicts with co-workers and family. In direct opposition to the Type A personality, the Type B personality is thought to be less hurried, more laid back, less competitive and, less hostile. Type A and Type B personalities were for a long period of time thought to be the only two classifications of personality type. A Type D personality (D for distress) was also proposed (Denollet, 1997 as cited in Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 400). According to Boyd and Bee such personalities had a tendency to exhibit chronic emotional distress. It is therefore likely that these individuals would require extra support and interventions to help them to turn around their negative situations and to re-shape the mind in a more positive and functional manner.

The importance of personality was mentioned in Unit 1. Sutherland (2011) *Toward a Caribbean Psychology: An African Centered Approach* alluded to a relationship between culture and personality. Specifically, the author noted,

> *"Other African beliefs are that the African personality is simultaneously teachable and perfectible; it has the capacity for free will and the need to be morally and socially responsible. In traditional African wisdom and philosophy, all things are created by and are of God. All phenomena are char-*

acterized by unity through the complementarity of masculine and feminine principles. It is a reasonable contention that the transmittal of such cultural knowledge to children by parents and by significant adults could aid in the optimal development of Caribbean children. These interventions could also contribute to the diminishing of African Caribbeans' and other Caribbean people's sense of hopelessness and despair. They could assist in decreasing the high rates of domestic violence, murder, suicide, and other aberrant occurrences." (Sutherland, 2011, pp. 1183-1184)

The role of 'the self' is a key aspect of the humanistic approach to psychology outlined in Unit 1. Humanists focus on the uniqueness of individuals and the subjective experiences of the self. The emphasis is also on understanding the ways in which people define and live out their lives. More importantly, the key to understanding human behaviour is individual choice and responsibility. For example, rationalizing how people respond to their environmental conditions. How would different groups of people in your society react to the fact that their basic needs are not being met? Would some individuals be creative and try to obtain a second job to fund their basic needs? Would persons decide that a career in criminal activities is the better option? The choice made would reflect the development of the individual in their cognitive, socio-emotional and moral domains. Theories of personality, personality disorders and the self are discussed below.

Session 7.1 Objectives

By the end of this session learners would be able to:

1. Define the concept personality using the unit notes;
2. Frame youth development policies in line with knowledge of personality theories and traits outlined in the unit notes and recommended readings discuss these policies in the reflective activities;
3. Recognize the core elements of the personality disorder documented in the unit.
4. Define the concept of the self in tutorial discussions;
5. Link the realization of life goals and development plans to Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Parameters and Theories of personality

Different definitions of personality have been offered in the academic literature. The following definition states, "Personality represents the combination of the **temperament** with which children are probably born and the knowledge they gain about temperament-related behaviour during childhood." (McCrae, et al. 2000; Karreman et al., 2010 as cited in Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 187) The subsequent discussion illustrates the scope of personality as the author or authors perceive it to be. Definitions also reflect a theoretical preference.

There are four main theories of personality: psycho-analytic theory, trait theory, behavioural learning theory and humanistic theory. The essential elements can be found in the references listed in Activity 7.1. No single theory can provide the best or the most inclusive explanation for personality changes across the lifespan or personality differences across groups of people. Using a combination of theories for description or prediction can therefore be advantageous. C.G. Boeree's views of the ideal personality theory will be presented as a summary to the subsection on personality theories.

A Review of The Main Four Personality Theories

1. Psycho-analytic theory

Freud's theories are influential and controversial. He suggested that all human behaviour, with the exception of fatigue, is motivated by sex or aggression and such behaviour is neither random nor purposeless. Another assumption of psycho-analytic theory of personality is the existence of the unconscious. According to Newman and Newman "this includes all psychic contents and processes that are actively barred from awareness (Newman & Newman, 1983, p. 384). Freud's tripartite view of human personality comprising the id, the superego and the ego was briefly mentioned in Unit 1. You would recall that within the id, sexual and aggressive instincts are waiting to spring forth; the superego comprises thoughts, beliefs and fears instilled in us as the result of early socialization by parents and other authorities. The ego is the rational manager of both our un-socialized instincts and our fears and anxieties. The best known of the ego's many functions is the **defence mechanisms**, which operate at an unconscious level to help deny reality and reduce tensions arising from the id and the superego. These three concepts keep the personality in balance.

Freud linked personality development to psychosexual development through the stages of development in infancy, childhood, and adolescence. He derived his data from his patients who had memories of sexual feelings and behaviour in childhood which led Freud to believe that sexual feelings are important to personality development. Freud suggested that development occurred through a series of psychosexual stages through which a child moves in a fixed sequence determined by maturation (summarized in Table 7.1). Feud's controversial idea regarding the early childhood phase of development was based on the belief that children experience sexual attraction to the opposite-sex parent during the phallic stage (between the ages 3-6 years). These fixations were referred to as the Oedipus complex (when a boy is fixated on his mother) and the Electra complex (when a girl is fixated on her father). The phallic stage successfully concludes when boys desire to be like their fathers and girls choose to emulate their mothers.

Oral	Birth – 1 year	Mouth, Lips	Weaning	Oral behaviour such as smoking and overeating; passivity and gullibility.
Anal	1- 3 years	Anus	Toilet training	Orderliness; obstinacy or messiness, disorganization.
Phallic	3 – 6 years	Genitals	Resolving Oedipus / Electra Complex	Vanity, recklessness; sexual dysfunction or deviancy.
Latency	6-12 years	None	Developing defence mechanisms; identifying with same sex peers.	None
Genital	12 years	Genitals	Achieving mature sexual intimacy.	Adults who have successfully integrated earlier stages should emerge with sincere interest in others and mature sexuality.

Table 7.1 Freud's Psychosexual Stages (adapted from Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 26)

The link between psycho-analytic theory and personality is also expanded upon in the YouTube video titled 'Socialization Sigmund Freud Personality Development' which is the subject of Activity 7.2.

LEARNING ACTIVITY 7.2 • Tutorial Discussion

Please look at the following YouTube video.

Riggs, K. (2011, Oct 11). Socialization Sigmund Freud Personality Development. [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMK_ckjaf-0&feature=related

The video presentation will be used as the subject material for your tutorial activity for discussion to be moderated by your e-tutor. Your tutor will assign one person from the tutorial group to prepare a 300 word summary of the discussion and to post the answers to the following questions in the Learning Exchange. Learning activity 7.2 is due by Week 9.

1. What are the key elements of Freud's psycho-analytic theory?
2. What is the relationship between the id, the ego and the superego?
3. How do nature/nurture and socialization contribute to the development of the personality?

Freud's theories were very influential but there were other views of psycho-analytic theory and personality. It was reported that, "Freud himself was very committed to the basic principles that he formulated. He was not at all pleased when a member of his circle

of co-workers and students deviated from his ideas. Many squabbles occurred among the early psychoanalytic theorists, and bitterness often resulted between Freud and people who had been among his early followers." (Newman & Newman, 1983, 392) In light of the discussion on personality types and personality theories you may find that this quotation sheds some light on the personality of Sigmund Freud himself!

