

## Developmental Psychology

### Research Methods

*Cross-sectional* = uses participants of different ages to compare how certain variables may change over the lifespan

- Quick results, but cannot affirm effects of historical events or cultural trends

*Longitudinal* = examines one group of participants over time

- Precisely measures effects of development, but consumes time and resources

### Parental Influences on Development

- Genes determine a person's natural reflexes, as well as developing motor skills
- Some genes may or may not be expressed depending circumstances in the newborn environment or during the gestational processes

*Teratogens* = harmful chemicals or agents that are harmful for the mother and can possibly pass through the placenta to the fetus

*Fetal Alcohol Syndrome* = condition where children of alcoholic mothers are born with small, malformed skulls and mental retardation, and may develop learning disabilities or behavioral problems

### Newborn Reflexes

- Past belief held that people were born as blank slates – without skills or reflexes
- Babies exhibit specific reflexes – inborn, automatic responses to certain specific stimuli

*Rooting Reflex* = when touched on the cheek, the baby will turn its head to the side that it felt the touch and seek to put the object into its mouth

*Sucking Reflex* = when an object is placed into the baby's mouth, the baby will suck on it

*Grasping Reflex* = if an object is placed into a baby's palm or foot pad, the baby will try to grasp the object with its fingers or toes

*Moro Reflex* = when startled, a baby will flight its limbs out and quickly retract them, making itself as small as possible

*Babinski Reflex* = when a baby's foot is stroked, the baby will spread the toes

### Newborn Senses

- Minutes after birth, a baby will try to turn its head toward a mother's voice
- Babies have a preference for sugar – preferences in taste and smells develop later on
- Babies can only see 8-12 inches in front of themselves
- Babies prefer looking at symmetrical objects and shapes that look like faces

### Motor Development

- Motor control develops as neurons in brain connect together and become myelinated
- Babies can roll over at about 5 months, stand at 8 months, and walk by 15 months

## Attachment Theory

- Some infant animals imprint on and get attached to individuals or objects
- Harry Harlow showed that monkeys prefer motherly warmth and comfort to food

### Mary Ainsworth's Strange Situation Experiment

Attachment Style	% of Subjects	When Parent is Present	When Parent Leaves	When Parent Returns
Secure	66%	Confidently explores new environment	Distressed and upset	Go to parent and for comfort
Avoidant	21%	Resist parents and explores new environment	Continues exploring environment	Do not go to parent for comfort
Anxious-Ambivalent	12%	Distressed and cannot separate from parents	Show extreme distress	Still upset, resist being comforted

### Parenting Styles

Parenting Style	Strictness	Education	Outcomes
Authoritarian	Strict standards that uphold obedient attitudes more than rationale	Punishment for undesired behavior	Likely to distrust others and are more withdrawn
Authoritative	Consistent standards, but with reason and rationale	Explanations encouraged	More socially capable and perform better academically
Permissive	Loose and unenforced guidelines/rules	Few demands, inconsistent and unpredictable	Likely to have emotional control problems and are more dependent

## **Lev Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development**

*Proximal Stage of Development* = range of tasks a child can perform independently and tasks the child needs assistance with

- Teachers and parents provide scaffolds to help child accomplish task at upper end of zone of proximal development, encouraging further cognitive development

## **Sigmund Freud's Five Psychosexual Stages**

- If we fail to resolve a significant conflict, we become fixated in the stage, becoming preoccupied with behaviors associated with that stage

*Oral Stage* = Infants seek pleasure through their mouths. People fixated at this stage might overeat, smoke, and in general have a childlike dependence on things and people.

*Anal Stage* = Develops during toilet training. If conflict around toilet training arises, a person might fixate and be overly controlling (retentive) or out of control (expulsive).

*Phallic Stage* = Babies realize their gender, causing conflict in the family. In this process, boys experience the Oedipus complex, when boys resent their father's relationship with their mothers. The same process for girls is called the Electra complex. Conflict in this stage could cause later problems in relationships.

*Latency Stage* = At this stage, Freud thought children go through a short latency, or period of calm, and between the ages of six and puberty of low psychosexual anxiety that most psychologists don't regard as a separate stage.

