

Study Unit 1 - Chapter 1 - Topic 1

What is Life-Span Development?

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Learning Outcomes

At the end of the study topic, you will be able to:



- Define life-span development
- List the characteristics of life-span perspective
- Recognise the developmental process, periods, and the main issues of life-span perspective
- Apply the principles in life-span development to enhance the understanding of clients from the various age groups (birth to adolescence)

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Life-Span Development

- The traditional approach to the study of human growth and development emphasises extensive changes from birth to adolescence, little or no change in adulthood, and decline in old age.
- Contemporary scientists, however, recognise that human development actually occurs throughout life.
- The concept of a lifelong process of development that can be scientifically studied is known as **life-span development**.
- Life-span development is the **pattern of change, growth and decline** from birth to old age.

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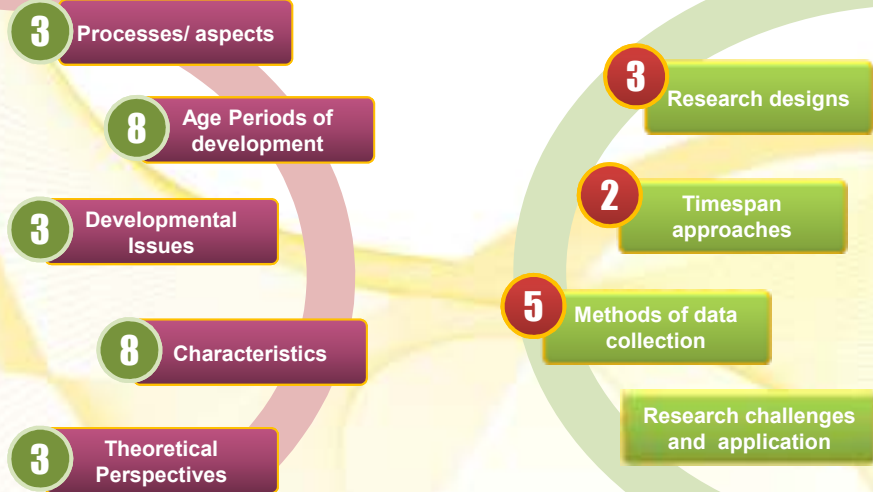
Issues of Life-Span Development

- There are different :



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Overview of Life-span Development Studies



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Developmental Processes



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Biological Processes

Biological



- Biological processes refer to changes in an individual's physical development.
- The development of the brain, height and weight gains, changes in motor skills, the hormonal changes of puberty, and cardiovascular decline – all reflect the role of biological processes in development.
- One area of biological research with immense importance for development seeks to slow the aging process and extend the human life span.
- Can you think of some examples?

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Cognitive Processes

Cognitive



- Cognitive processes refer to changes in the individual's thought, intelligence and language.
Watching a colourful mobile swinging above the baby cot, putting together two-word sentences, memorising a poem, imagining what it would be like to be an Oscar winner, solving a complex problem at the workplace - all involve cognitive processes.
Can you list some activities in the past six hours that involve cognitive processes (besides reading up on this course)?

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Socioemotional Processes

Socioemotional

3



- Socioemotional processes refer to changes in the individual's relationships with other people, changes in emotions, and changes in personality.

An infant's smile in response to her mother's touch, a young boy's aggressive attack on a playmate, a girl's development of assertiveness, an adolescent's joy at the senior prom, and the affection of an elderly couple – all reflect the role of socioemotional processes in life span development.

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Relationship Between the 3 Processes



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Eight Age Periods (time frame)

Pre – natal	Conception to birth
Infancy	Birth – 18 - 24 months
Early childhood	2 - 5 years
Middle and Late childhood	6 - 11 years
Adolescence	10-12 to 18-21 years
Early adulthood	20s and 30s
Middle adulthood	35 - 45 yrs to 60s
Late adulthood	60s and 70s

- The unfolding of life's 8 age periods of development is influenced by the interaction of biological, cognitive, and socioemotional processes

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Non-chronological Related Periods... Hoyer & Roodin (2003)

- **Chronological age**
 - The number of years that have elapsed since birth. Some developmentalists argue that chronological age is not very relevant to understanding a person's psychological development (Botwinick, 1978).
- **Biological age**
 - A person's age in terms of biological health. The younger the person's biological age, the longer the person is expected to live, regardless of chronological age.
- **Psychological age**
 - Based on adaptive capabilities
 - Refers to the perceptions, emotional and social adjustments of a person
- **Social age**
 - Based on roles and expectations related to a person's age
 - Tied in the societal norms and beliefs
 - For instance, the social behaviour of a 30-year-old woman who is a home maker and the mother of a 3-year-old child would be different from that of another 30-year-old woman who is a single lady and a professional devoted to her career.

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Reflection - Mark your Significant Milestones

On a sheet of paper, draw a similar time line and mark your **Significant Milestones** from birth till now. Note age above the line, and the event below.

0 yrs

Now



- What can you say about who you are as a person from looking at the your **Significant Milestones** from birth till now?
- Do you think there is a best age to be? Why do you say so?

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Eight Characteristics of Life-Span Development

Tabs - 9 Tabs (including Introduction)

Last Modified: Sep 02, 2014 at 04:28 PM

The image shows a screenshot of a presentation slide. On the left side, there is a thumbnail of the slide itself, labeled 'Image 2', with three tabs below it. The main content of the slide is as follows:

Three Developmental Issues

Tabs - 3 Tabs

Last Modified: Sep 01, 2014 at 05:30 PM

Reflective Questions

Knowing that there are changes throughout life-span, what are the implications in different stages of our lives?

- Can early childhood deprivations be compensated?
- Can stroke patients regain mental functioning?
- Can older people learn new skills?
- Imagine what your development would have been like in a culture that offered fewer or distinctly different choices than your own. How might your development have been different if your family had been significantly richer or poorer than it was?

Explanation

Click the button to listen to the explanation.

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Reflective Questions- Explanation

Knowing that there are changes throughout life-span, what are the implications in different stages of our lives?



- Can early childhood deprivations be compensated?
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Why Do We Need To Know These?



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Introduction
Select either 'True' or 'False' by clicking on the radio buttons. Then click the 'Submit' button.
There are generally eight key periods of development.

True
 False

Self-Test

Quiz - 4 questions

Last Modified: Sep 01, 2014 at 05:29 PM

PROPERTIES


On passing, 'Finish' button: [Goes to Next Slide](#)


On failing, 'Finish' button: [Goes to Next Slide](#)

Allow user to leave quiz: [After user has completed quiz](#)

User may view slides after quiz: [At any time](#)

Show in menu as: [Multiple items](#)

 Edit in Quizmaker

 Edit Properties

Summary

In this topic, you learnt that:

- Life-span development concerns with the changes, growth, and decline from birth to old age.
- Development always revolved around three aspects/processes; i.e. biological, cognitive, and socioemotional.
- There are eight general stages of life development in human.
- The life-span development perspective is characterised by 8 important characteristics of development, such as lifelong plasticity.
- There are three main issues of development.

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References and Additional Learning Resources



- Santrock, J. W. (2013). Life-Span Development (14th Edition), McGraw-Hill International. (Chapter 1)
- Note: All references not listed here are based on the text in Santrock (2013).

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Credits

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