According to Newman and Newman (1983) Carl Jung, described as one of Freud's colleagues, felt that Freud's ideas were too constraining so he proposed and developed his theory of analytic psychology. Essentially, he felt that the underlying driving force for behaviour was creative energy rather than exclusively sexual energy. He retained Freud's concept of a personal unconscious dimension to behaviour but added the existence of a **collective unconscious** which he called archetypes. These archetypes were basic and were transmitted from one generation to another via **heredity.** Examples of these archetypes were male image, female image, and God. Jung also proposed an introversion-extroversion dimension to personality which guided behaviour**. Introversion** is a preoccupation with one's self while extroversion is a preoccupation with social life. Carlson (1990) extended the definition of extroversion to include the tendency to seek the company of other people and to engage in conversation and other social behaviours with them. The propensity to be an introvert or an extrovert existed in every person. However, if **extroversion** is the dominant observable dimension then introversion is thought to influence unconscious functioning. Similarly, if introversion is the dominant observable dimension, then extroversion dominates unconscious functioning. This idea of the introversion-extroversion dichotomy has influenced other personality theories. In addition, Jung's ideas of the creative energy formed the basis of the perspective of personality offered by humanistic psychologists. Humanistic theorists believe that people are motivated to fulfil their potential as individuals particularly as part of the adult stage of human development.

Alfred Adler, a Viennese psychiatrist, was initially Freud's close colleague but the two became bitter adversaries (Newman & Newman, 1983). Adler stated that, "The personality was shaped by social relationships, social skills, and goals for oneself as a social being." (Adler as cited in Newman & Newman, 1983, p. 393) Specifically, personality is constantly in a phase of development. He identified 'the self' as a component of the personality that integrated past and current experiences with existing traits, values and other personal characteristics. More will be said about the self later in this session. Adler identified two concepts that relate to the personality and the self: inferiority and superiority. This is linked to the three stages that individuals experience in goal attainment. In the first stage the goal is aggression; in the second stage the goal is to be powerful; and in the third stage the goal is to be superior, not to be confused with being better than others, but to strive for personal fulfilment. This striving for fulfilment was a precursor to the concept of self-actualization developed by the humanists Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow documented in Unit 1 and in relation to self-fulfilment in Unit 4 *Motivation.*

2. *Trait theory*

In light of the comments so far you can appreciate the complexity of the term 'personality'. The terms introvert and extrovert can be regarded as traits. Traits can be defined as "internal characteristics that influence behaviour. Some theorists think that they are determined by

heredity." (Newman & Newman, 1983, p. 395) *The Oxford Dictionary of Psychology* extends this definition by stating that a trait is "A characteristic or quality distinguishing a person." Some theorists believe that traits are innate and thus determined by heredity while other psychologists claim that traits are a product of learning but all agree that traits reflect **consistency** and stability in behaviour. Hence a person with certain traits will show the same general disposition in different situations, from one time to another. Trait theorists try to identify the consistent aspects of people's personality in order to explain the complexity of social interactions and to some extent to predict future behaviour. For example, personality characteristics such as anxiety, negativity, and neuroticism (assessed when couples were newlyweds) were associated with later relationship problems (Caughlin, Huston & Houts, 2000). Caughlin et al. further discovered that these trait characteristics influenced both marital happiness and the health of the marriage partners. A classification system based on traits was developed by theorists such as Gordon Allport, Raymond Cattell and Hans J. Eysenck. Gordon Allport (1897-1967) is most closely associated with the development of trait theory and he proposed a hierarchical category of traits comprising **cardinal traits and central traits.** Carlson (1990) described cardinal traits as "powerful, all encompassing personality characteristics that can be used to predict the behaviour of some people in almost all situations." (Carlson, 1990, p. 534) However, most people are assumed to be influenced by a series of central traits such as assertiveness, submissiveness, honesty or kindness (Carlson, 1990).

Boeree (2006) discussed Hans Eysenck in detail in his e-resource cited in the readings. The main limitation of trait theory is that theorists differ on the number of traits that they find useful to describe social behaviour. Boeree equated traits with temperaments and his perspective on trait theory is both enlightening and entertaining. The author narrates how the Russian psychologist Ivan Pavlov – who is famous for identifying the role of **conditioning** in learning theory using data from his dogs – also developed the idea that the relationship between a stimulus and a response is mediated by the personality of the human or animal subject exposed to the stimulus. For example, the combination of your personality traits that reflect your work ethic would mediate the relationship between the presentation of the stimulus (the course content and Unit material for PSYC1000) and your response to the presentation of the material (i.e. what you choose to do with the material that will ultimately have a bearing on your chances of academic success). Your personality traits will also impact upon the working relationship that you have with your e-tutor and with your course colleagues when you have to prepare group based activity tasks as part of a team.

3. *Behavioural Learning Theory*

Behavioural learning theory, sometimes referred to as social learning theory, states that personality consists of newly learned behaviour or the elimination of old behaviours through the process of behaviour modification. A person who demonstrates undesirable personality characteristics or abnormal behaviours may be placed in situations where environmental conditions are changed. Such an individual's cognitive appraisal of a situation (e.g. the conditions that precipitate drug or alcohol abuse) or personal abilities (e.g. persons who suffer from chronic **depression** and are easily overwhelmed by everyday activities) may also be changed in attempts to help the person develop new and more

effective patterns of behaviour. You will learn more about this topic in Part Four of this course which is titled 'Abnormal Psychology'. In the interim, an example of behavioural learning can be seen in individuals who have phobias. **A phobia** is a persistent irrational fear of an object, situation, or activity that the person feels compelled to avoid. These phobias can severely interfere with the ability of individuals to lead a normal life because they impact upon people's ability to work, socialize, and go about a daily routine. If you would like to know more about phobia watch the video *Phobias* on my developmentlab. com (Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 348).

Most personality theorists who use a learning perspective do not take a narrow approach by restricting themselves to conditioning principles. Instead, they draw from a fuller assortment of the concepts and principles of learning theory such as learning through observation and imitation of other people. The use of cognitive interventions is also employed alongside behavioural modification programs. Newman and Newman (1983) noted first, critics of social learning theory claim that some of the work especially in the area of conditioning relies heavily on observations from simpler animals – e.g., dogs and mice – so the extent to which the results can be successfully applied to humans is questionable. Second, theorists working within a behavioural learning framework are currently divided in how they conceptualize the person. Radical behaviorists believe the reinforcements in the environment account for behaviour. Social learning theorists emphasize the cognitive system. Third, the extent to which laboratory research findings can be applied to the study of people in their natural environment is questionable. Finally, behavioural learning theorists have tended to emphasize the role of change in behaviour. These theorists point out the importance of situational influences and person-situation interactions in the study of personality. At the end of the discussion on personality and behaviour you might find a plausible answer to the question. Why do some individuals learn from their behavior and exhibit change on a subsequent occasion? Why do other persons learn their behaviour and therefore repeat the negative behaviour on subsequent occasions?

