

Unit

1

Developmental Psychology: Theoretical refinements, life-span perspective and applications

Overview

Welcome to PSYC 2015, Developmental Psychology. The purpose of this course is to provide you with an insight into the *breadth* of developmental psychology and to give you the opportunity to explore the *depth* of the subject. The level of detail in this course will be more extensive and comprehensive than the knowledge that you gained after successfully completing pre-requisite Year 1 courses such as PSYC 1000 'Introduction to Psychology: Social, Developmental and Abnormal'. If you completed the course PSYC 1000 you are likely to recall that the topics covered included a brief discussion of the physical, cognitive and moral milestones over the life-span (from infancy to adulthood); the risk and protective factors associated with young people; the effects of the actions of young people on the attitudes and behaviours of other groups in society; issues affecting adolescents and young people including theories of personality; personality disorders; exploration of the theme of the self; and answers to the issue of self-identification and the question 'Who Am I?' The following strategies are designed to refresh your memory of the material covered in Year 1. There is overlap in the coverage areas of PSYC 1000 and PSYC 2015 this will help you to understand PSYC 2015 even if you did not complete PSYC 1000. The course text is written by Denise Boyd and Helen Bee (2012), *Life-span development*, 6th edition, Pearson Education. A YouTube video is introduced in Activity 1.1 which reviews the principles of human development over the life-span. After viewing this video you should be in a better position to benefit from the advanced information on developmental psychology presented in Unit 1 and the expanded coverage in a number of key areas. Throughout the unit there is emphasis on viewing activities, reflective questions on the reading material, tutorial assignments and revision questions. These are geared towards enhancing your experience as an on-line learner and to encourage you to benefit from, and to contribute to, the information discussed in this unit and the other 9 units of the course.

The emphasis in PSYC 2015 is on, first, expanding upon the six foundational theories of developmental psychology (behavioral, cognitive, social psychological, biological, humanistic, and psycho-analytic). The second emphasis is on describing the domains of psychology (physical, social and cognitive) across the life-span from childhood through adolescence to late adulthood. The third focus is on the cultural influences on human development and on reporting as well as critically evaluating relevant scientific studies and national policies that relate to citizens in general and youths in particular. In this way developmental theories are brought to life in ways that would illustrate psychology 'in action'. It is important to have a critical understanding of the theories presented in this course and in this unit. For example, it is felt that, "Psychoanalytic theories are culture and gender-biased, treating Western culture and males as the measures for evaluating everyone (especially in Freud's theory)" (Santrock, 2008, p. 42). Developmentalists responded to the limitations of Freud's and Erikson's theories by creating their own models that took into

consideration other factors that influence behaviour such as cognition, culture, learning, and information processing. Although most of the leading theorists developed their ideas in an European context attempts are made in this course to include, as far as relevant information is available, the ideas of psychologists in the Caribbean and in North America.

The 10 units of this course are designed to allow you to make the connection between theories of developmental psychology and the lives of citizens in the Caribbean region. The spotlight is on designing or evaluating targeted relevant interventions, programs and policies that would empower people, particularly those at risk. The moral development of people in general as they proceed through the life-span will be examined as this is the key to understanding why citizens become dysfunctional or mal-adjusted.

It is important to distinguish between developmental psychology, developmental science and life-span development. **Developmental psychology** examines physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development in children, adolescents, and adults. The impact of ageing is also a primary consideration. The cause and effect relationships and their attendant variables that developmental psychologists study are comprehensive because variables of interest include physiological processes, cognitive processes, and social influence. Developmental psychology is integrated into human development defined as “the scientific study of age-related changes in behaviour, thinking, emotion and personality” (Boyd & Bee, 2012, p.2). Developmental psychology has connections to developmental science which explores practical applications of developmental theory and research. For example, a discussion of developmental science in a clinical environment can focus on crisis intervention for pregnant teenagers.

Developmental science relates to policy questions such as, ‘Should parents be held legally liable for the actions of their children such as truancy and underage drinking?’ This is not a far fetched idea as 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. You can read more about this in the article titled ‘*Liability Laws Make Parents Responsible for Underage Drinking in their Home*’ (January 2012) cited in the reading list. Given that many road traffic accidents and deaths in the Caribbean are caused by drunk driving and involve youths, do you think that the USA laws against underage drinking such be considered in your country of residence? Life-span development refers to the critical examination of the dynamic nature and change of individuals during their lifetime. A key concept is life-span which is defined as the maximum of years that a human can live, estimated to be between 120 to 125 years (Santrock, 2008, p. 588) Within life-span development the changes in the physical, social and cognitive domains that accompany maturity from infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, middle adulthood and into late adulthood, are given priority in the discussion and illustrations.

The coverage area for Unit 1 includes refinements in developmental psychological theories and the constituents of the life-span perspective. A multimedia approach is adopted in which the text material is reinforced through visual material such as YouTube videos. The videos aim to provide the context for you to reflect on, to interact with, and in some cases to challenge, with supporting evidence, the unit text material. Unit 1 will be covered in three sessions, in separate but related packages, so that you can read the sessions over three days, fully absorb the information and complete the session activities. The emphasis in the first session is on identifying the components of the lifespan and in outlining the domains of development (social, physical and cognitive). Session 1.2 sets the framework for expanding upon the six foundational theories of developmental psychology (behavioral, cognitive, social psychological, biological, humanistic, and psycho-analytic). You will learn more about how the traditional six theories were refined over time and how they influenced new perspectives such as ethology and behaviour genetics. In session 1.3 the focus is on the context of development: meshing theory with practice. The discussion draws upon the material presented in Sessions 1.1 and 1.2 to explore developmental issues such as **continuity-discontinuity**; the **nature-nurture controversy**; stability and change over the lifespan; emotional intelligence versus intelligence quotient; and **eclecticism**. The concepts in bold are explained in the glossary at the end of the unit. By the end of this unit you will have a comprehensive understanding of reasoning and development as outlined by Freud's psychosexual theory, Erikson's psychosocial theory, Bandura's social-cognitive theory, Piaget's cognitive-development theory, Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory and information processing theory. The findings from selected Caribbean readings would allow you to know named Caribbean developmental researchers and what they have to say about the topic discussed in this course. The readings also offer an insight into the concerns of young people. The discussion would help you to develop your thinking about solutions for addressing these concerns, and the strategies for delivering these inventions and policies. Knowledge of developmental psychology can help you to think about your design and implementation of these programs.

Course delivery is guided by **pedagogical** theories. Constructivist theory and cognitive theory encourage you to reflect upon, to construct and to actively participate in your learning process by linking your previous knowledge and experiences to the information documented in this unit. You will be given the opportunity to monitor and to track your progress throughout this unit through the completion of revision exercises located at the end of each session. Most importantly, you will benefit from timely feedback on your performance on submitted assignments. A systematic set-by-step approach is taken to provide the foundation or building blocks for understanding psychology by building on core psychological theories and principles before moving on to more complex concepts. Behavioural theory encourages learning through action such as the use of reflective practice (e.g. the completion of unit assessment activities and tutorial discussion topics) and a work-base approach (e.g. importing relevant knowledge and experiences from your work place to bear on the discussions and activities outlined in the unit).

You will have the opportunity to reflect on the comments made by the authors of the scientific papers and to share your views with your colleagues by posting your contributions in the discussion forum in the Learning Exchange. In this unit we will initiate a community of enquiry and continue to sustain it throughout the course. You will also be able to post questions on any aspect of the unit material or the unit activities that you do not understand in the designated space in the Unit 1 block on the course page and you will receive a timely reply to your queries so that you can proceed smoothly through this lesson and the course plan. You will be encouraged at all times, but particularly during the activity assignments, to reflect upon and to apply what you already know about human behaviour – your perceptions and intuitive knowledge – to the task at hand. You will be called upon to identify challenging social problems in your own environment particularly those that relate to youths and youth work that can be explained and resolved using the psychological theories, concepts and principles outlined here.

Although you will be exposed to a wealth of information you are also required to embark upon your own active internet searches to clarify topics that you do not fully understand or to critically evaluate the points stated in the unit discussions. There are prescribed hyperlinks and recommended e-resources readings. Collectively, the literature should help you focus on psychological content and analysis. The activity tasks are designed to allow you to contribute your reflections, arguments and debates on the forum. You will be introduced to the course's Glossary to which you will be expected to contribute. The reference list contain links to an on-line dictionary of psychology so that you can look up words and concepts that you do not know. This course supports the development and use of a set of regionally agreed upon skills set and knowledge-based competencies for your degree program and these competencies will be listed at the beginning of each unit.

Competencies/Skills lined to Youth Development Work

1. YDWCYP0413: Undertake research activities to support programme development.
2. YDWCYP0503: Work with youth with behavioural problems.

Key Concepts in Unit 1: life-span, plasticity, interdisciplinary, multi-contextual, domain, nature, nurture, emotional intelligence, intelligence quotient, continuity, discontinuity, social clock, psycho-sexual, psycho-social, social-cognitive, socio-cultural.

