



2

How and Why People Develop and Learn

Objectives

- Explain the role of theories in understanding human development.
- Describe how early experiences are important and heavily couched in emotion as described by psychoanalytical theories.
- Identify how psychosocial theory addresses the stages of socio-emotional development seen in humans from birth to old age.

continued

Objectives

- Describe how learning theories include behaviorism, operant conditioning, social cognitive theory, cognitive theory, and social learning.
- Summarize historical influences on modern theories of human development.

continued

Objectives

- Assess how environment can influence some personality traits, while others are influenced by heredity.
- Compare and contrast research methods commonly used to study human development.

The Role of Developmental Theories

- Researchers and scientists explore the many ways in which humans grow and develop
- **Developmental theories** are comprehensive explanations about
 - why people act and behave the way they do
 - how people change over time
- Learning about developmental theories will help you better understand the capabilities, motivations, and expectations of others

continued

The Role of Developmental Theories

- Understanding developmental theories can make you a more empathetic person
 - *Empathetic* means to be understanding or sensitive to the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of others





Checkpoint

1. How do researchers and scientists explore the ways in which humans grow and develop?
 - ✓ *They observe people, perform experiments, and draw conclusions based on their studies and earlier studies that others have done.*
2. What are developmental theories?
 - ✓ *comprehensive explanations about why people act and behave the way they do and how they change over time*

continued



Checkpoint

3. Why should you learn about developmental theories?

- ✓ *to better understand the capabilities, motivations, and expectations of others*

4. What does empathetic mean?

- ✓ *to be understanding or sensitive to the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of others*

How Early Life Experiences Affect People Over Time

- Many theorists have held different ideas about how and why humans develop and change the way they do
- **Psychoanalytic theories** state that much development happens at an unconscious level and is buried in emotions
- Psychoanalytic theorists analyze the symbolic meaning behind behaviors

continued

How Early Life Experiences Affect People Over Time

- Sigmund Freud was a pioneer in applying psychoanalytic theory
 - He believed that what happens early in life affects a person for years to come
- Erik Erikson believed that both early and later life experiences affect development
 - He thought that development is a social process and people are motivated by their desire to connect with other people

continued

How Early Life Experiences Affect People Over Time

- According to Erikson's **psychosocial development stages**, people must successfully resolve a psychological and/or social conflict before moving to the next stage
 - If people do not, their unsuccessful resolution will affect their future stages of development
- Erikson was careful to point out that there must be a healthy balance for optimal development

continued

How Early Life Experiences Affect People Over Time

- Erikson did not stop with adolescence
- He believed that development occurs throughout a person's life
- People are always changing and developing

continued

How Early Life Experiences Affect People Over Time

- Even people in older adulthood must face psychosocial conflicts that will help them eventually face death



Rocketclips, Inc./Shutterstock.com



Checkpoint

1. What do psychoanalytic theorists analyze?
What do they often believe?
 - ✓ *They analyze the symbolic meaning behind behaviors and believe that early life experiences are important in development.*
2. Which theorist was a pioneer in applying psychoanalytic theory?
 - ✓ *Sigmund Freud*

continued



Checkpoint

3. According to Erikson, which conflict must individuals resolve during the elementary school years?
✓ *industry versus inferiority*
4. According to Erikson, which conflict must individuals resolve during the teen years?
✓ *identity versus identity confusion*

How People Process Information and Learn

- Ideas about how people process information, think, and learn are called **cognitive theories**
- Cognitive researchers seek to explain the differences in how people think throughout the stages of life

continued

How Experiences Cause People to Behave in Certain Ways

- Lawrence Kohlberg identified three different levels of thinking that people go through in making **moral decisions**
 - People make decisions based on whether or not they will be punished or rewarded
 - People's moral decisions are motivated by laws and how they might be perceived
 - Some teens and many adults make moral decisions based on principles, such as justice