4. *Humanistic Theory*

According to Newman and Newman (1983) humanistic approaches to the study of personality emphasize subjective perceptions. The whole of the self must be understood in order to appreciate the way the individual behaves, rather than dividing the person into constituent elements such as traits or impulses. For the behaviourist, behaviour results from the way in which current experiences are categorized and integrated in one's own personal view. Unlike the three theories previously discussed, the emphasis in humanistic theory is on the self. In contrast to behavioural and psychoanalytic theories, unconscious motives, past experiences and current environmental conditions are not as important as personal development. Instead, people strive to develop themselves, to recognize their personal potential, and to attain personal fulfillment. In general, humanistic theories offer a positive view of the person. Critics identified the following flaws in humanistic theory. First, the theories are very general and they are doctrines rather than theories because the concepts are loosely defined and not easily testable or verifiable through the scientific process. Second, the emphasis on personal freedom minimizes the impact of the situation and the strength of previously learned responses. Third, holistic theories do not set clear limits about which experiences in the totality of life occurrences are central to personality

formation and which are peripheral. Finally, research findings do not consistently support the basis premises of the humanistic theory. You can read more about humanistic theory and the contribution of Abraham Maslow as well as Carl Roger in the e-text by Boeree (2006) which can be accessed via the hyperlink http://webspace.ship.edu/cgboer/perscontents.html

An Ultimate Theory of Personality: Boree's View

Boree (2006) noted that despite the differences in the perspectives on the formation of personality and the dimensions of personality, there is a common ground that illustrates the shape that the ideal explanation for personality might take. You are encouraged to read his E-chapter 'The Ultimate theory of Personality' available at hyperlink http://webspace.ship.edu/cgboer/conclusions.html as you need to know what he said about all the concepts that lie at the intersection of personality theories. The author discussed consciousness, unconscious, self-determination, stages, temperament, learning, emotions, coping strategies and therapy. However, only three of the concepts discussed by Boree will be mentioned: these are the twin concepts consciousness and the unconscious; self-determination, and stages of development. Let us briefly look at the linkage and application of these common concepts and how they might relate to developmental psychology as well as plasticity or the capacity for change.

Consciousness and the unconscious are regarded as Freud's most popular concepts it represents a way of accounting for the many things that influence us without our full awareness. (Boree, 2006) Boree considered the three aspects of the unconscious and he offers a more comprehensive as well as an applied approach than the psychoanalytic theorists. The first aspect of the unconscious is the biological one. He suggested that,

> *"We come into this life with something like Freud's **id** or Jung's **collective unconscious** in place. It is likely composed of whatever instincts remain a part of our human nature, plus our **temperament** or inborn personality, and perhaps the preprogramming for stages of life. This biological unconscious overlaps in part with the existentialist concept of thrownness. As for possible instincts, I would nominate three "complexes" of them: A mating complex, an assertive complex, and a nurturant (or social) complex. Second, there is the social unconscious (as Fromm calls it), which actually resembles Freud's superego more than Freud's id. It might include our language, social taboos, cultural habits, and so on. It includes all the cultural things we were surrounded with in our childhood and have learned so well that they have become "second nature" to us! The negative aspects of the social unconscious overlaps with the existential idea of fallen-ness and with Rogers' idea of conditions of worth. And third, there is the personal unconscious (to borrow Jung's term), perhaps understood as the unconscious aspect of the ego. It is composed of our idiosyncratic habits, the more personal things we have learned so well we no longer need to be conscious of them in order to enact them -- like knowing how to drive so well that we can comb our hair, talk on a cell phone, light a cigarette, and notice the attractive person in the rear view mirror all at the same time (at least until you run off the road into a tree)." (Boree, 2006)*

The related concepts of self and self-determination were placed in a developmental context by Boree and these views shed light on the reasons why persons may choose to be an agent of change or to maintain the same behaviour and attitudes. Specifically, Boree contended that, "As we develop from babies into adults, we gradually separate ourselves from the world. Our interior causal processes - especially mental processes - become increasingly independent of the causal processes outside of us. A gap develops that allows us to be

influenced by outside situations, but not necessarily determined by them…. By the end of life, some of us are nearly impervious to what others think about us, can rise above nearly any threat or seductive promise, can ignore nearly any kind of urge or pain. We are still determined - but little in our immediate situation is more than information we utilize in making our decisions. This may not be free will in the absolute sense, but it is certainly self-determination." (Boree, 2006).

Personality and stages of development have been mentioned across Units 1 to 6 of this course so you are familiar with the linkage. Boree noted that there is a biological basis for the idea of stages of development and personality which was illustrated in the following way.

> *"We can, on pure biology, separate out at least three stages: the fetus, the child, and the adult. This is, in fact, completely parallel to the egg, caterpillar, butterfly example we learned in high school biology! In addition, we can see three transitional stages: infancy, adolescence, and senescence. Infancy is not, actually, found in more primitive animals, and is greatly exaggerated in humans. We are, in a sense, all born prematurely. Perhaps this was the result of an evolutionary dilemma…. It would seem that for the first 6 to 12 months, our neural development is as yet incomplete. As we learn, we actually create certain neural paths, rather than just tightening synapses as we do later in life. It's as if we were actually learning instincts! Adolescence also qualifies, I believe, as a stage. The transition from child to adult involves rather massive hormonal changes accompanied by a growth spurt like you hadn't seen since you were two! It is hard for me to conceive of these changes not having some effect on us psychologically. Senescence is, strictly speaking, the last year or so of a full life, during which time the organs begin to deteriorate and shut down. We don't usually see this as a stage, and in fact most people never reach it (accidents and diseases usually beat senescence to the punch). But socially speaking, in our culture we certainly prepare ourselves for this inevitability, and that might constitute a social stage, if not a biological one. As this last point suggests, there are certainly cultural additions we can make. In our culture, there is a sharp transition from preschool child to school child, and another sharp transition from single adult to married adult. For all the power of biology, these social stages can be every bit as powerful. To venture a guess as to the psychological side of these biological stages: The fetus focuses on biological development, which is transformed by the presence of others in the infant into ego development in the child. In turn, the ego development of the child is transformed by the advent of sexuality in adolescence into the "trans-ego" or social development of the adult. Another way to look at it goes like this: In the fetal and infancy stages, we lay the groundwork and develop our temperaments (founded in hormones and neurotransmitters). In the child stage, we develop a personality (founded in habits). In adolescence, continuing into adulthood, we develop character (based on conscious decision-making)." (Boree, 2006)*

To add to Boree's developmental perspective, the transition from temperament to personality is also influenced by parental response to a young child's temperament (Boyd & Bee, 2012). The authors stated that if a parent rejects a difficult child, the child is likely to emerge from the pre-school years with a personality that puts him at risk for developing serious social relationships. However, Boyd and Bee advised that parents have a role to play in helping such difficult children to moderate the risks associated with a difficult temperament by helping these children to learn to regulate their emotions and behaviour. This point is related to the discussion on 'Emotional development and emotional regulation in childhood' documented in Unit 4 *Emotion: Theoretical and Applied Issues*. However, Boyd and Bee cautioned that infant temperament does not necessarily indicate the kind of personality a child will develop later in the lifespan because the formation of personality is dependent upon a combination of many factors as revealed in

the commentary on personality theories.

A brief comment on the **authoritarian personality** is relevant at this stage because of the strong association between socialization, personality, interpersonal behaviour and decision-making. Newman and Newman (1983) stated that the authoritarian personality is a personality constellation characterized by submission to people in authority, harshness towards subordinates, a preference for non-democratic leaders, conservatism, rigidity, traditional sex-role standards, projection, and prejudice towards out-groups. This expansive definition suggests that the authoritarian personality would resist change and attempts to re-shape the negative aspects of attitudes and behaviour. The term authoritarian personality can also refer to a person who shows prejudice as a consequence of unconscious hostility towards rigid and demanding parents. "Authoritarians are typically raised in environments in which parents are sharply critical and difficult to satisfy. However, because of a strong belief that authority is always right, authoritarians are unable to direct towards their parents the hostility they develop. Instead, they displace their hostility towards groups that they perceive as weak or unconventional." (Feldman, 1998, p. 86)

Personality Disorders

A great deal of attention was placed on personality, personality traits, temperament and the link between stages of development and personality in this session. Equally important for understanding risky attitudes and behaviour is knowledge of personality disorders. This topic will be elaborated upon in Part Four of this course. The main theme is Part Four is *Abnormal Psychology*. As a precursor to the discussion on personality disorder please view the video presentation cited in Unit 7.3 and answer the activity questions.

