

- **ESSENTIALS OF LIFE-SPAN
DEVELOPMENT**

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- Chapter Outline
- The life-span perspective
- The nature of development
- Theories of development
- Research in life-span development

- **The Life-Span
Perspective**

- The importance of studying life-span development
- Characteristics of the life-span perspective
- Contemporary concerns in life-span development

- The Life-Span Perspective
- **Development:** Pattern of movement or change that begins at conception and continues through the human life span
 - The importance of studying life-span development
 - Prepares us to take responsibility for children
 - Gives us insight about our own lives

- The Life-Span Perspective
- Characteristics of the life-span perspective
 - **Life-span perspective:** Views development as
 - Lifelong
 - Multidimensional
 - Multidirectional
 - Plastic
 - Multidisciplinary
 - Contextual
 - A process that involves growth, maintenance, and regulation of loss

- Types of Contextual Influences
 - **Normative age-graded influences:**
Similar for individuals in a particular age group
 - **Normative history-graded influences:**
Common to people of a particular generation because of historical circumstances
 - **Nonnormative life events:** Unusual occurrences that have a major impact on an individual's life
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- The Life-Span Perspective
 - Contemporary concerns in life-span development
 - Health and well-being
 - Parenting and education
 - Sociocultural contexts and diversity
 - **Culture:** Behavior patterns, beliefs, and all other products of a group that are passed on from generation to generation
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- The Life-Span Perspective
 - **Cross- cultural studies:** Comparison of one culture with one or more other cultures

- **Ethnicity:** Based on cultural heritage, nationality characteristics, race, religion, and language
- **Socioeconomic status:** Grouping of people with similar occupational, educational, and economic characteristics
- **Gender:** Characteristics of people as males or females
- **Social policy:** National government's course of action designed to promote the welfare of its citizens

- The Nature of Development
- Biological, cognitive, and socioemotional processes
- Periods of development
- Conceptions of age
- Developmental issues

- Biological, Cognitive,
and
Socioemotional
Processes

- Biological, Cognitive, and Socioemotional Processes
- Connecting biological, cognitive, and socioemotional processes
 - Connection is obvious in:
 - Developmental cognitive neuroscience - Explores links between development, cognitive processes, and the brain
 - Developmental social neuroscience - Examines connections between socioemotional processes, development, and the brain

- Figure 1.4 - Processes Involved in Developmental Changes

- Periods of Development
- Conceptions of age
 - Four types of age
 - Chronological age

- Biological age - Person's age in terms of biological health
- Psychological age - Individual's adaptive capacities compared with those of other individuals of the same chronological age
- Social age - Connectedness with others and the social roles individuals adopt
- Age and happiness
 - Research revealed that happiness increased with age

- Periods of Development
- Developmental issues
 - **Nature-nurture issue:** Concerns the extent to which development is influenced by nature and by nurture
 - Nature - Organism's biological inheritance
 - Nurture - Environmental experiences
- Developmental Issues
 - **Stability-change issue:** Involving the degree to which early traits and characteristics persist through life or change
 - **Continuity-discontinuity issue:** Focuses on the degree to which development involves either:
 - Gradual, cumulative change or distinct stages
 - Evaluating the developmental issues

- Nature and nurture, stability and change, continuity and discontinuity characterize development throughout the human life span

- Theories of Development
- Psychoanalytic theories
- Cognitive theories
- Behavioral and social cognitive theories
- Ethological theory
- Ecological theory
- An eclectic theoretical orientation

- Theories of Development
- Scientific method - A four-step process
 - Conceptualize a process or problem to be studied
 - Collect research information
 - Analyze data
 - Draw conclusions

- Theories of Development

- **Theory:** An interrelated, coherent set of ideas that helps to explain phenomena and facilitate predictions
- **Hypotheses:** Specific assumptions and predictions that can be tested to determine their accuracy

- Theories of Development
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- Psychoanalytic Theories
- Describe development as primarily unconscious and heavily colored by emotion
 - Freud's theory