Structure of the Unit

Unit 1 is divided into three sessions that cover the following topics:-

Session 1.1: Theoretical advancements in developmental psychology

- Components of the life-span perspective

- Domains of development (social, physical, cognitive)

Session 1.2: Theoretical advancements in developmental psychology

- Advances in developmental psychological theories and new perspectives
- Psychoanalytic theories (Sigmund Freud; Erik Erikson)
- Learning Theories (John Watson; Ivan Pavlov; B.F. Skinner; Albert Bandura)
- Cognitive Theories (Jean Piaget; Lev Vygotsky) and Information Processing Theory.
- Biological and Ecological Theories (Behaviour genetics, ethology and sociobiology; bio-ecological theory)

Session 1.3: The context of development: Meshing theory with practice:

- Assumptions about development (active versus passive; usefulness; eclecticism).
- The nature-nurture debate.
- Emotional intelligence (EI) versus intelligence quotient (IQ).
- Application of theory to policy: Considering the case for national service in the Caribbean.

Unit 1 Learning Objectives

By the end of this session you should be able to:

1. Define and outline the components of the life-span perspective in your tutorials.
2. Know what constitutes the domains of development.
3. Develop a community of enquiry through discussion of the unit activities in the Learning Exchange.
4. Articulate the merits and demerits of developmental psychological theories in your unit activities.
5. Demonstrate your knowledge of how social policies or programs can be influenced by developmental psychological theories in your tutorial discussions.
6. Conduct web searches of the relevant literature to assist with the unit activities.
7. Develop your ability to think globally and strategically when reflecting on developmental policies for your local community.
8. Critically think about human development within the context of national development.

Session 1.1

The Lifespan Perspective

Introduction

In this session the components of the life-span perspective will be discussed and the domains of development will be identified and elaborated upon. These are precursors to the main part of the session which documents and critically appraises the refinements in psychological theories and also offer new perspectives in psychology. The new perspectives include ethology, behaviour genetics, eclecticism, psychosexual theory, psychosocial theory, social-cognitive theory, cognitive-development theory, learning theories, socio-cultural theory and information processing theory. The applications of the lifespan perspective and domains of development are demonstrated with respect to real-world, contemporary issues in Session 1.3. These applications include child rearing and the nature-nurture debate as well as policy framing; for example, National Service plan for youths in the Caribbean. The core theories, principles and concepts are the building blocks for understanding the topics to be covered in the other nine units in this course. Collectively, these details speak to the knowledge and skills set outlined in YDWCYP0413; for example, how to provide the links between data, critical thinking, policy and theory. YDWCYP0503 requires you to have the knowledge base to recognize and to work with persons exhibiting behavioural problems. For instance, behaviours deemed appropriate are to be identified and highlighted as examples to citizens, particularly youths. An understanding of the basic concepts of psychological developmental theories coupled with an appreciation of the impact of these theories will help you realize the ultimate goals of the course. The overarching goal of this course is to produce individuals who are innovators and who are equipped to function as leaders, managers, supervisors, researchers, policy makers and practitioners in a developing Caribbean environment. The aim is also to produce professionals who can think strategically and globally while delivering targeted policies and programs regionally and locally.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session you should be able to:

1. Define what is meant by the lifespan perspective.
2. List the characteristics associated with the lifespan.
3. Discuss the domains of development.
4. Reflect on policies and interventions using the lifespan perspective and domains of development.

The Life-span perspective

What exactly is the life span perspective? One interpretation is that, “[I]t is the current view of developmentalists that important changes occur throughout the entire human life-span and that these changes must be interpreted in terms of the culture and context in which one operates. Thus, interdisciplinary research is critical to understanding human development.” (Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 4) Santrock expands upon this definition by stating that the life span perspective represents, “The perspective that development is lifelong, multidimensional, multidirectional, plastic, multidisciplinary, and contextual; and is constructed through biological, socio-cultural, and individual factors working together” (Santrock, 2008, p.7). Collectively, these two definitions offer an expansive view of the life-span perspective. When these definitions are placed within the context of developmental psychological theories, to be discussed in the Session 1.2, the importance of psychology’s role in the human life-span becomes very clear.

It is also essential to know the characteristics that are associated with the life-span. The discipline of psychology aims at distinguishing common sense beliefs from scientifically derived facts about human behaviour. There is a common Caribbean expression, ‘You can’t teach an old dog new tricks’. This suggests that the acquisition of new knowledge is either impossible or difficult to attain as a person becomes older. But is this really true? Developmental psychologists offer a view that is counterintuitive to common sense expectations of human behaviour. Santrock’s (2008) definition identifies the following eight characteristics of the life-span and these characteristics indicate that it is possible to learn and to develop at any age.

1. *Development is lifelong.* This means that in the life-span perspective, early adulthood is not the end of development. In other words, a specific age period does not dominate development. This point is perhaps better appreciated when one considers that distance learning is premised on the philosophy of continuous education, regardless of the age of the learner.
2. *Development is multidimensional.* This point refers to the fact that whatever a person’s age, state of mind, emotion and the type of relationships that were formed these variables are always changing and affecting each other through out the lifespan. For instance, a well-adjusted young person is usually a warm, caring and happy individual. However, a life changing event such as a divorce later in life can radically alter that person’s mental and physical health transforming such an individual into a depressed, moody and hostile person. In other words, humans comprise biological, cognitive, socio-emotional and other dimensions that interact.
3. *Development is multidirectional.* Throughout life some dimensions or components of a dimension expand while others shrink. For example, as adolescents and young

adults develop romantic attachments they are less likely to have the same quality of attachment to their former friends preferring instead the company of their romantic partner or spouse.

4. *Development is plastic.* Plasticity means the capacity for change. Can shy and withdrawn children change as they grow up or are they destined to have these traits as adults? Although there is general agreement that there is plasticity, exactly how much plasticity exists, and on what types of dimensions change can occur, are points that continue to be debated by developmental psychologists in the academic literature.
5. *Developmental science is multidisciplinary.* Psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, neuroscientists, social workers, youth development professionals all share an interest in unlocking and identifying the mysteries of development. The resultant knowledge can be very relevant to the application of targeted inventions and programs to address social ills and challenges plaguing society and inhibiting human development.
6. *Developmental is contextual.* This point refers to the fact that all development occurs within a context or a setting. **Context** can include families, schools, peer groups and the work place. Each of these settings is influenced by psycho-social, cultural and sub-cultural factors. Moreover, the context or setting can influence individuals as much as individuals can impact upon and influence their setting. There are three types of contextual influences: (1) Normative age-graded (biological) influences which are similar for individuals in a particular age group such as puberty and menopause. (2) Normative history-graded (cultural) influences which are common to people of a particular generation because of historical circumstances. For example, people who lived in the era of the Black Power Movement may have special values, attitudes and beliefs arising out of these experiences. (3) Normative life events which are unusual occurrences that have a major impact on the individual's life. These events do not happen to all people, and when they do occur they can influence people in different ways. For example, the impact of the death of a parent or both parents upon a young child.
7. *Development involves growth, maintenance, and regulation of loss.* Some developmentalists assert that the mastery of life often involves conflicts and competition among three goals of human development: growth, maintenance and regulation of loss. As individuals age into middle and late adulthood, the maintenance and regulation of loss in their capacities takes centre stage away from growth. For instance, a 70 year old is less likely to be concerned with academic growth and studying for a degree and is more likely to focus on sustaining health and mental well-being in the senior years of life.

8. *Development is a co-construction of biology, culture and the individual.* This view is shared by many theorists (e.g. Li, 2006; Lindenberger & Staudinger, 2006 as cited in Santrock, 2008, p. 13). The brain shapes culture but it is also shaped by culture and the experiences that individuals acquire. With respect to individual factors we can go beyond our genetic inheritance and environmental contributions and map our own future by the choices that we make from the options that we possess or are given.

Using the eight characteristics of the lifespan discussed above one can begin to appreciate the role of psychology in lifespan development. Applications of developmental psychology include the provision of information to government officials, non-governmental agencies and civil society to shape social policy. Social policy is defined as “a government’s course of action designed to promote the welfare of its citizens. Values, economics, and politics all shape a nation’s social policy.” (Santrock, 2008, p. 13) Issues that are the subject of social policy can include women’s struggle for equality; protecting the well-being of vulnerable citizens (e.g. children, senior citizens, the differently able and those with special needs).



Learning Activity 1.1

An informative multimedia resource on the topic of neuroplasticity can be viewed at the hyperlink

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JismoWKknZ4>

As you view this resource, keep in mind the following questions. Post your responses in the designated section on the course page in the Unit 1 block.

1. What do you understand by the term neuroplasticity? (100 words)
2. What are some of the factors that promote neuroplasticity? (100 words)
3. What types of skills or knowledge gain are associated with neuroplasticity? (100 words)

This is due in Week 2.

The Domains of Development

Boyd and Bee (2012) identified three domains of development – physical, social and cognitive. These domains form a typology or a classification that assists psychologists to organize their theories, thoughts and research findings on human development across the lifespan. It is important to bear in mind that these three domains do not function independently. For instance, a woman experiencing menopause may experience physical

hormonal changes which impact upon her cognitive and social functioning. The three domains of development will be expanded upon below.