LEARNING ACTIVITY 7.3 •

Watch the YouTubes video on **Anti Social Personality Disorder**

Sfidlv09. (2007, Jul 6). Antisocial Personality Disorder. [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WftbmbVYiCk

Zimmerman, L. (2011, Oct 16). Antisocial personality disorder. [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=li75Sm3p4sc

Please answer the following questions in the Wiki:

1. What is anti social personality disorder?
2. How would you recognize this disorder in a person?
3. What kind of threats would persons diagnosed with anti social personality pose to society?
4. What interventions would you propose to mitigate these threats?

Learning activity 7.3 is due by Week 9.

A personality disorder is defined as, "An inflexible pattern of behaviour that leads to difficulty in social, educational, and occupational functioning." (Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 348) The authors identified some of the reasons why personality disorders occur. Among these are the stresses of young adulthood, presumably in combination with some biological factors, resulting in serious disturbances in cognitive, emotional and social functioning that are not easily treated. Other stressors or stress factors may cause the onset of the disorder. These stressors include the break-up of a long term relationship, physical illness can cause abnormal behaviour and it was also suggested that some cultural practices may cause personality disorders. Boyd and Bee suggest that personality disorders are usually manifested early in life yet a diagnosis may not be made until later in life – usually in the stage of adolescence or adulthood. A summary of personality disorders is presented in Table 7.2 for your perusal. It should be borne in mind that to be diagnosed with any kind of disorder the young adult with the disorder should have been displaying it since mid to late adolescence and the disorder or behaviour should be consistent across all situations.

Antisocial	Difficulty forming borderline attachment; lack of empathy; little regard for the rights of others; self-centered; willing to violate the law or social rules to achieve a desired objective.
Paranoid	Suspicious of others' behavior and motives; emotionally guarded and highly sensitive to minor violations of personal space or perceived rights .
Histrionic	Irrational, attention-seeking behavior; inappropriate emotional responses; sexually seductive behavior and clothing.
Narcissistic	Exaggerated sense of self-importance; craves attention and approval; exploits others; lack of empathy.
Borderline	Unstable moods, relationships; fear of abandonment; tendency to self-injury; highly dependent on others; impulsive and reckless behavior.

Table 7.2: Personality Disorder adapted from Boyd and Bee (2012, p. 349)

The Self: Who Am I?

You would recall from the earlier discussion that Alfred Adler identified 'the self' as a component of the personality that integrated past and current experiences with existing traits, values and other personal characteristics. The self was also thought to be capable of creating experiences that would bring an individual closer to personal goals and expectations for self fulfilment. This was a process that occurred throughout the lifespan as new goals are set and future expectations are met. The self is also linked to the concepts self-esteem, self-efficacy, and mastery that you encountered in Unit 6 titled *Developmental Milestones over the lifespan* and it links to Boree's discussion of self-determination and free-will. In the introduction mention was made of the role of developmental and personality psychology to illustrate how to support young people to realise their life plans and to

correctly link life plans to learning, aspirations and development goals. The humanistic psychologist Abraham Maslow (1908-1970) devised a theory of personality based on a hierarchy of needs summarized in Figure 7.1 and described below.
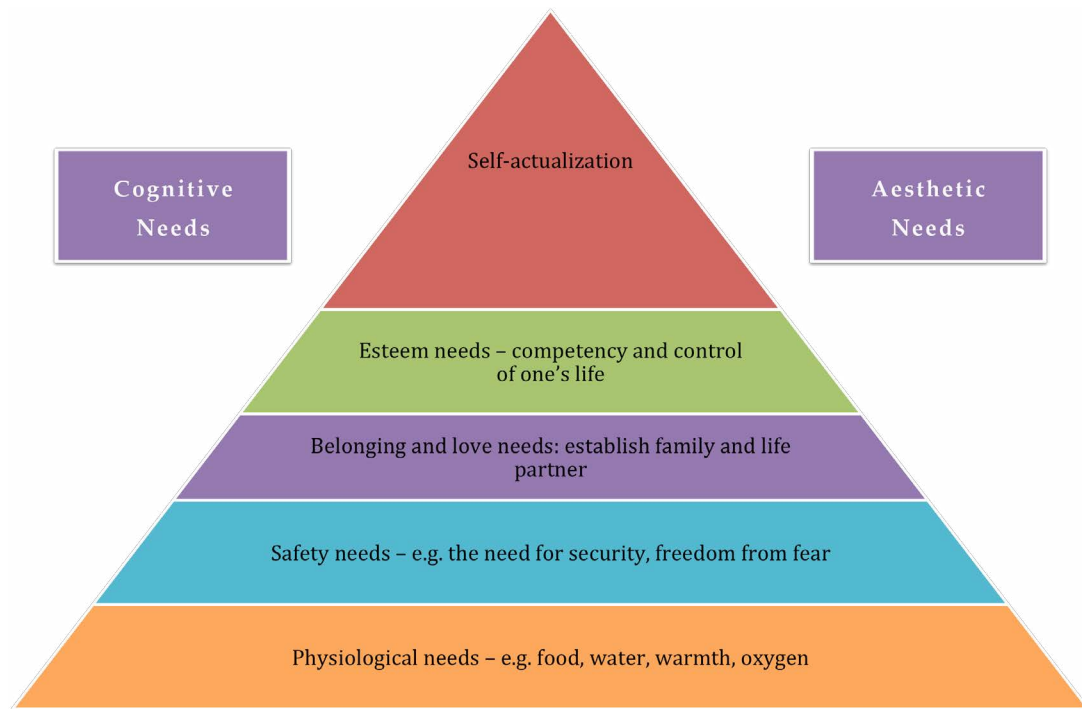
Figure: 7.1: Maslow's hierarchy of needs

The hierarchy of needs as outlined by Carlson (1990) revealed that although some needs are believed to be innate, most of the ways in which the needs are assumed to be gratified can be learned. This notation offers a lot of hope for disadvantages persons, those in less than desirable circumstances and others who either fall out of the social system or are rejected by it. It is important for needs to be met because each stage of gratification will lead to growth and development for an individual. Maslow proposed a hierarchy with the base representing the most basic of needs such as the physiological needs: for example, the need for food, water, warmth and oxygen. Deprivation of the physiological needs can cause illness. Difficulty in achieving these basic physiological needs causes blocks to development. For instance, an indigent or poverty stricken adult citizen is likely to be more concerned about finding food, water and shelter for the day rather than in pursuing tertiary education although such a person in a nurturing environment may have the potential to be a successful student. Safety needs refer to the need for security, freedom from fear as well as a stable and structured environment. A person who worries constantly about safety concerns is likely to become paranoid or neurotic. The need for love and belonging propels an individual to find strong interpersonal relations with a life partner or a family group. Prolonged deprivation of the need for love and belonging may lead to loneliness, feelings of rejection, anxiety and depression. The need for esteem includes the need to feel competent and in control of one's own life, labelled as self-esteem as well as a desire to be held in a favourable light by other persons. When esteem needs are unfulfilled this leads to feelings of inferiority and helplessness. At the apex or the highest point of the pyramid is the need for self-actualization or the desire to become all that one

seeks to be without limitations. Followers of Maslow's typology of needs would take into policy making the view that persons can be taught to improve self-confidence, self-esteem and supported with financial and other services to transition from underachievement to outstanding performance.