Checkpoint

1. Which theorist described the stages of cognitive development in four stages? What are these stages?
 - ✓ *Jean Piaget; sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational*
2. According to cognitive theory, why do young children think differently from teens?
 - ✓ *Young children base their thinking on what they know. As they gain more experience, their way of thinking will change and adapt.*

continued



Checkpoint

3. Describe Vygotsky's sociocultural theory.
 - ✓ *The theory that social and cultural environments shape human cognitive development.*
4. What are moral decisions?
 - ✓ *personal decisions that evaluate what is right and what is wrong*

continued



Checkpoint

5. Describe Kohlberg's three levels of thinking that people go through in making moral decisions.
 - ✓ *In the first level, people make decisions based on whether or not they will be punished or rewarded. In the second level, people's moral decisions are motivated by laws and how they might be perceived. In the third level, some teens and many adults make moral decisions based on principles such as justice.*

How Experiences Cause People to Behave in Certain Ways

- **Observable behaviors** are the things people do and say or the way they act
- **Behaviorism** is the belief that people's behavior is determined by forces in the environment that are beyond their control

continued

How Experiences Cause People to Behave in Certain Ways

- Ivan Pavlov demonstrated the idea of behaviorism through an infamous experiment with a dog



continued

dogboxstudio/Shutterstock.com

How Experiences Cause People to Behave in Certain Ways

- In **classical conditioning**, behaviors are associated with emotional responses
 - Positive, negative, or neutral experiences affect people and a range of emotional associations, attitudes, and behaviors result
- B. F. Skinner was well-known for identifying the basic principle of **operant conditioning**
 - People tend to repeat behaviors that have a positive effect

continued

How Experiences Cause People to Behave in Certain Ways

- Albert Bandura argued that people watch and imitate other people's behaviors
- This happens despite whether or not there are rewards and punishments involved
- He called this **social cognitive theory**
- How a person responds to a situation is based on personal reaction and how he or she processes information



Checkpoint

1. What is behaviorism?

- ✓ *the belief that people's behavior is determined by forces in the environment that are beyond their control*

2. Who demonstrated the idea of behaviorism through his infamous experiment with a dog? What has this been termed?

- ✓ *Ivan Pavlov, classical conditioning*

continued



Checkpoint

3. What is operant conditioning? Who was well-known for identifying this principle?

✓ *the repetition of behaviors when reinforced, B.F. Skinner*

4. What is social cognitive theory?

✓ *theory based on the assumption that people are affected by rewards and punishments, but that their reactions to rewards and punishments are filtered by their own perceptions, thoughts, and motivations*

Which Theory Is Correct?

- No one theory should be regarded as the absolute truth
- Humans are much too complex to describe using simplistic theory
- The conflict between two theories often leads to more valid insights
- More theories will likely emerge as knowledge about human development grows



Checkpoint

1. Which theory is the most correct?
 - ✓ *No one theory should be regarded as the absolute truth. Humans are much too complex to describe using simplistic theory.*
2. What can often develop from the conflict between two theories?
 - ✓ *more valid insights that offer understanding of human development*

continued



Checkpoint

3. Give an example of a debate that has been occurring among scientists in recent years.
 - ✓ *the debate between the origin of specific characteristics or traits of people, and whether they are inborn or learned*

What Causes People to Develop Specific Traits?

- Questions about what causes people to develop specific traits have been asked repeatedly
- Specific instructions about you are in your **genes**

continued

What Causes People to Develop Specific Traits?

- **Genetics** have started to show patterns about how just one gene can be associated with different inherited disorders



continued

DeoSum/Shutterstock.com

What Causes People to Develop Specific Traits?

- Assigning traits and behaviors based on biology is called **ethological theory**
- Even though genes determine individual traits, the environment can manipulate some traits
- Assigning traits and behaviors based on environment is called **ecological theory**

continued

What Causes People to Develop Specific Traits?