*Genital Stage* = Once they enter the genital stage, adolescents remain at this stage for the rest of their lives. The focus is sexual pleasure on genitals, and to have this fixation is what is considered normal.

## **Lawrence Kohlberg's Three Moral Development Stages**

- Model was based solely on responses of boys

*Preconventional* = Children focus on making the decision most likely to avoid punishment. Their moral reasoning is limited to how the choice affects themselves.

*Conventional* = At this level, children can see past personal gain or loss and look at moral choices through other views. Children in this stage make moral choices based on how others view them, and learn of what is right and wrong from parents, peers, and their surroundings.

*Postconventional* = At the final stage, moral reasoning develops, where a person examines the rights and values involved in a choice. Self-defined ethical principles are utilized, where opposing ideals or thoughts are weighed out to come to a determined conclusion.

## Jean Piaget's Four Cognitive Development Stages

- Schema Creation = formulating patterns of thought or behavior that organizes categories of information
- Assimilation = incorporating experiences into existing schemata
- Accommodation = process by which people alter their existing schemas or create new schemas as a result of new learning
- Many children go through stages faster and enter them earlier than predicted

*Sensorimotor Stage* = From birth to the age of 2, babies explore the world strictly through their senses. First cognitive schemas are developed to explain the processes of the world. *Object permanence* is developed during this period – babies understand that objects exist even if the infants can't see the objects.

*Preoperational Stage* = From ages 2 to 7, toddlers understand real-world symbols and begin using language, which is an essential development at this stage. While children can express their own views, they cannot see the world through other people's perspective, and are thus *egocentric*.

*Concrete Operational Stage* = At ages 5 to 12, children are able to think logically understand complex relationships between different characteristics of objects, and demonstrate knowledge of *concepts of conservation*, such as volume, area, and numbers.

### Concepts of Conservation

Concepts	Description
Volume	The volume of a material is conserved even if the material's container or shape changes
Area	Area is conserved even if objects within that area are rearranged
Number	The number of objects stays the same when the objects are rearranged

*Formal Operational Stage* = From ages of 12 onwards to adulthood, abstract reasoning develops – people can manipulate objects and contrast ideas in the mind without physically seeing the objects. *Hypothesis testing* is such an ability developed at this age, as well as metacognition, which is the ability to think about the way one thinks.

## **Erik Erikson's Eight Psychosocial Stages**

*Trust vs. Mistrust* = Babies' first social experience centers on need fulfillment. Babies learn if they can trust the world/provider can provide for their needs and that their requests (crying, tantrums) are effective.

*Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt* = At this stages, toddlers begin to exert their will over their bodies for the first time. "No," is a favorite word at this time. Toddlers learn to control temper, tantrums, and demonstrate control over themselves and others.

*Initiative vs. Guilt* = At this stage, "Why?" replaces "No!" Once we trust those around us and feel personal control over our own bides, we begin to question and seek understanding of our surroundings. Those who take the initiative and are encouraged flourish, while those who are scolded for their curiosity may feel guilty about asking questions and avoid doing so in the future.

*Industry vs. Inferiority* = At this stage, formal education begins, and children enter school. Whether in the classroom or on the playground, children are often expected to perform well at games and school work. Those we can do these things well are competent and are high in industry, while those who are unable to do so experience inferiority.

*Identity vs. Role Confusion* = During adolescence, people try to understand who they are, the roles they should take, and often spend time with groups to figure themselves out, or take time to look inwards at who they are.

*Intimacy vs. Isolation* = Those who have established stable identities then must figure out how to balance between work (such as careers, school, or self-improvement) and relationships with other people. Common conflicts that arise are family vs. work, platonic vs. romantic relationships, etc.

*Generativity vs. Stagnation* = At this point, people begin to look critically at their life paths. People want to make sure they are creating the type of life they want for themselves, and do so by seizing control of their lives to ensure things go as they plan. This stage is often identified by people doing what they can do ensure that their lives are going the way they want them to go.

*Integrity vs. Despair* = The last stage comes towards the end of a person's life, where they look back at what they've done, and assess their accomplishments and failures, and whether they are satisfied with their lives or not.