The **physical domain** is obvious as it includes changes in the size, change and characteristics of the human body. For instance, developmental psychologists examine the physiological changes that are associated with puberty in boys and girls. In addition to physical changes psychologists assess how individuals sense and perceive the physical world, such as the gradual development of depth perception over the first years of life during infancy. The **social domain** includes changes in variables associated with the relationship of an individual to others. The assessment of children's social skills and research on individual differences in personality both fall within the purview of the social domain. Changes in thinking, memory, problem solving and other intellectual skills are included in the **cognitive domain**. Researchers working in the cognitive domain empirically examine issues such as how children learn to read, why some memory functions deteriorate in old age, and differences between children and adults on a variety of tasks including remembering previously presented information. Intuitive or commonsense thinking may lead one to believe that adults can outperform children (an age effect) in learning and memory tasks. But is this really true? Are there variables that affect and predict how adults and children perform on a memory task? More importantly, can strategies be identified that could eliminate an age effect. The example below illustrates how an age effect in memory and retrieval may not be significant so that performance is as good for children as for adults. Consider the following resources which offer an insight into developmental differences within the parameters of domains of development. The YouTube video on developmental differences cited in Activity 1.1 and the study by Seemungal and Stevenage (2002) which empirically assessed developmental memorial differences between adults and children for previously presented experimental information relating to eyewitness information.

Specifically, the study by Seemungal and Stevenage (2002) examined the effects of detail type (central, peripheral) and an eyewitness's state of awareness at retrieval, (for instance, does the witness remember seeing or hearing the information or simply claims to know it?) on recall accuracy. The study assessed the accuracy with which children and adults exposed to a video taped crime event depicting a chase where four men, one armed with a gun, pursued a man and a woman, could accurately recall this information 24 hours later during a surprise test. The researchers examined whether the details central to a crime (such as the presence of a weapon, the number of perpetrators involved in the incident) can be as accurately recalled as the details that are peripheral to the event (such as the color of the clothing worn by a by-stander in the video clip who was not involved in the main event). The experiments were conducted in the UK with 167 adults (16- 35 years with a mean age of 19 years) and with 181 children ages 8-9 years. The experimental results offer an insight into the extent to which witnesses are accurate and the conditions under which they might be inaccurate.

From the above study, results from adult eyewitnesses revealed that central details were not necessarily better remembered than peripheral details. Witnesses who were able to recall seeing or hearing the information presented 24 hours earlier were more accurate in their recall of both types of details than those who merely reported what they believed they knew about these details. Therefore, there is merit in encouraging witnesses to think about and to report how their knowledge was derived. This is a relevant finding to the interview process during police investigations or the gathering of witness statements. Co-author Seemungal reviewed the defendant and witness statements contained in the files of the Homicide Bureau of the Trinidad and Tobago police service for approximately 633 murders as part of a research project on the implementation of the mandatory death penalty in Trinidad and Tobago (Hood & Seemungal, 2006). Interestingly, police interviewing was still being conducted using the phrasing, 'Tell me what happened on the day in question,' a format that has been replaced by the cognitive interview utilized by the British police because the cognitive interview focuses on context and remembering. With respect to an age effect in memory performance, the study by Seemungal and Stevenage found that 8 and 9 year olds, like adults, have the cognitive development to,

"...engage in memory monitoring sufficiently to be aware of, and to identify, how their memories were accessed. Second, the ability to reinstate, contextualise and retrieve associated details that accompany the process of 'remembering' transcends the age of the narrator and the content of the material reported. Children's eyewitness memories proved to be more reliable than is reported in some studies." (Seemungal & Stevenage, 2002, p. 230)

Learning Activity 1.2

Please watch the YouTube video which recaps the salient aspects of human development including the periods of development. It is 48 minutes long and as such the review is very comprehensive.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k-2L7AmKvcE&feature=related>

Answer the following questions in the relevant section of the Unit 1 block.

1. State 3 issues about human development mentioned in this video that you did not know prior to viewing this video. (100 words)
2. How did this video material assist your understanding of the needs of young people in your country of residence? (100 words)
3. State one program that you would like to introduce in your country of residence that could help people. State what age group of citizens you are targeting for support. Explain why. (100 words)

This is due in Week 2.

Review and Reflect

Reflect

What was your first childhood memory? What childhood or teenage experiences account for the person that you are today?

Review



The aim of Session 1.1 was to define the lifespan perspective and to identify the eight characteristics that are believed to be associated with the lifespan. According to Santrock (2008) development is constructed through biological, socio-cultural and individual factors all working together. Since development straddles birth to death it is associated with various characteristics: it is lifelong, multidimensional, multidirectional, plastic, multidisciplinary, and contextual; it involves growth; it is associated with maintenance and regulation of loss. The discussion progressed to the consideration of the three domains of development: physical, social and cognitive. A YouTube presentation reviewed human development and the information in this video was designed to provide the framework for understanding the advances in developmental psychology to be presented in Session 1.2. As you read extensively for this course your thoughts on issues of theoretical and practical concerns that are not mentioned in this session but which you believe must be considered when undertaking policy driven research, are extremely relevant. You are encouraged to document raise these points in your tutorial session and to post them in the discussion forum.

Key points from Session 1.1:

1. Developmental psychology as the scientific study of human development across the life-span requires the consideration of appropriate theories, subjects and research methods to produce relevant and reliable data for empirically driven policies, strategies and interventions.

2. Considering characteristics of the life-span perspective and domains of development can improve your understanding of the social ills and age-specific challenges facing the Caribbean community.
3. The three domains of development are often used as concepts to frame the theories of development to be presented in Session 1.2
4. There is no right or wrong approach to understanding the lifespan development – each perspective or model offers insights that can be customized into a specially targeted program or policy for rescuing at risk youths or adults.

Session 1.2

Theoretical advancements in developmental psychology

Overview

The domains of development discussed in Session 1 offered an insight into specific developmental theories. As you read more extensively about psychological theories from your textbook and recommended internet sources you will realise that there has been contemporary refinement and development of the core theories. This session discusses the new perspectives of ethology, behaviour genetics and information processing theory along with the traditional theories – psychosexual theory, psychosocial theory, social-cognitive theory, learning theories, cognitive-development theory and socio-cultural theory. Human behaviour is diverse and various theories evolved to explain as much of this behaviour as possible. The parameters covered by these theories are wide ranging, and include the sequence of physical, emotional and cognitive development through the life span; awareness and sensory processing; sensation and sensory deprivation; learning thinking and communication; motivation; and emotion. Current developmental interests incorporate new ideas, new aspects of life, and the analysis of cutting edge issues in society. These include new issues in childhood and adolescence (such as eating disorders, pregnancy and self-harm) as well as the increasing incidence of specific disorders such as autism.

To what extent are some of these problems prevalent in the Caribbean region? Let us consider the example of eating disorder. It is widely accepted in the psychological literature that eating disorders and disorders of bodily preoccupation are common in pre-adolescents and teenagers. In the study *An Analysis and Treatment of Eating Disorders in Jamaican adolescents* (Walker, 2012), available from the Unit 1 reading folder, it was reported that,

“Jamaica has seen an increase in diagnosable cases of eating disorders. It is believed that this is due to the adoption of Western standards and ideas brought to the forefront by the international media. Analysis of eating disorders in Jamaican adolescents should include an understanding of the interdependence of the family relationship, peer influence, developmental stage of adolescence and comorbidity of eating disorders and other psychiatric disorders. Treatment is multifaceted to include individual and family therapy, however, when working with Jamaican families one should be prepared for family resistance and subsequently tailor therapy towards empowering the adolescent.” (Walker, 2012, p. 64)

In this session we will examine and critically assess each theory by identifying the strengths and limitations of each. As you reflect on the information presented below, please bear in

mind these theories were developed in line with the guidelines of the scientific process outlined in your Year 1 psychology courses, such as PSYC 1000. To recap, the scientific process is a four step sequence that (1) conceptualizes a process or method to be studied; (2) collects research information or data; (3) analyses the data; and (4) draws conclusions to develop or to refine a theory. The evaluation of the theories below speaks to issues of the generalization of research findings. These findings are in turn dependent upon the data collection method as well as the characteristics of the subjects under investigation. The theories; learning theories and biological or ecological theories.

By the end of this session you should be able to:

1. Identify how domains of development are incorporated within developmental theories.
2. Compare and contrast developmental psychological theories.
3. Assess the potential of developmental psychological theories for structuring national policies and programs to empower citizens at risk.

Developmental Theories

1. *Psychoanalytic Theories*

Psychoanalytic theory has its genesis in the work of the Viennese physician Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). This theory is rooted in the belief that internal drives such as sex and aggression influence behaviour. More importantly, these drives are primarily outside the purview of conscious awareness and according to one academic writer they are “heavily colored by emotion” (Santrock, 2008, p. 40). According to Santrock, psychoanalytic theories focus on the belief that behaviour is merely a surface characteristic and that a true and deeper understanding of development requires analyzing the symbolic meanings of the behaviour that is exhibited as well as the working of the mind that is linked to the particular behaviour. Boyd and Bee (2012) provide a very good summary of Freud’s theory which was structured around the concepts of the *id*, the *ego* and the *superego*. These three concepts are believed to keep the personality in balance. The purpose of this sub-section is to first, identify some key aspects of Freud’s theory that pertain to children; second, to explore how Freud’s ideas were expanded upon by Erik Erickson in his psychosocial theory; and third, to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of psychoanalytic theories.