Reflect

You were presented with a lot of information in Session 7.1 but you can quickly summarise all of the information presented into three key areas. (1) The relationship between personality and stages of development. (2) The relationship between personality and personality disorder. (3) The need for behaviour modification with improvements along the lines suggested by Maslow's hierarchy of needs. As current or future professionals in the field of youth development work or social work you are likely to be concerned with encouraging a range of positive attitudes and behaviour consistent with nation building and good citizenship. However, there would be persons who fall through the cracks in society and these persons require extra understanding and support to transform their circumstances from risky behaviour to risk adverse or protective ones. Those persons diagnosed with a personality disorder require specialist attention. A pro-active and preventative approach is also required and this involves knowledge about the personality, plasticity and the self in order to better tailor strategies and interventions in ways that would maximize success.

Outlining the connection between personality, plasticity, the self, esteem and self-actualization was designed to assist you to develop the skills set and knowledge base to acquire and develop the competencies identified at the beginning of this Unit. The theories, concepts and principles documented in Session 7.1 were designed to (1) demonstrate the need for theories and interventions discussed in Session 7.2 to be theoretically understood in order to achieve the desired goals; (2) to provide an insight into the issues that will be explored in Part Four of the course titled *Abnormal Psychology*; and (3) to get you thinking strategically when asked to design or to formulate policies, programs and interventions for assisting persons to become active and responsible citizens or to help them to promote healthy lifestyles.

Review

What response would you give to the following questions?

1. What is a phobia? ....
2. What is a personality disorder? ………………………………….
3. How does a personality trait differ from a personality theory? ....
4. With which personality theory was Carl Jung associated?..............
5. Define ego……………………………………………………………..
6. Define hierarchy of needs………………………………………..
7. What do you understand by the term plasticity?..............................
8. State two characteristics of behavioural learning theory of personality

   …………………………………………………………..
9. What is self determination? …………………………………………
10. What is the relationship between personality and the self? ....

Key Points

1. Initially two personality types were identified: Type A and Type B. Type A persons were perpetually comparing themselves to others and their goal is to win. Type B personality is thought to be less hurried, more laid back, less competitive and, less hostile. A Type D personality (D for distress) was proposed by Denollet (1997).

2. There are four main theories of personality: psycho-analytic theory, trait theory, behavioural learning theory and humanistic theory.

3. Carl Jung identified dimensions to personality and contributed two important dimensions: introversion and extroversion. Introversion is a preoccupation with one's self while extroversion is a preoccupation with social life.

4. Boree (2006) discussed the importance of the concepts of the self and self-determination that shed light on the reasons why persons may choose to be an agent of change or to maintain the same behaviour and attitudes.

5. Five personality disorders were identified; namely, antisocial, paranoid, histrionic, narcissistic and borderline.

6. The self is very important to goal seeking and goal attainment. Adler believed that the self was thought to be capable of creating experiences that would bring an individual closer to personal goals and expectations for self fulfilment.

7. Maslow's hierarchy of needs identifies the growth trajectory that is possible from the physiological needs at the base of the pyramid to self-actualization at the apex.

Session 7.1 Summary

In Session 7.1 the discussion began by outlining the link between personality, self, plasticity, and developmental psychology. A key learning objective of Unit 7 was to provide a scientific understanding of the topic of personality which in turn would enable learners to assist citizens to achieve their life goals or to be agents of change. By the end of this Unit you will have an enhanced awareness of the support systems and interventions that will be required to empower citizens and to transform risky behaviour and attitudes to risk adverse ones. Personality is one of the most talked about topics in psychology and yet it is not fully understood by strategic planners, policy makers or politicians. Unit 7 attempts to fill this gap by exposing learners to salient issues and concepts.

At the beginning of Session 7.1 the discussion identified three personality types: Types A, B and D. It was suggested by Sutherland (2011) that understanding the role of culture in the (re)-shaping of personality could reverse Caribbean people's sense of hopelessness and despair and it could also assist in decreasing the high rates of domestic violence, murder, suicide, and other aberrant occurrences. The four main theories of personality were discussed and their key concepts explained. The groups of theories are psycho-analytic theories, trait theories, behavioural learning theories and humanistic theories. It should be emphasized that no single theory can provide the best or the most inclusive explanation for personality changes across the lifespan or personality differences across groups of people. Hence Boree (2006) advised that using a combination of theories for description or prediction is advantageous. The discussion of personality theories, traits and dimensions was followed by insights on personality disorders. A personality disorder is defined as, "An inflexible pattern of behaviour that leads to difficulty in social, educational, and occupational functioning." (Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 348) The authors identified some of the reasons why personality disorders occur such as the stresses of young adulthood, biological factors such as illness and situational factors such as the end of a long-term relationship. Five personality disorders were identified: antisocial, paranoid, histrionic, narcissistic and borderline. The discussion of the self included the important contribution of the humanistic psychologist Abraham Maslow who outlined 5 strata in his pyramid of the hierarchy of needs: physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem and self actualization.

Session 7.1 sets the stage for considering the three issues listed below in Session 7.2.

1. How the actions of young persons influence the attitudes and behaviour of other groups in society.
2. The relationship between prevailing personality, attitudes and behaviour change over the life span.
3. How the life-goals of young persons can be supported by knowledge of developmental psychology.

Session 7.2

Applied Issues Affecting Young Persons

Introduction

Session 7.1 provided the theoretical and conceptual background for understanding how self, personality and plasticity influenced life goals and stages of development. The focus was on understanding personality, personality traits and the self across the lifespan. However, you would realize from the discussion on personality disorder that problems are either manifested or diagnosed in the mid to late adolescence stage of development. Therefore, it is relevant to concentrate our attention on adolescents at risk, on the perceptions of young people by older citizens, and to identify ways to help young people fulfill their personal life goals and plans.

Session 7.2 Objectives

By the end of this session learners would be able to:

1. Incorporate the notes in tutorial discussions that aim to identify your country's plans for encouraging risk adverse or protective attitudes in young persons;

2. Identify from the recommended readings how attitudes, values and self-determination contribute to behaviour change in youths;

3. Outline how the life-goals of young persons can be supported by knowledge of developmental and personality psychology and post your comments in the discussion forum.

The Effects of Actions of Young People on The Attitudes and Behaviour of Other Groups in Society

Textbooks on adolescent psychology identify the risk-taking behaviour associated with this stage of development. You would recall previously documented unit notes on theories of risk taking behaviour of youths (Johnson & Malow-Iroff, 2008, pp. 1-2). These theories, listed below, have their genesis in the developmental psychological theories and successful interventions to mitigate or reverse risk must also be informed by these theories.

1. Rebellion – Adolescents take risks to rebel against adult authority.

2. Problem Behaviour Theory – Adolescents that engage in risk taking take multiple risks and do so as a form of their unconventionality.

3. Sensation Seeking – A subset of adolescents possesses a biological predisposition to engage in activities associated with heightened physiological arousal. This theory assumes a genetic component to adolescent risk taking.