- **Erikson's psychosocial theory:** Eight stages of development unfold as we go through life
- Figure 1.6 - Freudian Stages
- Figure 1.7 - Erikson's Eight Life-Span Stages
- Psychoanalytic Theories
- Evaluation
 - Emphasis on:
 - A developmental framework
 - Family relationships
 - Unconscious aspects of the mind
 - Criticisms
 - Lack of scientific support
 - Too much emphasis on sexual underpinnings
 - An image of people that is too negative
- Cognitive Theories
- Piaget's cognitive developmental theory
 - **Piaget's theory:** States that children go through four stages of cognitive

development as they actively construct their understanding of the world

- Figure 1.8 - Piaget's Four Stages of Cognitive Development

- Cognitive Theories
- Vygotsky's sociocultural cognitive theory
 - **Vygotsky's theory:** Emphasizes how culture and social interaction guide cognitive development
- **Information-processing theory:** Emphasizes that individuals:
 - Manipulate information
 - Monitor it
 - Strategize about it
- Cognitive Theories
- Evaluation
 - Contributions
 - Positive view of development

- Emphasis on the active construction of understanding
- Criticisms
 - Skepticism about the pureness of Piaget's stages
 - Little attention to individual variations

• Behavioral and Social Cognitive Theories

- Development can be described in terms of behaviors learned through interactions with our surroundings
 - Skinner's operant conditioning
 - Development consists of the pattern of behavioral changes that are brought about by rewards and punishments
 - Bandura's **social cognitive theory**
 - Holds that behavior, environment, and person/cognitive factors are the key factors in development

• Figure 1.9 - Bandura's Social Cognitive Model

- Behavioral and Social Cognitive Theories
- Evaluation

- Emphasis on:
 - Scientific research
 - Environmental determinants of behavior
- Criticisms
 - Little emphasis on cognition in Skinner's view
 - Inadequate attention paid to developmental changes
- Ethological Theory
- **Ethology**: Study of the behavior of animals in their natural habitat
 - Theory stresses that behavior is:
 - Strongly influenced by biology
 - Tied to evolution
 - Characterized by critical or sensitive periods
- Lorenz's research with Greylag Geese
 - Konrad Lorenz helped bring ethology to prominence
 - John Bowlby - Attachment to a caregiver over the first year of life has important consequences throughout the life span
- Ethological Theory
- Evaluation
 - Contributions include:
 - Focus on the biological and evolutionary basis of development
 - Use of careful observations in naturalistic settings

- Figure 1.10 - Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory of Development
- Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory
- Evaluation
 - Contributions include:
 - Systematic examination of macro and micro dimensions of environmental systems
 - Attention to connections between environmental systems
 - Emphasis on a range of social contexts beyond the family
 - Criticism
 - Giving inadequate attention to biological factors
 - Too little emphasis on cognitive factors
- Eclectic Theoretical Orientation
- Does not follow any one theoretical approach
 - Selects from each theory whatever is considered the best in it
- Research in Life-Span Development

- Methods for collecting data
- Research designs
- Time span of research
- Conducting ethical research

- Methods for Collecting Data
- Observation
 - **Laboratory:** Controlled setting in which many of the complex factors of the real world are removed
 - **Naturalistic observation:** Studies that involve observing behavior in real-world settings
- Survey and interview

- Methods for Collecting Data
- **Standardized test:** Uniform procedures for administration and scoring
- **Case study:** In-depth look at a single individual
- Physiological measures

- Research Designs
- **Descriptive research:** Designed to observe and record behavior
- **Correlational research:** Describe the strength of the relationship between two or more events or characteristics
 - **Correlation coefficient:** A number based on statistical analysis that is used to describe the degree of association between two variables
 - Ranges from -1.00 to +1.00
- Research Designs
- Experimental research
 - **Experiment:** One or more of the factors are manipulated while all other factors are held constant
 - Independent and dependent variables
 - Experimental and control groups
- Figure 1.13 - Principles of Experimental Research
- Time Span of Research

- **Cross-sectional approach:** Individuals of different ages are compared at one time
 - **Longitudinal approach:** Same individuals are studied over a period of time, usually several years or more
 - **Cohort effects:** Due to a person's time of birth, era, or generation rather than the person's actual age
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- Conducting Ethical Research
 - American Psychological Association's ethics guidelines that address:
 - Informed consent
 - Confidentiality
 - Debriefing
 - Deception