Many of Freud’s patients had memories of sexual feelings and behaviour in childhood which led Freud to believe that sexual feelings are important to personality development. Thus, Freud suggested that development occurred through a series of psychosexual **stages** through which a child moves in a fixed sequence determined by maturation. This is summarized in Table 1.1. Freud’s most controversial idea about the early childhood phase of development is that children experience sexual attraction to the opposite-sex parent during the phallic stage which occurs 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). However, the phallic stage reaches a successful conclusion when boys desire to be like their fathers and girls choose to emulate their mothers.

Table 1.1 Freud's Psychosexual Stages

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

(Adapted from Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 26).

We now turn our attention to the psycho-social theorist Erik Erikson (1902-1994). Erickson is described in the developmental literature as a neo-Freudian because he was among a group of theorists who sought to build on the strengths of Freud's theory while also trying to avoid the weaknesses of the theory. Erickson's research is highly influential for the following reasons. He believed that: (1) development resulted from the interaction between internal drives and cultural demands and this is reflected in his theoretical focus on psycho-social development rather than on psychosexual development; (2) development occurred throughout the lifespan; (3) to achieve a healthy personality, an individual must successfully resolve a crisis at each of the eight stages of development summarized in Table 1.2. After reading Table 1.2 you will notice that each of Erikson's stages describes a 'positive' pole such as trust and a 'negative' pole such as mistrust. In the healthy solution to the crisis suggested in each stage, the positive pole dominates. However, Erikson cautions that some exposure or commitment to the negative side is sometimes inevitable. Santrock (2008) gives the example that learning to trust is an important outcome of Erikson's first stage, but one cannot trust all people under all circumstances.

The strengths of Erickson's model of development are:

1. It helps to explain the role of culture in personality development;
2. It highlights the importance of lifespan psychology;
3. A useful description of major themes of personality development at different ages is provided.

Table 1.2 Erickson's Psychosocial Stages

<i>Approximate Ages</i>	<i>Stage</i>	<i>Positive characteristics gained and typical activities</i>
<i>Birth to 1 year</i>	Trust versus mistrust	Hope - Trust in primary caregiver and in one's own ability to make things happen. (Secure attachment to caregiver is key.).
<i>1- 3 years</i>	Autonomy versus shame and doubt	Will – New physical skills lead to demands for more choices, most often seen saying “no” to caregivers; child learns self-care skills such as toileting.
<i>3 - 6 years</i>	Initiative versus guilt	Purpose - Ability to organize activities around some goal; more assertiveness and aggressiveness. (Oedipus conflict with parent of same sex may lead to guilt.)
<i>6 - 12 years</i>	Industry versus inferiority	Competence - Cultural skill and norms; including school skills and tool use. (Failure to master these leads to sense of inferiority.)
<i>12 - 18 years</i>	Identity versus role confusion	Fidelity - Adaptation of sense of self to pubertal changes, consideration of future choice; achievement of a more mature sexual identity and search for more values.
<i>18 – 30 years.</i>	Intimacy versus isolation	Love - Persons develop intimate relationships beyond adolescent love; many become parents.
<i>30 years to late adulthood</i>	Generativity versus stagnation	Care: People rear children; focus on occupational achievement or creativity and train the next generation; turn outward from the self and toward others.
<i>Late adulthood</i>	Integrity versus despair	Wisdom: Person conducts a life review; integrates earlier stages and comes to terms with basic identity; develops self acceptance.

(Adapted from Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 27)

Critical evaluation of psychoanalytic theories

Boyd and Bee (2012) observed that Freud's and Erickson's psychoanalytic theories have several attractive aspects such as the emphasis on the importance of children's earliest relationship with caregivers which provides the quality of bonding that is required for the development of a healthy personality. Caregivers can be an immediate family member or another trusted person. Family relationships are central aspects of development. Another advantage of the theories is the consideration of children's needs to which caregivers must respond as children become older. An interesting point is made by Boyd and Bee that has also captured the attention of Caribbean officials: the significance of good parenting in

creating functional and well-adjusted citizens. Boyd and Bee caution that, “Good parenting is not an unchanging quality. Some people may be very good at meeting the needs of an infant but less capable of dealing with teenagers.” (Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 28)

Despite the strengths of the psychoanalytic theories documented in the preceding discussion, there are concerns about the applicability of the theories for explaining a variety of behaviours. The criticisms of Freud’s theory are linked to his reliance on the data from his adult patients who had serious mental disorders rather than relying on data from a normal population sample which would also include healthy individuals, adults and children. The reconstructed memories of these patients were the primary source of data for Freud’s theory. His main premise was that behaviour is driven by conscious and unconscious processes. His concepts of the *id*, *ego* and the *superego* are difficult to scientifically test. Perhaps most glaring was the fact that the sexual underpinnings of development are overemphasized and that the unconscious mind is given too much credit for influencing behaviour. Santrock felt that, “Psychoanalytic theories are culture and gender-biased, treating Western culture and males as the measures for evaluating everyone (especially in Freud’s theory).” (Santrock, 2008, p. 42) Developmentalists responded to the limitations of Freud’s and Erikson’s theories by creating their own models that took into consideration other factors that influence behaviour such as cognition, culture, learning, and information processing. The essential elements of learning theories, in particular B.F. Skinner’s experiment on operant conditioning with pigeons, can be gleaned from viewing the resource that is available at the hyperlink cited in Learning Activity 1.3 in the next subsection on learning theories.

2. *Learning Theories*

Behaviorism or learning theory is associated with the psychologist John Watson (1878-1958), the Russian psychologist and Noble prize winner Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936), B.F. Skinner (1904-1990) and with Albert Bandura’s social cognitive theory. It is important to keep in mind the areas in which learning theories differ from the psycho-analytic theories previously discussed.

John Watson (1930) offered ideas of human development that varied significantly from psychoanalytic theories because he believed that manipulating environmental conditions impact tremendously on children’s ability to acquire information and to learn. Therefore, when parents provide enriching experiences for their children and encourage learning through a system of rewards, this is beneficial to children. Watson coined the term **behaviorism** which defines development in terms of behavioural changes caused by environmental influences. Watson’s exact philosophy is captured in his quotation cited in Boyd and Bee.

Give me a dozen healthy infants, well-formed, and my own specified world to bring them up in and I’ll guarantee to take any one at random and train

him to become any type of specialist I might select – doctor, lawyer, merchant, chief, and yes, even beggar man and thief, regardless of his talents, penchants, abilities, vocations, and race of his ancestors. (Watson, 1930, as cited in Boyd & Bee, 2012, p.29)

Watson wanted to demonstrate, using an 11- month-old subject called “Little Albert”, that learning was simply due to the process of pairing responses to the presentation of specific stimuli. This was referred to as *classical conditioning* – the result of a biologically programmed stimulus-response connection or reflex. For example, salivating at the sight of foods that are highly palatable or intensively advertised so that a connection becomes established in your mind. Classical conditioning increases the desire to acquire those items. John Watson was influenced by earlier learning theorists, particularly Pavlov. Pavlov’s experiments with animals revealed that they can acquire new signals for existing responses or behaviors. B.F. Skinner’s approach to learning was based on a system of punishment or reward/reinforcement. Punishment is anything that follows a behaviour that causes it to stop while reinforcement is anything that follows a particular action that causes it to be repeated. Albert Bandura (1925 – to the present time) offered the view of vicarious or observational learning. In other words, learning occurs not necessarily because of a deliberate strategy involving the pairing of stimulus and response or the application of reinforcement and punishment but it could also be intentional and unintentional. When learning occurs from watching the actions of others in the environment it is referred to as learning from role models or modeling. It is important to note that behaviours, actions, attitudes and values may be easily transmitted via observational learning. The media is a very powerful agent of socialization and this includes the print, electronic and social media.



Learning Activity 1.3

To refresh your memory of B.F. Skinner’s 1948 experiment on operant conditioning with pigeons click on the hyperlink below to watch the video.

Jenningh. (2007, Mar 20). Operant Conditioning. [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I_ctlqjlrHA

Now answer the following questions by Week 2 in the Unit 1 block on the course page.

1. List 5 points made about learning in the video. (150 words)
2. In your view, to what extent can data derived from pigeons shed light on the way humans learn? (150 words)

Evaluation of Learning Theories

There are obvious applications for theories of learning to the educational setting. Boyd and Bee (2012) indicated that classical conditioning forms the basis for useful therapies in the clinical domain as anxiety problems can be controlled or eliminated using the principles of classical conditioning. If you place this idea in the context of the experiment with Little Albert you would begin to see that classical conditioning can be used in a positive or negative way: to create fear in the case of Little Albert but equally to reduce anxiety. Table 1.3 presents a summary of the key points to be remembered about learning theories.