4. Invulnerability – Adolescents engage in risk-taking behaviour because they see themselves as invulnerable to the potential risks associated with their actions.

5. Conscious Decision – Adolescents consciously decide to take risks because they perceive personal benefits from doing so.

6. Immaturity and Present Orientation – Adolescents take risks because they are not yet mature enough to see the potential risks associated with their actions and because they tend to live in the present moment, making it difficult for them to consider future consequences.

An interesting view of youths was posted on the internet. It is titled 'Scapegoating of youth' and the blogger K Palicz referred to the misperception of youths as 'super-predators', a misperception that was largely created by the way in which the media reported stories and portrayed young persons. You are asked to read the following quotation as it constitutes the assignment outlined in Activity 7.4.

"Throughout history dominant majorities have redirected public attention away from the majorities' problems and onto an artificially created scapegoat. Many countries have used a variety of scapegoats throughout time; this practice leads to persecution and anger towards the selected minority. Today in North American society a new scapegoat is being fabricated, this scapegoat is our youth. Due to powerful advocacy and protection organizations, scapegoating of other minorities is on the decline and the one remaining minority with no voice or say in society is our nation's youth. A highly visible manifestation of this scapegoating is evident in society's treatment of youth violence. By exaggerating the extent of youth violence, the media and politicians seek to promote their own personal agendas at the expense of the generation under the age of majority. Currently the public is being fed the idea of a plague of youth violence in society that will only get worse. The often proclaimed "epidemic of youth violence" is used by media, doctors and politicians to increase their ratings and profile in the nation." (Palicz, n.d.)

LEARNING ACTIVITY 7.4 •

Do you agree with the views of the blogger cited in the reference below? Justify your response.

Palicz, K. (n.d.) Scapegoating of youth. [Web log comment]. Retrieved from http://www.youthrights.org/research/library/scapegoating-of-youth/.

Discuss Palicz's blog in your tutorial group. Look for supporting or disconfirming evidence for your views from scientific publications located in the Open Campus Library or newspaper articles. A member of your tutorial group must post a 300 word summary of your discussion in the Learning Exchange to share your insights with your course colleagues. **Learning activity 7.4 is due by Week 9.**

After completing activity 7.4 you are likely to have divergent opinions on the scapegoating of youths and the view that youths are super-predators. Nevertheless, there is likely to be consensus on the fact that some youths do fall through the cracks in society and thus are in need of special support. The Caribbean literature is replete with examples of risky behaviour undertaken by adolescents and young people which includes drug and alcohol use and abuse, teenage practices and unsafe sex practices leading to AIDS and HIV.

There is less material published in the Caribbean on underage gambling although several Jamaican articles expressed a concern with this occurrence as outlined in Activity 7.5.

LEARNING ACTIVITY 7.5 •

Please read the following articles and discuss the issue of the incidence of gambling by young people in your country of residence in your tutorial session. **Learning activity 7.5 is due by Week 9.**

Reynolds, A. (2009, Sep 20). Teen gambling on the increase. *The Gleaner.* Retrieved from http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20090920/news/news3.html

Patterson, C. (2012, June 11). Teens urged to avoid gambling. *Caribseek News.* Retrieved from http://news.caribseek.com/index.php/caribbean-islands-news/jamaica-news/item/15784-teens-urged-to-avoid-gambling

The Jamaican Minister of Education, Rev the Hon. Ronald Thwaites, during his address to the fourth staging of the adolescent gambling prevention all island poster competition award ceremony on June 7, 2012 encouraged adolescents to refrain from participating in underage gambling, as this may lead to other unhealthy habits such as substance abuse. He stated that, "the habit, once started, is hard to overcome." Instead he advised students to "use their intellectual capacity and the power of reasoning to earn honestly, and also advised parents to talk with their children to ensure they are guided on the activities they can engage in and those they should avoid." (Thwaites, 2012)

Teen gambling starts in an innocent way by watching parents gamble (Johnson & Malow-Iroff, 2008, pp. 30-31). In some Caribbean communities it is very common for parents and relatives to send under-aged children to buy lottery or play whey tickets, cigarettes and alcohol on their behalf despite laws prohibiting the sale of these items to minors. You would recall from the earlier units in this course that vicarious or observational learning and **modelling** are ways of transmitting attitudes and behaviour particularly when the observer is already pre-disposed to act in a particular way or is attracted to a lifestyle of conspicuous consumption. A gambling addiction can start in childhood or early adolescence with on-line gambling as most pre-teens and teens have a Smart phone, computer or other internet accessible device. You would recall the discussion of the cluster effect in risky behaviour which indicates that risk-taking behaviour is not isolated but strongly associated with other risky behaviours. Similarly, Johnson and Malow-Iroff (2008) noted that teens with a gambling problem are more likely to engage in unsafe sex, binge drinking, smoking marijuana, skipping school, depression, taking cocaine, and petty crime such as stealing to fund the gambling addiction. However, there is hope for at risk children and teens. The comments by Rev the Hon. Ronald Thwaites are consistent with the views of developmental psychologists that with warm, caring and positive guidance from parents, teachers or other concerned caregivers, adolescents can resist negative influences or desist from participating in harmful activities.

Acquisition of Positive Attitudes, Values and Moral Development Over The Lifespan

With respect to adolescent risk taking behaviour Johnson and Malow-Iroff (2008) felt that, in addition to the forces of biology, parents also influence their children's risky or risk-adverse behaviour in three ways:

1. Through parents' own involvement in risk-taking behaviors – such as smoking, drinking and fighting.

2. Through parents' discussions with their children about what is and what is not acceptable behavior.

3. Through consistent parental use of sanctions when children engage in behaviors the parents have deemed to be unacceptable.

The main point to remember is that there are ways of preventing adolescent involvement in specific risk taking behaviour such as gambling, living life in the fast lane, excessive drinking or drunk driving. The intention of PSYC 1000 is to provide our professional pool of learners with the scientific knowledge of psychology – across the domains of social psychology, developmental psychology and abnormal psychology –that will best assist them to help young persons either in their community or in their care to avoid such involvement. By choosing to be engaged in youth development work or social work you are making a vast difference in the lives of at-risk persons. Your interventions can encourage at risk persons to live less dangerously. The discussion on attitude formation and attitude change reveals that often awareness of knowledge is not a sufficient condition to inspire change in young people who are engaged in negative behaviour. The theories and principles of cognitive psychology suggest that it is the way in which the information is presented to young people or processed by them that makes the difference in accepting or rejecting change.

There are many insights documented across units 1-6 and quoted from the psychological literature that identify hope for our young people. In previous units the warm, nurturing, role of the caregiver was identified as a strong predictor of whether an at-risk child can turn around negative circumstances to thrive and to strive for better opportunities. Similarly, Johnson and Malow-Iroff (2008) were adamant that teens can be steered towards healthy lifestyles and life goals and away from stunted troubled futures mainly because the adolescent stage of development is associated with great resilience despite adverse circumstances.

Moral Development as a Strategy in Promoting Risk-Adverse Behaviour

Mention was made of moral development in Unit 6 and some tips are offered by Shumaker and Heckel (2007) in their book *Kids of Character: A Guide to promoting moral development.* This book sheds light on the specifics that need to be imported into community and national plans geared towards competencyYDWCYP0333: Enable young people to develop their spiritual, ethical, moral values and beliefs; and competency DWCYP0513: Plan and implement programmes to promote healthy lifestyles among youth.

