LIFESPAN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW
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Development: Why Study?
- For policy purposes – to propose new legislation.
- To change our perception and knowledge about the way we see or do things.
- To educate the public.
- To advance the species.
- To evolve to a higher consciousness.
- To understand how to properly maintain our bodies.
- To develop good human relationships.

Development: Why Study?
- To learn effective parenting skills and marital relationship skills.
- To monitor shortfalls in development.
- For the guidelines provided.
- For the structure it can bring to our lives.
- To develop a utopian model.
- To facilitate future development.
- To enable the production of stronger, brighter generations in the future.
- To create supportive developmental programs to assist with improving quality of life.

Development: Why Study?
- To study what hinders and advances development.
- For improvement.
- For better interaction.
- For survival.
- To learn from the past.
- To identify patterns.
To make better parents.
To become well-rounded.
To make us more acceptable of change.
To gain knowledge of others.

DEVELOPMENT: Significant Impacts
   (Medical, Economic, Educational, Social, Environmental, Political, Media)

MEDICAL IMPACTS

Medical: Positive Impacts

- Advances in medicine.
- Antibiotics has strengthened humans’ immune system.
- Our knowledge and understanding about health basics and how to maintain our body systems has improved quality of life.
- Welfare, food stamps, free medical screenings, Medicaid

Medical: Negative Impacts

- Lack of the availability of healthcare
  - Stunts development
  - Decreases lifespan
  - Promotes birth defects
  - Contributes to future defective generations
  - Leads to death. May be genocidal.
  - Provides no prenatal care
  - Leads to intellectual impairment, learning deficits

Medical: Negative Impacts

- Susceptibility to disease
- Poor immune system

- Poor health leads to inability to work
- Affects psychological perspective – may lead to psychological trauma
- Diseases like AIDS cripples future development leads to defective generations and may even eradicate future generations
- Skyrocketing health care costs
- Health insurance costs cause cutbacks.

**ECONOMIC IMPACTS**

- Lack of job leads to:
  - stress
  - poor health
  - heart disease
  - stroke
  - family dissolution
  - children in poverty
  - homelessness

**Economic Impacts**

- Shifts national expenditures → diverts monies for crises and social ills.
- Impacts elderly.
- Leads to domestic violence & child abuse.
- A poor labor market status, sporadic employment and income.
- Families cannot advance future generations nor prepare for their economic futures due to lack of economic resources.

**Educational Impacts**

- Cannot meet children’s social, education, health, or other needs.
- Stunts development overall because offspring cannot make growth.

**Less illiteracy**

**Mandatory schooling**

- Should make schooling mandatory to at least a 2 year or technical degree. A bachelor’s degree would be preferable

**Teaching tolerance → e.g., mainstreaming, special education**

**Educational Impacts - Negative**
- Can't advance the species
- Lack of emphasis on the importance of continual development and advancement of gifted children will lead to mediocre future generations.
- Perpetuating ignorance.
- Impacts all aspects of development.

**Educational Impacts - Negative**
- Contributes to social ills and crime.
- Tracking system.
- Absence of moral education and spiritual development destroying the core of man.
- Spiritual development = emotional wholeness, peace, moral and ethical sense (strong sense of self).
- Underpaid teachers, less experienced teachers.
- Lack of funding for arts programs.

**Social Impacts**
- Social problems such as unemployment and a poor labor market position can lead to:
  - Family dissolution/lack of family unity
  - Inhibits family formation
  - Increase in mortality and death rates
  - Causes political upheaval
  - Destruction of self and others

**Social Impacts**
- Destruction of social and moral fiber
- Increase in crime
- Suffering causes psychological bitterness, resentment and hatred (not character)
- Impact of TV leads to violence and aggression
- Sexual crimes lead to abuse toward women – to pornography – to rapes, etc.
- Media exposing “dirty deeds” promoting wrong models

**Political Impacts**
Ignorance of policymakers and legislation developed can have a significant impact on people’s quality of life.

Special interests and lobbying groups with the concept of “win at all cost” may push for policies that have devastating effects on human life.

Difficulty in finding a balance in creating appropriate legislation.

Environmental Impacts

- Air pollution/air quality
- Chemicals
- Impure water systems
- Smoking
- Leads to allergies, immune disorders, chronic diseases, miscarriages, stress, intellectual impairment

Introduction to Development: What is Development?

Definitions and Descriptions

Definitions

- Focuses on changes that normally occur in body, thought, emotions, and behavior over the course of a lifetime.
- The focus is on the cumulative effects of changes across the lifespan, the overall context in which change occurs, and the degree of change occurring at any age.
- Scientific study of how people grow and change from conception to moment of death.

Definitions

- Includes a multicultural perspective and an understanding of how culture may influence development (values, beliefs, and behaviors).
- Different people have different worldviews, based on their experiences and exposure, that may influence their thinking.
- But, people from different cultures do not all think or behave alike.
Education contributes significantly to development. When you stop learning, you stop living and developing.

Definitions
Development is the key of life.

Human development encompasses physical development (changes in the body), personal development (changes in personality), cognitive development (changes in thinking), social development (the way an individual relates to others), and maturation (changes occurring naturally and spontaneously and are genetically programmed).

Definitions
Education contributes significantly to our development. You invest in your development through education. We must have a base of education. Learning contributes to the physiological development of the body. Learning directly results in the development of synapses and dendrites in the brain and the development of protein. Brain cells change when we learn and the brain becomes larger.

Three Important Principles About Development:

1. People develop at different rates.
2. Development is relatively orderly. People tend to develop certain abilities before others.
3. Development takes place gradually and over time.

Role of Developmental Psychologists
To formulate accurate descriptions. They draw on their own work and the work of anthropologists, biologists, sociologists and specialists from every field of psychology.

Study human development across the lifespan, from the fetus and newborns to the elderly. Many are specialists. Others are generalists.

Role of Developmental Psychologists
Information and research aids grandparents better relate to grandchildren, parents relate to children, college students relate to siblings, parents, etc.

Employed in academic settings, teaching, doing research. Often consult in daycare centers, preschool, hospitals, clinics.
**Role of Developmental Psychologists**

- Evaluate intervention programs such as Head Start and Follow-Through.
- Provide other direct services to children and families.
- Some focus on problems of aging and work in programs targeted at older populations.
- Graduates with bachelor’s and master’s degrees work in applied settings, e.g., daycare, youth programs.

**Early Studies**

- Maturation and learning.
- Swimming behavior in tadpoles.
- Prenatal behavior.
- Maturation and locomotor behavior (Hopi Indian babies).
- Critical periods in development.

**Current Questions**

- How can we best understand the rich multicultural backgrounds of our changing population?
- What will be the long term impact of daycare on children who are placed in centers soon after birth?
- How does homelessness affect children’s development?

**Developmental Questions From Different Fields and Areas of Psychology**

- **Anthropology:** Is development the same in all cultures?
- **Biology:** How do genes influence development?
- **Clinical Psych:** Why are some people more susceptible to mental illness?
- **Industrial Psych:** What role does job satisfaction play in adult development?
- **Intelligence:** Are declines in intelligence in old age substantial? Can these declines be reversed?
- **Linguistics:** Are children better than adults at learning language?
- **Memory:** Why are adults able to remember more than children?
- **Perception:** How does our ability to perceive the world change with age?
- **Personality:** How does personality change over the lifespan?
- **Physiological**: How do brain development and hormonal changes affect psychological development?

- **Developmental Questions From Different Fields and Areas of Psychology**

- **Social Psych**: How do parents and peers shape values? What affects sex-role development?

- **Sociology**: Do different social groups experience the same patterns of development?