Table 1.3: Evaluating Learning Theories

<i>Theory</i>	<i>Main Idea</i>	<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>
<i>Pavlov's Classical Conditioning</i>	Learning happens when neutral stimuli become so strongly associated with natural stimuli that they elicit the same response.	Useful in explaining how emotional responses are learned	Explanation of behaviour change is too limited to serve as comprehensive theory of human development.
<i>Skinner's Operant Conditioning Theory</i>	Development involves behaviour changes that are shaped by reinforcement and punishment.	Basis of many useful strategies for managing and changing human behaviour	Humans are not as passive as Skinner claimed; the theory ignores hereditary, cognitive, emotional and social factors in development.
<i>Bandura's Social Learning Theory</i>	People learn from models; what they learn from models depends on how they interpret the situation cognitively and emotionally.	Helps explain how models influence behaviour; explains more about development than other learning theories do because of the addition of cognitive and emotional factors	Does not provide an overall picture of development

(Adapted from Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 32)

3. Cognitive Theories

Whereas psychoanalytic theories stressed the importance of the unconscious, cognitive theories flag the role of conscious thought in behavior. Three important cognitive theories will be examined: Piaget's cognitive development theory, Vygotsky's cognitive theory and

information processing theory. Because of the volume of information that is available it is easier for you to remember notes that are summarized in tabular form rather than reading through a block of text. Table 1.4: Piaget's Four Stages of Cognitive Development

<i>Approximate Ages</i>	<i>Stage</i>	<i>Characteristics and typical activities</i>
<i>Birth to 2 years</i>	Sensorimotor	The infant constructs understanding by coordinating sensory experiences with physical actions. An infant progresses from reflexive, instinctual action at birth to the beginning of symbolic thought at end of the stage.
<i>2- 7 years</i>	Preoperational stage	The child begins to represent the world with words and images. These words and images reflect increased symbolic thinking and go beyond the connection of sensory information and physical action.
<i>7 - 11 years</i>	Concrete operational stage	The child can now reason logically about concrete events and classify objects into different sets.
<i>11 years of age-adulthood</i>	Formal operational stage	The adolescent reasons in more abstract, idealistic, and logical ways.

(Adapted from Santrock, 2008, p. 43)

The sociocultural cognitive theory was developed by the Russian Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934). He was born in the same year as Jean Piaget. Vygotsky proposed a socio-cultural theory that emphasizes how culture and social interaction guide cognitive development. You would recall the emphasis on culture in the psychosocial theory previously discussed. Like Piaget, Vygotsky believed that children actively construct their knowledge. Unlike Piaget, Vygotsky gave social interaction and culture predominance in his model of how cognitive development occurs across the lifespan. With respect to cognitive development in children Vygotsky portrayed a child's development as inseparable from social and cultural activities. He believed that processes such as memory, attention and reasoning involved learning to use the interventions of society such as culture and social strategies. This point can be illustrated by thinking about how cultural practices may impact upon on how children are taught to count.

In contemporary times in the USA and in the Caribbean children may engage in interactive computer software or television sing-along programs such as Sesame Street. However, prior to the widespread use of information communication technology children may have traditionally been taught to count using beads or other available objects in their natural environment. Similarly, children's social interaction with more skilled adults and peers is indispensable to their cognitive development. Arising out of Vygotsky's theory is the strong

belief that knowledge is situated (i.e. contextual) and collaborative (i.e. to some extent interactive). Hence, knowledge is not exclusively generated from within the individual but is derived from external sources. In other words, the acquisition of knowledge moves intrapersonal (within the person) to interpersonal (between persons). You would immediately recognize the possibility that negative cultural, peer and societal influences can lead to unhealthy attitudes and values that are detrimental to a child's development, and if these negative effects remain unaddressed they can place the child at risk later in the lifespan. We shall elaborate more on this issue in Session 1.3 which addresses the context of development and the application of developmental theory in areas such as anti-social behaviour.

In summarizing this sub-section, there are two key concepts that must be remembered from Vygotsky's sociocultural theory: **scaffolding** and **the zone of proximal development**. Scaffolding occurs when a child's complex forms of thinking originate in social interaction and are guided by more experienced persons in the child's environment (e.g. an adult such as a parent or teacher or a more skilled older child). Boyd and Bee elaborated on the concept *scaffolding* by stating that, "In order to create an appropriate scaffold the adult or older child must gain and keep the child's attention, model the best strategy, and adapt the whole process to the child's development level, or zone of proximal development." (Boyd & Bee, 2012, p.35) Vygotsky created the concept *zone of proximal development* to signify tasks that are too hard for the child to do alone but that can be managed with guidance. Hence, parents who are teaching a young child to read or to spell may provide the foundational building blocks of phonetics which emphasize sounding out words and pronunciation. You are likely to discern the application of Vygotsky's theory for designing education tools. In this course, the concept of *scaffolding* is applied by introducing you to foundational theories and concepts in Unit 1 and continuing to build on this information across the 10 units. The scaffolds also provide the framework for developing your thinking along the lines of how policies, programs and other interventions can successfully target citizens at risk and reverse their circumstances. Boyd and Bee remind us that Vygotsky's theory encourages exploration of the mind rather than a passive acceptance of the material that is presented to you.

Information processing theory: "The goal of information processing theory is to explain how the mind manages information." (Munakata, 2006, cited in Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 35) This theory was constructed around the notion that as a computer is used for processing information in a manner similar to the brain, the computer can be a model of human cognitive functioning. Additionally, the logical operations that a computer is able to undertake when programmed, is believed to offer insights into the logical functioning of the human brain. Within developmental psychology information processing theory addresses how encoding, storage and retrieval processes change with age, causing changes in memory function. These changes occur because of brain maturation and practice or lack of practice. The main strength of this theory is that it helps to explain how much information people of different ages can manage at one time and how much they can process. It provides a useful framework for studying individual differences in the cognitive efficiency of people of the

same age. The study by Seemungal and Stevenage (2002) outlines in great detail the process of encoding, storage and the retrieval of information. The primary weakness of information processing theory relates to the fact that human memory is much more complex and is certainly more efficient than the latest computer technology. In addition, the theory does not provide an overall picture of development. You would recall that other theories discussed the role of the environment as well as culture on human development.

Evaluation of cognitive theories

Boyd and Bee (2012) state that research that is based on cognitive theories, particularly the work of Jean Piaget, demonstrates that simplistic ideas such as those associated with conditioning theory, cannot fully explain the complexity underlying human thinking. Piaget's findings have been successfully replicated in many cultures and with subjects of different age groups so his theory has withstood the test of time. His innovative research methods continue to be used in contemporary investigations. The limitation of Piaget's theory is primarily with the stages of cognitive development he described. He was incorrect about some of the age categories at which he believed children developed particular skills. Other scientific investigators identified intellectual development at much earlier ages than those identified by Piaget. Additionally, according to Piaget 8 year olds are believed to have a developed sense of operational thinking. However, psychologists discovered that 8 year olds do not display operational thinking on all types of tasks. For example, their operational thinking is better on familiar than unfamiliar tasks. With respect to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, it is believed that there is insufficient scientific evidence to either support or disconfirm it (Thomas, 2005, cited in Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 36). Information processing theory has received more empirical support than Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory (Boyd & Bee, 2012, p.37). The findings from studies designed around the framework of information processing theory shed light on and helped to clarify some of the cognitive processes underlying Piaget's ideas.

4. *Biological and Ecological Theories*

Theories that propose links between physiological processes and human development represent some of the most important current trends in developmental psychology (Parke, 2004, cited in Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 38). It should be noted that some of the biological theories emphasize individual differences in behaviour while other theories focus on the universal aspects of human development. Boyd and Bee caution that all of the biological and ecological theories address to varying degrees the effect of environmental factors on development. In most cases the environment is assumed to interact with biological forces. This point would become clearer during the discussion of the nature-nurture debate in Session 1.3.

Behaviour genetics, defined as the study of the role of heredity in individual differences, is relevant to the discussion of biological theories. **Traits** and behaviours are assumed to be

influenced by genes, and evidenced of this was obtained from studies indicating that related people share more traits and behaviours than people who are unrelated. We will examine some of the evidence from studies on twins in subsequent units. Behavioral geneticists believe that heredity can affect intelligence, shyness and aggressiveness. We will consider the development of intelligence in more detail in Session 1.3. Freud's psychoanalytic theory is premised on the view that sex and aggression are powerful drives. The definition of a drive as "an energizing, motivational state that accompanies needs" as suggested by Newman and Newman, (1983, p. 298) indicates that drives connect to needs that have a physiological basis.

Ethology and sociobiology

Ethology is defined as the perspective in development that emphasizes genetically determined survival behaviours which are presumed to have evolved through the process of natural selection. There is a good summary of ethology and sociobiology in Boyd and Bee (2012) which you are strongly encouraged to read. You will discover that the relationship between individuals and the settings in which they develop is the focus of ecological theories. Within this framework, development is believed to result from the degree to which genes help or hinder individuals' efforts to adapt and to functionally successfully in their environment. Ethologists primarily study animal subjects; for example, Konrad Lorenz (1936) studied imprinting in the grayling geese and in jackdaws (birds). Some ethologists discovered that evolution has produced genes that cause humans to form relationships. Boyd and Bee provide the example of a crying baby which can be irritating because the baby needs to attract a response in order to have his or her needs immediately addressed.