1. The role of the family

Shumaker and Heckel (2007) noted that divorce, family mobility, controversial media influence, and an abdication of responsibility for teaching values emerge as factors that have a detrimental impact on children's development in the family. The authors reported that concerned parents claim that they feel overwhelmed by the cumulative effect of negative external forces as parents try to steer their children on to the right and moral pathway of life. It is likely that you have heard this refrain from parents in your community or in your professional role. You are likely to have your own list of the nature of the ideal values that you believe would produce well-adjusted, active and responsible citizens and you can add these to the ones identified by Thomas (1997). Thomas identified the moral values that most family and caregivers try to inculcate in children. These are regard for human life, honesty, respect for property, obedience to authority, loyalty and faithfulness, empathy and altruism, self-preservation, self-determination and social order (Thomas, 1997 as cited in Shumaker & Heckel, 2007, p. 35) If these values are successfully embedded in the developing child's psyche they can remain highly influential throughout an individual's life, even long after parents or caregivers are deceased. Without bonding or the actual presence of parents in the household children are increasingly being raised by the TV, the boys on the block, older siblings or by themselves if both parents are working a shift system. These children are very much at risk to the negative influences in society.

2. Parental Liability Laws

Although it is assumed that parents have the interest of children at heart, in some countries legislation is introduced to remind parents of their responsibility. You would recall in Unit 6 it was noted that in the USA in certain states parents who allow their teens to have friends over to drink are subject to liability laws that make them vulnerable to lawsuits, fines and jail time. Moreover, parents in some states can be held liable even if they were not aware that drinking was going on in their homes. Please read the article titled *'Liability Laws Make Parents Responsible for Underage Drinking in their Home'* (January 2012). In information published by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) that pertains to the USA, in the section on *Juvenile Justice Reform Initiative in the States 1994-1996: Parental Responsibility Law*s the OJJDP stated,

> *"The Provenzino case brought national attention to a growing trend at both State and local levels to combat youth crime: the enactment of parental responsibility laws imposing liability on parents for the delinquent behavior of their children. Caught somewhere between prevention and punishment for both children and parents, these laws attempt to involve parents in the lives of their children by holding them civilly and/or criminally liable for their children's actions. Penalties for violation of these laws include increased participation by parents in juvenile proceedings; financial responsibility for restitution payments and court costs; financial responsibility for detention, treatment, and supervisory costs; participation in treatment, counseling, or other diversion programs; and criminal responsibility and possible jail time for parents found negligent in their supervision. Although the effectiveness of these laws has not been evaluated in a systematic way, the notion of parental responsibility has attracted broad support." (OJJDP, 1997)*

Professor Ramesh Deosaran in 2011 cautioned against the reliance on legislation alone as a solution to the crime problem. His comments were in response to the Gang Bill and the Bail (Amendment) Bill which was passed unanimously in the House of Representatives of Trinidad and Tobago on April 1, 2011. A newspaper columnist wrote the following,

"Already grappling with a crime rate that continues to rise at an alarming rate, the Government has moved full speed ahead to stamp out gang-related activities, even making parents account-able. The bills were hailed by Attorney General Anand Ramlogan as "revolutionary." He said parents would be made accountable for criminal activities committed by their children and parents who "harbour" and "conceal" gang members would face the consequences. According to statistics supplied by the police, there were between 80 and 110 gangs operating in Trinidad with an average membership of 15 people. However, some gangs could be as large as 100 people. In a country where gang violence has even permeated the school system, how effective would legislation be?" (Kowlessar, 2011)

3. A multi-pronged approach

In Kowlessar's article Professor Deosaran indicated that legislation alone was not enough and there was a call for accountability in schools as well as better functioning school safety officers. Kowlessar reported that, "While he hailed the Government for doing its part, Deosaran said there was a "huge gap," as already existing legislation was not being implemented. "The Government is doing it's duty, but there are other agencies, like the police and the probation officers, who have failed and that's the missing gap," he said. "It is not the legislation...It is holding those who are accountable responsible—who are responsible for enforcing the legislation." He said to eradicate violence in schools, gang activities must be eradicated altogether. "As long as there is a multiplicity of gangs on the streets and in the schools and neighbourhoods, they will serve as magnets for school violence," Deosaran said, adding that as long as the school environment remained "toxic," students would be vulnerable to that "toxicity." "We have to deal with gangs in the schools and in the wider public and therefore we must deal with their mode of operation," he said. "While it is a good intention to rehabilitate young people, they, however, must be subjected to tough love." Deosaran, who identified strict discipline and accountability as the building blocks to prevent the spread of violence in schools, said it should be made mandatory for parents to answer to school principals. He said a few years ago, a study titled A Social Justice Mode was conducted on some 60 schools throughout the country. One of the recommendations, he recalled, was that if a student was found guilty of engaging in violence, that student should be judged by a "jury of peers." "Bring that student in front of the classroom before a jury comprising fellow students and let them determine what punishment should be meted out," Deosaran said. "This will also serve as a deterrent to other students because there is nothing in the life of an adolescent more powerful than peer pressure."

4. *Community's Role in Character Development*

Shumaker and Heckel (2007) stated that the community historically has always played a vital role in the shaping of the moral behaviour of children and adolescents. You are likely to be familiar with the phrase "It takes a community to raise a child." However, as the community structures disintegrates or transition from a close-knit supportive one to an environment that is permeated by delinquency, gangs, drugs, lack of respect of the vulnerable including the young and the elderly, a lack of direction and underachievement, at risk communities pose a new set of problems for the national society.

In wrapping up this session it should be recognised that policy creation should be empirically driven, it must be supported by enforcement, and most importantly it must

be multi-pronged –combining agency and institutional support. There is much more that can be said about identifying feasible solutions to help all persons, but particularly youths, to become responsible citizens, to achieve their developmental goals and to improve their spiritual, ethical, moral values and beliefs. The philosophies that support Maslow's hierarchy of needs have a key role to play in empowering citizens particularly as humanistic psychologists and personality psychologists believe that these skills can be learned. As you complete the unit activities and post your comments in the Learning Exchange or in the Wiki, you would have the opportunity to propose your strategies and interventions to promote risk-adverse behaviour

Key Points

1. The risk taking behavior of youths was attributed to a range of factors including rebellion, problem behaviour, sensation seeking, a sense of invulnerability and the personal benefits that could be accrued from the risky behaviour or action.

2. It should be borne in mind that not all youths engage in negative behaviour as some are national sporting heroes and role models.

3. It was suggested that youths may be scapegoats and that there is a false perception – created by politicians and the media– that they are 'super-predators'.

4. The inculcation of positive values, attitudes and morals over the lifespan is thought to be the key to re-shaping the minds and circumstances of at risk children and youths. This requires a multi-pronged approach in which there is co-ordinated institutional support.

Unit Summary

The discussion in Unit 7 highlighted selected theoretical and applied issues associated with personality, plasticity, the self, attitude change and moral development over two sessions. Psychologists who study personality aim to explain current behaviour and to predict future behaviour. The assumption here is that the characteristics or traits that allow a reliable prediction of behaviour are stable ones and they are consistent over time and across situations. The emphasis on personality was based on recognition of the fact that traits, views of self and self-determination can be the drivers of change from negative or mal-adaptive behaviour to positive and well adjusted one. This unit was designed to support the competencies, skills and knowledge base of YDWCYP0263; YDWCYP0323, YDWCYP0333, and YDWCYP0513. The issues examined in Unit 7 provided an introduction to the sub-discipline of abnormal psychology which will be the focus of attention in Units 8, 9 and 10. The activities were designed to help learners to reflect on the material presented as a self-check measure of their understanding of the theories and concepts embedded in the framework of personality, theories of personality and the role of personality in change.

