



# Developmental Psychology TFL 215

## Introduction



Psychology is a science of cognition and behavior



# Cognition

- Emotions and feelings
- Senses and perceptions
- Thinking and language
- Motives and will power
- Attention
- Memory

□ And BEHAVIOR

- Psychology as a science studies how behavior grows and develops from infancy to old age and also studies behavioral differences between people



# Developmental psychology

Is the study of physical and mental growth and behavioral changes in individuals from conception to death.

The approach is life-span development

Main Idea

The field of developmental psychology examines physical, social, personality and cognitive development. Heredity and environment control different aspects of development to varying degrees.



# Development includes the changes in



- Physical (bodily features, weight, height, refinement of motor behavior)
- Cognitive (thinking, memory, language, problem solving)
- Personality (emotions, temperament, crises)
- Social (functioning in society)

characteristics of the individual over time.



# Video illustration



- Emotional development in children
- Marshmallow experiment
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QXoy9614HQ&ab\\_channel=IgniterMedia](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QXoy9614HQ&ab_channel=IgniterMedia)



# Video illustration



- Cognitive development in children
- Conservation tasks
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g\\_nArvcWaH6I&ab\\_channel=munakatay](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g_nArvcWaH6I&ab_channel=munakatay)



# Scope of Life Span Development

- a) **Physical Development:** Physical development includes how our brain, nervous system, muscles and sense organs influence our development. Our biological needs such as the need for food, hunger, drink, sleep, etc., influence and shape our behaviour. It also studies how malnutrition influence human growth, how one's physical performance declines as one ages, etc.





b) **Cognitive Development**: It studies how growth and changes influence intellectual capabilities. Cognitive developmentalists examine how learning, memory, problem solving and intelligence influence our development.

- c) **Personality and social development**: Personality development is the study of stability and change in the characteristics that differentiate one person from another over the life span. Social development is concerned with the ways in which individuals interactions and relationships with others grow, change and remain stable over the course of life.



# Age Ranges and Individual Differences with respect to Development



- Our life span is divided into following broad age ranges.
- 1) The Prenatal Period (from conception to birth)
- 2) Infancy and Toddlerhood (birth to three years)
- 3) The Preschool Period (3 to 6 years)
- 4) Middle Childhood (6 to 12 years)
- 5) Adolescence (12 to 20 years)
- 6) Young Adulthood (20 to 40 years)
- 7) Middle Adulthood (40 to 65 years)
- 8) Late Adulthood (65 to Death)



# Historical Foundations: Plato vs. Aristotle



**Plato** emphasized self-control and discipline

**Aristotle** was concerned with fitting child rearing to the needs of the individual child

**Plato** believed that children are born with innate knowledge

**Aristotle** believed that knowledge comes from experience



# Historical Foundations: Later Philosophers



The English philosopher **John Locke**, like Aristotle, saw the child as a *tabula rasa* and advocated first instilling discipline, then gradually increasing the child's freedom

**Jean-Jacques Rousseau**, the French philosopher, argued that parents and society should give the child maximum freedom from the beginning



# Historical Foundations: Research-Based Approach



Emerged in the nineteenth century **Social reform movements established** a research conducted for the benefit of children; provided some of the earliest descriptions of the adverse effects that harsh environments can have on child development



# Research Methods

## Cross-Sectional Studies

- Participants of different ages studied at the same time.

## Longitudinal Studies

- One group of people studied over a period of time.



# Three big issues about Human Development

I Nature or Nurture play a larger role in shaping our lives?

II We remain the same person throughout life with stable characteristics or they change as we develop?

III Human Development occurs gradually or it proceeds in leaps and bounds, in stages which are essentially different from each other?



# Fundamental Issues: Nature vs. Nurture

- What is role of heredity vs. environment in determining psychological makeup?
  - Is IQ inherited or determined early environment?
  - Is there a 'criminal' gene?
  - Is sexual orientation a choice or genetically determined?
- These are some of our greatest societal debates





# Fundamental Issues: Is Development Continuous?

- Development means change; change can be abrupt or gradual
- Two views of human development
  - stage theories: there are distinct phases to intellectual and personality development
  - continuity: development is continuous



# Seminar discussion

1. What is Developmental Psychology ? Its goals and major issues.
2. How can Developmental Psychology contribute to teaching?
3. Compare longitudinal and cross-sectional research methods. Give examples from internet.
4. Explain qualitative and quantitative changes that we have in our life. Illustrate with 5 examples for each change. Which do you think are more important?
5. Explain the process of continuity and discontinuity in our development. Which do you agree more?



# Reflection journal task 1



- Consider your own development since you were a youngster. Which of your characteristics show **continuity** across your life? Are there characteristics that have changed? If so, what were the circumstances for the change?
- Write between 150-200 words.
- **Developmental and Educational Psychology for Teachers**  
. Ch. 1,(pp. 1-18)