Sociobiology is the study of society using the methods and concepts of the biological sciences. When applied to human development, socio-biology highlights the belief that human genes are designed for group survival. It identifies shared social rules and cultures that exist in all societies. It is commonly said that humans are by nature gregarious (i.e. enjoying the company of others) so there appears to be merit in the socio-biological approach. The term *gregarious* also refers to animals living together in herds or flocks. Critics of ethology and sociobiology claim that these theories overemphasize genetic contribution and underestimate the impact of environmental factors. Boyd and Bee (2012) indicate that the views of sociobiologists are not always testable. For example, how can one assess that infants are attached to their caregivers because their survival depends upon strong attachments? The impact of culture is also under-estimated as the quality and extent of the infant-caregiver relationship may vary across cultures.

Bronfenbrenner's Biological Theory

Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1993 as cited in Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 40) explained development in terms of the relationship between people and their environments or their contexts. He attempted to classify all the possible individual and contextual variables that affect

development using a framework that incorporated a macro-system (the cultural context); the ecosystem (the socio-economic context); the microsystem (the immediate context); the mesosystem (the immediate context such as family, school, religious organization, and the neighbourhood); finally the biological context (the genetic makeup of an individual). You can read more about these systems in Boyd and Bee (2012) in order to elaborate on the outline presented in this sub-section. One advantage of this elaborate framework is that the theory provides a way of thinking about development that captures the complexity of the individual and the context (Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 41). For example, in her study *An Analysis and Treatment of Eating Disorders in Jamaican adolescents* (Walker, 2012) linked the rise in the increase in the number of eating disorder cases amongst adolescents in Jamaica to the emphasis on body image conveyed by the American media and culture infiltrating Jamaican society. This occurrence changed the traditional Jamaican acceptance and appreciation of the full bodied woman depicted in dancehall music. Specifically,

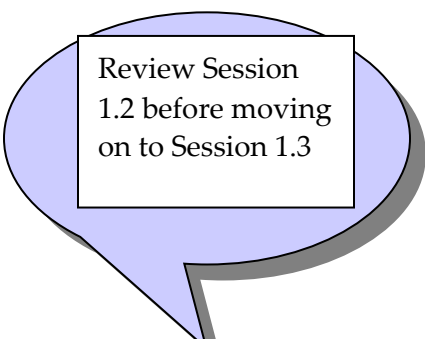
“Dancehall culture promotes girth and celebrates the “big body gal” while scorning the “maaga gal”. This is heard repeatedly in songs such as “Original Fat Thing” and “Under Mi Fat Ting” where Echo Minott and Anthony Red Rose, affectionately calls attention to all fat women; while Red Dragon renames all maaga gal “Krukumkrum”, which is the unflattering sound of bones rattling.” (Walker, 2012, p. 61)

Review and Reflect

Reflect

What is your favourite developmental theory and why?

Review



Review Session
1.2 before moving
on to Session 1.3

Session 1.2 was a very detailed one but it is important to provide a solid foundation for Session 1.3 and for the subsequent units in this course. In order to avoid information overload the material was presented in various formats including text, tabular summaries and video presentations. You are likely to require several readings of Session 1.2 in order to fully understand the content. Rest assured that these developmental psychological theories will be referred to again as we progress through out the course. The techniques of repetition, elaboration and illustration will help you to encode the material into your long term

memory. It is important to note that the theories discussed do not compete with one another to explain the same event or behaviour. Instead, psychological theories describe which problems or phenomena will be explained. As an introduction to the discussion on the research process in Unit 2, the theoretical discussion in Unit 1 was supported using scientific studies and experiments. These studies collectively offer an insight into the types of research methods that developmental psychologists can employ to scientifically examine a particular phenomenon and to order to generate, prove or disprove various tenets of developmental theories. An important objective of this session was to provide the necessary information about the range of theories and concepts that are available for you to develop your knowledge base and skill set to achieve among other competencies, competency YDWCYP0413 and YDWCYP0503. Before progressing to Session 1.3 you are encouraged to test yourself for your understanding and memory of the theorists associated with the various psychological theories documented in Session 1.2.

Revision

Name the theorist that is associated with the following concepts:

1. Macrosystem.....
2. The ego.....
3. Psychosocial stages.....
4. Classical conditioning.....
5. Observational learning.....
6. Operant conditioning.....
7. Scaffolding.....
8. Imprinting.....
9. Mesosystem.....
10. Reinforcement.....

Key points from Session 1.2:

1. The theories examined in this section were grouped into four main categories: psychoanalytic, cognitive, learning and biological.
2. These four groups of theories proposed individual frameworks that covered the lifespan from infancy to late adulthood.
3. The range of developmental psychological theories offer a very good background for focusing our mind on the programs, policies and interventions that are necessary to either prevent or to reverse at-risk factors in citizens.
4. Each theory stresses a different aspect of human development as human behaviour is a very complex phenomenon that defies a single explanation mainly because it is wide ranging and can vary from situation to situation as well as across the life span.

Session 1.3

Development in Context: Integrating Theory with Practice

Overview

Given the discussion in the previous two sessions, you will realize that human development is the scientific study of age-related changes in behaviour, thinking, emotion, and personality. This scientific process was outlined on page 16. In session 1.3 we continue to build on the foundational information presented in Session 1.1 and Session 1.2. It is a short session as the goals are first, to link the theoretical framework from the previous sessions into this practical session; and second, to stimulate your thinking along the lines of strategic policy planning. The discussion in Session 1.3 examines the academic assumptions regarding development. These include an assessment of active versus passive development; continuity versus discontinuity; an evaluation of the usefulness of various theories and the notion of *eclecticism*. We shall consider the case for and against one of the most popular debates in developmental psychology: Which has the greater impact on human development, nature or nurture? An under-examined area of developmental psychology but one which has the potential to affect policy planning is the issue of emotional intelligence. As part of the discussion we will explore the connection between the Intelligent Quotient (IQ) and Emotional Intelligence (EQ). This session concludes with an example of the factors that should be considered when designing a national policy. It is an attempt to integrate theory with practice using the example of the arguments for the introduction of National Service for youths in your country of residence. It is useful to consider the role of cultural sensitivities in policy formulation.

Learning objectives

At the end of this session you should be able to:

1. Identify assumptions made about development.
2. Discuss the main features underlying the nature-nurture debate.
3. Distinguish between emotional intelligence and the intelligence quotient.
4. Explain developmental psychology's role in empowering citizens and in facilitating youth development work.
5. Outline the role of cultural sensitivities in understanding the region's social issues or challenges.
6. Incorporate culture and cultural sensitivities in the creation of suitable policies, programs and interventions to address psycho-social problems.

Assumptions about development

Boyd and Bee (2012) identified key issues in the study of human development that connect all the developmental psychological theories. These issues are defined as relevant and significant because, according to the authors, they “cut across all domains and periods of development. These include the relative contributions to development of biological and environmental factors and the presence or absence of stages.” (Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 6) The main assumptions relate to active versus passive, the nature-nurture debate, and continuity versus discontinuity. When assessing the merits and demerits of developmental theories psychologists compare various frameworks for their usefulness and eclecticism to explaining the problem at hand.

Active versus passive development theory

Is a person active in shaping his or her own development or is a person a passive recipient of environmental influences? Theories that claim that a person’s actions on the environment are the most important determinants of individual development support an active involvement in behaviour acquisition and modification. Theories that advocate that development is a function of environmental influences acting on the individual fall in the passive range.

The nature-nurture debate

Some psychologists conceptualise changes in human development as being driven by forces either inside the person (i.e. biological and genetic variables) as opposed to outside the person (i.e. environmental, social, or cultural variables). Boyd and Bee (2012) note that the **nature-nurture debate** has evolved from an either/or position to one in which there is acknowledgment that both nature and nurture impact upon human development. The authors give the example of an inborn bias in language development in all children; specifically, children acquire and use single words before progressing to two-word sentences. Another inborn bias is the smiling behaviour of babies which babies initiate to encourage interaction with those in their environment. An additional dimension to the nature-nurture debate was identified as internal models of experience. This is based on the idea that the effect of an experience depends not on its objective properties but on the individual’s interpretation of these experiences.

Continuity versus discontinuity

The **continuity-discontinuity** issue relates to whether age-related changes in human development are based on the amount or degree of change (the continuity side of the debate) or the kinds of changes that occur (the discontinuity side of the debate). For instance, do you have more or fewer friends now than 10 years ago? Another way of looking at the continuity-discontinuity issue is as follows. Does development happen

continuously or in stages? Theories that do not refer to stages propose that development is a stable, continuous process. In contrast, stage theorists emphasize change more than stability because development happens in leaps from lower to higher steps.