We began Session 7.1 by defining personality, documenting three personality types (A, B and D) and considering the four main groups of personality theories; namely, psycho-analytic theory, trait theory, behavioural learning theory and humanistic theory. In psycho-analytic theory Freud's psychosexual stages were listed. These are oral (birth to 1 year); anal (1-3 years); phallic (3-6 years); latency (6-12 years) and genital (12 years).

Freud also identified the focus of the libido, the major development task and some of the characteristics of adults who are fixated each of the five stages. Some of these characteristics in adults are associated with risky behaviour; specifically, in the oral stage there could be a tendency towards gullibility while in the phallic stage vanity, recklessness or deviancy could be manifested.

The ideas of other psychoanalytic theorists were mentioned and the similarity or differences between their work and Freud's original ideas were documented. For example, Carl Jung who was regarded as one of Freud's co-workers, felt that Freud's ideas were too constraining so he proposed and developed his theory of analytic psychology. He retained Freud's concept of a personal unconscious dimension to behaviour but added the existence of a **collective unconscious** which he called archetypes. Jung also proposed a new aspect of personality: an introversion-extroversion dimension**. Introversion** is a preoccupation with one's self while extroversion is a preoccupation with social life. Introversion and extroversion are regarded as traits. A trait is defined as a characteristic or quality distinguishing a person or (less commonly) a thing, especially a more or less consistent pattern of behaviour that a person possessing the characteristic would be likely to display in relevant circumstances. The focus of trait theory is the identification of the consistent aspects of people's personality in order to explain the complexity of social interactions and to some extent to predict future behaviour. Attempts to classify traits were made by Allport, Cattell and Eysenck. The theory that offers the greatest potential for change for at risk persons is behavioural learning theory, sometimes referred to as social learning theory which is premised on the view that personality consists of newly learned behaviour or the elimination of old behaviours through the process of behaviour modification. Humanistic theory also offers hope for disadvantaged citizens and those living in adverse circumstances. It proposes that the study of personality emphasizes subjective perceptions. The whole of the self must be understood in order to appreciate the way the individual behaves, rather than dividing the person into constituent elements such as traits or impulses.

In Session 7.1 attention was also placed on personality disorders as an explanation for risk-taking and risky behaviour. Five types of personality disorders were identified: antisocial (characterized by among other features a lack of empathy and willingness to violate the law or social rules); paranoid (as evidenced by being emotionally guarded and suspicion of others' behaviour); histrionic (characterized by irrational, attention-seeking behaviour); narcissistic (an exaggerated sense of self-importance); and borderline (in which unstable moods occur). Session 7.1 concluded with a discussion of the Self. More importantly, Maslow's hierarch of needs flagged the point that the skills that are required to achieve the higher order needs such as esteem and self-actualization can be learned.

As with previous units Session 7.2 offered an applied and a contemporary perspective of personality, moral development and the change. Johnson and Malow-Iroff (2008) offered a developmental explanation for risky behaviour in adolescents which included among other reasons rebellion, problem behaviour, sensation-seeking, perception of invulnerability, conscious decision and immaturity as well as a tendency to live in the present. Some of these reasons might be linked to personality traits such as impulsivity. Particular attention was placed on what policies, programs and interventions must focus

on in order to nurture active and responsible citizens, to assist persons with their life goals and development plans, and to develop in young people their spiritual, ethical and moral values. The interventions that were considered necessary for transforming risky into risk adverse behaviour require the role of the family, the use of parental liability laws, the community and the school. In Session 7.2 a multi media approach using YouTube videos and readings from electronic resources were incorporated in the unit. Collectively, these extra resources demonstrate psychology in action. A multi-media approach to course delivery serves to bring the text material to life and assists you in reading, understanding and remembering key points and concepts.

Key Points

1. Four personality theories were discussed: personality: psycho-analytic theory, trait theory, behavioural learning theory and humanistic theory.

2. Three personality types were identified: Type A, Type B and Type D.

3. Five personality disorders were discussed: antisocial, paranoid, histrionic, narcissistic and borderline

4. Counter to the view that adolescents are in a developmental stage that is characterized by risk-taking and thrill seeking behaviour, K. Palicz spoke about the scapegoating of youth. Palicz believed that the misperception of youths as 'super-predators' was largely created by the way in which the media reported stories and portrayed young persons.

5. Policies, strategies and interventions to facilitate development and life goals should be multi-pronged and incorporate the role of the family, the community, parental responsibility legislation, the community and the school.

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Glossary of Terms Used in Unit 7

Source: A Dictionary of Psychology, Andrew M.Coleman, Oxford University Press, 2nd ed. 2006.

Other free access on-line psychology dictionaries are available at the following links http://allpsych.com/dictionary/ and http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/psychology

Antisocial Personality Disorder	A personality disorder characterized by a consistent pattern of such behaviours as truancy, delinquency, lying, promiscuity, drunkenness or substance abuse, theft, vandalism, and fighting.
Authoritarian Personality	A personality constellation characterized by submission to people in authority, harshness towards to subordinates, preference for non-democratic leaders, conservatism, rigidity, traditional sex-role standards, projection, and prejudice towards out-groups.
Collective Unconscious	In Jung's theory, the basic primitive human images, called archetypes, inherited from earlier generations (i.e. God, father, mother).
Consciousness	This represent an awareness of something within oneself or of an external object or fact.
Consistency	The tendency to act in similar ways to a particular situation on different occasions.
Defence Mechanism	In psycho-analytic theory, techniques which attempt to alleviate anxiety caused by the conflicting theories of the id and superego (e.g. repression, projection, displacement).
Depression	A state of extreme sadness, usually characterized by slow thoughts and movements but sometimes by restless agitation.
Dispositional Factors	A cause of behaviour that is related to one's personality characteristics and preferences.
Extroversion	An attitude of preoccupation with social life and relationships; a personality trait; the tendency to seek the company of other people and to engage in conversation and other social behaviours with them.
Heredity	The proportional contribution of genetic factors to the total variance of a trait.
Introversion	An attitude of preoccupation with one's self; the tendency to avoid the company of other people, especially large groups of people; shyness.

Modelling	Changing a person's behaviour by providing an example of desirable behaviour and (usually) overtly or covertly reinforcing that behaviour.
Nature-Nurture Debate Or Controversy	The debate about the relative contributions of biological processes and experiential factors to development.
Personality	The integrated and organized characteristics and behaviour tendencies of a person that determine the unique ways the person interacts with his or her environment.
Personality Disorders	Impairment in work or social behaviour due to rigid, maladaptive personality traits
Phobia	A phobia is a persistent irrational fear of an object, situation, or activity that the person feels compelled to avoid.
Temperament	An individual's behavioural style and characteristic way of emotionally responding.
Trait (N.)	A characteristic or quality distinguishing a person or (less commonly) a thing, especially a more or less consistent pattern of behaviour that a person possessing the characteristic would be likely to display in relevant circumstances.