- Families affect human development in profound ways
- Families have the greatest social influence on a child's early development



continued

Monkey Business Images/Shutterstock.com

What Causes People to Develop Specific Traits?

- Peers have a greater impact than families during later childhood and adolescence
- A person's community is the neighborhood, town, or city in which he or she lives
- The community factors that affect development are endless



continued

Monkey Business Images/Shutterstock.com

What Causes People to Develop Specific Traits?

- Parents of different socioeconomic conditions may raise their children in different ways
- Families that are economically advantaged may be better able to provide housing in areas that offer more support services
- Families with fewer economic resources may still efficiently use them in child-rearing processes that promote optimal development

continued

What Causes People to Develop Specific Traits?

- Media affects everyone differently
- Your age, experiences, values, and media literacy all affect how you interpret a message
- Media messages can be helpful or harmful to children and teens
- Their effect may not be immediately apparent

continued

What Causes People to Develop Specific Traits?

- The availability of health care, proper nutrition, and physical activity are the most obvious ways to manipulate the environment
- Some genetic conditions can be lessened with medication and therapy combined
- Children and teens need nutritious foods to physically grow and function
- Adults need nutritious foods to maintain health

continued

What Causes People to Develop Specific Traits?

- Sedentary lifestyles can lead to poor health at any life stage
- When combined with other enriching experiences, physical activity may have a positive impact on thinking and learning



takayuki/Shutterstock.com

Think Further

- Up to this point, do you feel that biology or environment has influenced your development more? Why?



Checkpoint

1. What is ethological theory?

✓ *assigning traits and behaviors based on biology*

2. What is ecological theory?

✓ *assigning traits and behaviors based on environment*

continued



Checkpoint

3. How can a person's heredity influence some personality traits?
 - ✓ *All people are born with genes, which help shape personality and temperament, in addition to physical traits and brain development.*

continued



Checkpoint

4. How can a person's environment influence some personality traits?
 - ✓ *Although a person is born with traits, he or she continues to develop after birth cognitively, physically, and socio-emotionally. Family, peers, community, economic resources, media, health care, nutrition, and physical activity can all shape personality.*

Research Perspectives and Methods

- Researchers use the **scientific method** to learn about human development
- They ask questions about observed behaviors
- Through these observations, a **hypothesis**, or possible answer, is formulated
- There are many ways to collect data to test a hypothesis

continued

Research Perspectives and Methods

- **Descriptive studies** use information that describe people and situations, such as their age, attitudes, or behaviors
- In **manipulative experiments**, data is collected by keeping all the variables that affect behavior the same except for one
- In **longitudinal studies**, the same individuals are observed over a period of time

continued

Research Perspectives and Methods

- **Cross-sectional studies** compare groups of various ages at the same time
- In **naturalistic experiments**, groups are only observed and observations are recorded

continued

Research Perspectives and Methods

- Researchers must follow ethical standards
- They must ensure the people being observed are safe and not harmed
- Information that is gathered must be kept confidential



Did You Know?

- The scientific method has roots in ancient times as well as the Renaissance. Well-known thinkers and scholars such as Aristotle, Euclid, Copernicus, and Galileo all influenced the methodology of modern science.



Checkpoint

1. What is the scientific method?
 - ✓ *means of increasing knowledge by observing, formulating a hypothesis, testing the hypothesis, and formulating a theory*
2. Which data collection method uses information that describes people and situations?
 - ✓ *descriptive studies*

continued



Checkpoint

3. Describe how data is collected for manipulative experiments.
 - ✓ *data is collected by keeping all the variables that affect behavior the same except for one*
4. What is the difference between longitudinal studies and cross-sectional studies?
 - ✓ *Longitudinal studies observe the same individuals over a period of time. Cross-sectional studies compare groups of various ages at the same time.*

continued



Checkpoint

5. List four ethical standards researchers must follow.
 - ✓ *ensuring safety, confidentiality, moral practices, and truthfulness and diligence*