In Session 1.2 you were presented with various theoretical options for explaining development across the lifespan. Table 1.5 below links the assumptions of development to developmental theories. When comparing the theories it is important to bear in mind that developmentalists tend to compare theories or to assess the merits of a theory based on the usefulness of the theoretical framework, concepts and principles. The utility of any theory, psychological, developmental or any other science must adhere to the scientific method. 'Good theories' must also have what is known as *heuristic value*; that is, they must stimulate thinking and future research. By the end of this course you will realise that contemporary developmental scientists are sufficiently open-minded and informed to appreciate the merits of all theories and they do not adhere dogmatically to any one theoretical approach. The objective of science is to explain and to predict human behaviour and this means being aware of the strengths and limitations of all theoretical options. In other words, there is a leaning towards **eclecticism** which is the use of multiple theoretical perspectives to explain and to study human development.

Table 1.5: Theories of Development and Assumptions of Development

<i>Theories</i>	<i>Active or passive?</i>	<i>Nature or Nurture?</i>	<i>Stability or Change?</i>
<i>Psychoanalytic theories</i>			
<i>Psychosexual theory</i>	Passive	Nature	Change (stages)
<i>Psychosocial theory</i>	Passive	Both	Change
<i>Learning Theories</i>			
	Passive	Nurture	Stability (no stages)
<i>Classical conditioning</i>	Passive	Nurture	Stability
<i>Operant conditioning</i>	Active	Nurture	Stability
<i>Social learning theory</i>			
<i>Cognitive Theories</i>			
			.
<i>Cognitive-developmental theory</i>	Active	Both	Change
<i>Socio-cultural theory</i>	Active	Both	Change
<i>Information processing theory</i>	Active	Both	Both

(Adapted from Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 42)

Emotional Intelligence versus Intelligence Quotient

Intelligence quotient (IQ) is defined as “The ratio of mental age to chronological age. It is also a general term for any kind of score derived from an intelligence test.” (Boyd & Bee, 2012, p. 172) The discussion on emotional intelligence and intelligence quotient is largely based on the writing of Daniel Goleman, one of the leading academics on this topic. Goleman is somewhat of a philosopher and introduces his 1995 book *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ* with the following quote:

“Anyone can become angry – that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way – this is not easy.” (Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, as cited in Goleman, 1995, p. ix)

Goleman (1995) believed that IQ and emotional intelligence are not opposing competencies but separate ones. He concedes that there is a small correlation or statistical association between IQ and EI so that in some cases persons with high IQ also displayed high EI scores but the small correlation also indicated that the competencies were separate ones. Goleman acknowledges that there are several widely recognized measures for assessing IQ but fewer acceptable measures for assessing EI. What does the discussion on EI have to do with the content and objectives of this unit? The connection becomes clearer in the discourse below.

It is often said that some people are both ‘hot blooded and hot headed’. You may or may not agree with this populist saying but you are likely to acknowledge that there is a sense of frustration and anger in our society which manifests itself as outrage and outrageous behaviour, hostility and rudeness in unwarranted situations. Social encounters often progress from hostile interactions to murder when passion overcomes reason. An empirical study was conducted on homicide in Trinidad and Tobago using the case files of 297 defendants committed to the Supreme Court of Trinidad and Tobago for murder during the period 1998 to 2002. The study reported the nature of the victim/offender relationship for 279 of the 297 defendants whose cases concluded in the courts at the time of the study. The findings revealed that overall 62% of the 279 defendants knew their victim. Specifically, the victims and offenders were involved in a prior relationship as a family member or domestic partner (23.7%), as a casual acquaintance (26.9%) and as a friend, employer or neighbour (11.5%). Only 26.5% of victims were a stranger to the defendant while the court records did not identify the victim/offender relationship for 11.5% of the 279 defendants. (Hood & Seemungal, 2006, p. 37)

Goleman (1995) describes bursts of emotion as an emotional malaise. He questioned why people of high IQ flounder while people of modest IQ functioned very well. For Goleman, the key to success is emotional intelligence (EI) which consists of traits such as self-control, zeal and persistence, the ability to be self motivated even in the face of frustrations, to control impulse, to delay gratification, to regulate one’s moods, to empathize, and to hope. He notes, “Those who are at the mercy of impulse – who lack self control – suffer a moral

deficiency: The ability to control impulse is the base of will and character.” (Goleman, 1995, p. xiii) He felt that EI can be taught to children in order to give them a head start that would overcome any deficits that may occur if their genetic IQ contribution was modest. The discussion of emotional intelligence and deficits in emotional intelligence, assume relevance for this course. You would recall that the learning objectives of this course and several of the units aim to train you to design national or community policies, programs, strategies and interventions to reduce those who may be at risk of becoming dysfunctional citizens. These include persons who may be homeless, have run-away from home, or youths engaging in risky behaviours such as dangerous driving, excessive drinking and drug-use. In order to formulate policies and interventions an in-depth understanding of developmental psychology at various stages of the human lifespan is required. Johnson and Malow-Iroff (2008) summarised various theories for explaining the risk-taking behaviour of youths. These theories have their genesis in the developmental psychological theories outlined in Session 1.2. Hence, 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.

A Caribbean perspective: The need for cultural sensitivities?

In the course PSYC 1000 that a persuasive case was made for incorporating a Caribbean perspective in psychology that took into account cultural sensitivities of our citizens. Recapping on a few key comments by Sutherland (2011) *Toward a Caribbean Psychology: An African Centered Approach* will help to set the context for the final unit activity labelled Activity 1.4. Sutherland’s article can be found in the Unit 1 reading folder. This activity aims to stimulate your thinking about the role of culture in attitude change and attitude development. Thus, cultural sensitivities are an integral part of policy planning and design as cited by Sutherland and listed below. The points listed below and the references are extracted from Sutherland (2011).

1. Caribbean psychologists should reconstruct mainstream psychology to address the psychological needs of Caribbean people.
2. An examination of the culture, philosophy, and language defining the Caribbean social reality and the cultural context in which Caribbean peoples live is appropriate. Such explorations can contribute to the development of the discipline of Caribbean Psychology that can inform culturally appropriate theoretical frameworks and research approaches to address the important areas of human relations and geopolitical realities in the Caribbean region.
3. In contemporary Caribbean societies, pervasive interpersonal violence, child abuse, elder abuse, drug abuse, suicides, homicides, and the personal, familial, economic, and social consequences of these acts of violence have preoccupied politicians and scholars. Several explanations exist for the high rates of psychosocial violence in Jamaica and in other English-speaking islands.
4. Errol Miller (1999) wrote, Jamaicans have the mentality of taking the opportunity to exploit those who are in a weak position. Miller is correct in arguing that enslavement and colonial conditions have set Jamaicans against each other and against their cultural and historical foundation. Yet, in the contemporary era, social scientists need to examine the internal dynamics of Jamaica's family structures, which are related to these negative attitudes and behaviors. Analysts have discussed the fragmentation of the extended family structure because of economic constraints; rural-to-urban migration; transnational migration to the United States, the United Kingdom, and other foreign countries; urbanization; and the absence of, or the breakdown of, parenting skills. Hence, it is not unusual for children of poverty to be raising themselves (Narcisse, 2000). The physical and emotional violence inflicted on Caribbean children has also been documented (Barrow, 1996). In other extreme instances, there are those hostile parents who mold their children into violent and ruthless individuals who prey on and destroy their communities for personal self-aggrandizement.

Application of theory to policy: Considering the case for National Service

The knowledge base, skills-set and competencies associated with YDWCYP0413 and YDWCYP0503 require learner to recognise the importance of social research in the policy making and program planning process. Forging the links between data, critical thinking, policy and theory is strongly encouraged. You can achieve this link by undertaking the simple task outlined in Activity 1.4 and building on your ideas documented in this task with the new information to be presented over the 10 units of the course. If you are unfamiliar with the vision of a national service some ideas are cited to familiarise you with the concept and ideals most of which are geared towards nurturing **pro-social behaviour**.

“National service recognises that individuals can and should contribute to the larger society. The political advocates justified its implementation by indicating that every modern democratic society from Great Britain to

the U.S.A. as well as Grenada and Guyana in the Caribbean region has systems of national service, albeit with various modification, to ensure consistency and continuity of nation building by maximizing the human resources in the country. It also seeks to engender a spirit of nationalism in the **psyche** of youths, and this thrust towards developing a sense of patriotism can be examined within the framework of the psychology of nationhood." (Seemungal, 1990)

Learning Activity 1.4

- (1) View the YouTube video of the address by Mr. Kamal Powell who spoke about youth issues in the Caribbean.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PCUU2Z4ZkVQ>

- (2) Read the article by Corey Connelly, 'Louis Lee Singh pushes for compulsory national service', September 29, 2009, Newsday newspaper.

<http://www.trinidadandtobagonews.com/blog/?p=1657>

- (3) Search for a policy in your country of residence that speaks to national service or contains elements of national service. Elements of National service may already be present in some of the region's youth programs as suggested in the links below.

<http://www.nysjamaica.org/dynaweb.dti?dynamodule=news&dynapage=news&id=23>

Jamaica

<http://www.kaiteurnewsonline.com/2012/01/29/the-guyana-national-service/>

- Guyana

Answer the following questions in the respective section in the Unit 1 block during Week 2.

1. Are you in favor of a national service program for the youths in your country of residence? (100 words)
2. Should National Service be voluntary or mandatory? Justify your response. (100 words)
3. What age groups should be exposed to national service and for how long? (100 words)
4. What programs or activities would you like these youth to undertake during a National Service program? (100 words)

Review

The focus in Session 1.3 was on exploring the context for development and illustrating how theory should be integrated into practice and policy design. The discussion documented some assumptions of development: active versus passive development, continuity versus discontinuity, and the nature-nurture controversy. The concepts emotional intelligence and intelligence quotient were presented and the session concluded with a note on why cultural sensitivities should be considered during policy planning and design. The practical task of drafting a National Service program or policy was introduced. You are encouraged to read widely and to explore the resources at your disposal via UWIlInC. You are reminded that comments on issues of theoretical and practical concerns that are not mentioned in this session but which you believe must be considered when undertaking psychological, developmental and policy driven research are extremely relevant.

Key points from Session 1. 3:

1. Developmental psychology is the scientific study of human development across the lifespan. The discipline makes key assumptions about development; for example, development can be viewed as either active or passive; development may involve continuity and/or discontinuity; cognitive development as evidenced by intellectual progress is shaped by nature and nurture. Developmental theories and models should be based on evidence derived from testable findings because ultimately the utility and application of the theory, concepts and principles will be judged by their heuristics (the influence of the theory on thinking, teaching and research) as well as the **internal validity** of the study.
2. A strong case has been built regarding the need for a Caribbean psychological perspective for facilitating a better understanding of the social ills facing youths and the wider regional community, and the need to import culture as a variable in social policy planning.
3. The current leaning toward theoretical eclecticism hold that there is no right or wrong theoretical approach to understanding social phenomena; rather the central concern should be the appropriateness of a theory (or a combination of theories). Generally, theories are chosen that are suited to the problem being investigated, the knowledge base of the investigating team, the resources available (including both financial and person power) to carry out research to guide policy-making, the socio-cultural context, and the level of analysis that is required to generate the information required.

End of unit summary

This unit was designed to support the competencies, skills and knowledge base related to YDWCYP0413 and YDWCYP0503. The issues examined in Unit 1 provided an introduction to the discipline of developmental psychology and provided the foundational and procedural knowledge that will help you to understand the subsequent units in this course. The activities were designed to help you to reflect on the material presented as a self-check measure of your understanding of the theories, methods, **hypotheses** and concepts that constitute the framework of the discipline. We began by defining in Session 1.1 the parameters of developmental psychology by mapping out the eight components of the lifespan. Development is perceived to be lifelong, multidimensional, multidirectional, plastic, multidisciplinary, and contextual; it involves growth, and it is associated with maintenance and regulation of loss. The discussion progressed to the consideration of the three domains of development: physical, social and cognitive. The discourse proceeded in Session 1.2 to document in detail and to critically review the four major groups of developmental theories: psychoanalytic theories, learning theories, cognitive theories and biological based theories. The contributions of the major developmental psychologists (Sigmund Freud, Erik Erikson, John Watson, Ivan Pavlov, Albert Bandura, Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky) were detailed. A multi media approach using YouTube videos to bring the text material to life and to assist you in reading, understanding and remembering the unit material.

In Unit 2 the focus will be on outlining in more detail the scientific method and how psychologists do research. A short recap of the salient points related to research methods, ethics guidelines to be considered when undertaking research, and how to critique a published study will be provided. The focus in Unit 2 is to provide you with an expanded coverage of the research methods popularly used by developmental psychologist to generate and to refine their theories. Using scientific articles for case study analysis we will discuss, for example, findings from twin research that were derived from experiments and longitudinal designs. These options are well suited to collect data in order to identify the precise role of nature and nurture on child development. As with Unit 1, Unit 2 will utilize Caribbean examples to illustrate key points. The discussion in subsequent units will tap into your memory for the foundational content covered in Unit 1.

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Glossary of Terms: Unit 1

Source: Coleman, A.M. (2006). *A Dictionary of psychology* (2nd ed.).

Oxford University Press,

(Other free access on-line psychology dictionaries are available at the following links

1. AllPsych Online: <http://allpsych.com/dictionary/>
2. Merriam Webster: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/psychology>)

Behaviour (n.) – The physical activity of an organism, including overt bodily movement and other physiological processes. The term also denotes the specific physical responses of an organism to particular stimuli or classes of stimuli.

Behaviour Genetics – The study of the role of heredity in individual differences.

Case Study – An in-depth examination of a single individual.

Cognition (n.) The mental activities involved in acquiring and processing information. The term describes the process people use for remembering, reasoning, understanding, and using judgment; the ability to think and make sense out of what is seen, heard, felt, and experienced, in order to solve problems. A cognition is also an item of knowledge or belief.

Cognitive Theory (n.) Also called Social Cognitive Theory - An approach to social learning, incorporating findings from research into learning, memory, and social cognition, and focusing on people's thoughts and how they affect social behaviour.

Cognitive Domain – The term denotes changes in thinking, memory, problem solving, and other intellectual skills.

Concept (n.) - A mental representation, idea, or thought corresponding to a specific entity or class of entities, or the defining or prototypical features of the entity or class, which may be either concrete or abstract.

Context – The setting in which development occurs, which is influenced by historical, economic, social, and cultural factors.

Continuity-Discontinuity Issue – The focus is on the extent to which development involves gradual, cumulative change (continuity) or distinct stages (discontinuity).

Control Variable - In experimental design, any variable apart from the independent variable that is controlled by the experimenter by being randomized, held constant, statistically controlled, or suppressed in some other way (also called a controlled variable).

Culture – The culture of a society is the way of life of its members: the collection of ideas and habits which they learn, share and transmit from generation to generation.

Defence Mechanism (n.) - A term used originally in psychoanalysis and later more widely in psychology and psychiatry to refer to a process whereby the ego protects itself against demands of the id.

Development – The pattern of change that begins at conception and continues through the lifespan. Most development involves growth, although it also includes decline brought on by aging and dying.

Eclecticism – This refers to the use of multiple theoretical perspectives to explain and study human development.

Ethology – A perspective on development that emphasises genetically determined survival behaviours presumed to have evolved through natural selection.

Experiment – A study that tests a causal hypothesis.

Hypothesis (n.) – A tentative explanation for a phenomenon, subject to criticism by rational argument and refutation by empirical evidence

Internal Validity (n.) – The extent to which the conclusions of an empirical investigation are true within the limits of the research methods and subjects or participants used

Longitudinal Design – A research strategy in which the same individuals are studied over a period of time, usually over several years or more

Life-span Perspective – The perspective that development is lifelong, multidimensional, multidirectional, plastic, multidisciplinary, and contextual: involves growth, maintenance, and regulation; and is constructed through biological, socio-cultural, and individual factors working together.

Nature-nurture Debate or Controversy – The debate about the relative contributions of biological processes and experiential factors to development.

Operant Conditioning – Learning to repeat or stop behaviours because of their consequences.

Pedagogy (n.)– The principles, practice or profession of teaching

Prosocial Behaviour – Helping behaviour, altruism, or more generally any behaviour that is positive and calculated to promote the interests of society.

Perception (n.) – The act, process, or product of perceiving; the ability or capacity to perceive. In psychology a distinction is made between sensation (the subjective experience or feeling that results from excitation of sensory receptors) and perception (sensory experience that has been interpreted with reference to its presumed external stimulus objective or event).

Psyche (n.) - The human mind or soul. In Greek mythology, the soul was personified by Psyche, a young woman who was loved by Eros, the god of love who married Psyche but visited her only at night and insisted that she should never see his face.

Punishment – Anything that follows a behaviour and causes it not to be repeated.

Qualitative – Concerned with meaning, rather than with measurement. The emphasis is on subjective understanding, communication, and empathy, rather than on prediction and control, and it is a tenet that there is no separate, unique, 'real' world.

Race – In the biological sense refers to a group of people who possess certain distinctive and conspicuous physical characteristics.

Reinforcement (n.) - In operant conditioning, any stimulus that, if it is presented soon after a response, increases the relative frequency with which that response is emitted in the future; also the process whereby a response is strengthened in this way.

Social Clock – A set of age norms defining a sequence of life experiences that is considered normal in a given culture and that all individuals in that culture are expected to follow.

Social domain – Change in variables that are associated with the relationship of an individual to others.

Social Structure – Two or more people interacting and interrelating in certain expected ways, regardless of the unique personalities involved.

Stages – Qualitatively distinct periods of development.

Stimulus (n.) – Any event, agent or influence internal or external, that excites or is capable of causing a response in any organism. Behavioural psychologists such as Frederick Skinner (1904-1990) noted that a stimulus is an event, whether physical or mental, that evokes a response. Plural: stimuli.

Theory (n.) – A proposition of set of propositions offered as a conjectured explanation for an observed phenomenon, state of affairs or event.

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.

Variable (n.) – Anything that is subject to variation; in psychological research, any stimulus, response, or extraneous factor that is changeable and that may influence the results of the research