**HNS 106; HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY AND COUNSELLING**

**COURSE INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to course HNS 106 where we will learn about psychology. The course is arranged into eleven sections with activities, in-text questions, assignments, take notes, review questions and self-test at the end of the course. The sections are:

Section One: Concepts of psychology

Section Two: Biopsychology

Section Three: Human Growth and development

Section Four: Learning and cognition

Section Five: Personality development

Section Six: Motivation and Emotion

Section Seven: Health and adjustment

Section Eight: Social psychology

Section Nine: Therapeutic communication

Section Ten: Psychopathology

Section Eleven: Counselling

By the end of this course, you should be able to: -

1. Describe concepts in psychology
2. Describe the influence of neurotransmitters and the brain in thinking, emotion and behavior.
3. Describe human growth and development
4. Describe human learning and cognition
5. Describe theories of personality development
6. Discuss the theories of motivation and emotion
7. Describe health and its adjustment
8. Describe social psychology in individuals, families and community
9. Describe the process of therapeutic communication in nursing
10. Describe various psychopathologies
11. Explain application of counselling skills in the management of clients.

**SECTION ONE: CONCEPTS IN PSYCHOLOGY**

**1.0 Section Outline**

* 1. Introduction
  2. Section objectives
  3. Definition of psychology
  4. Perspectives of psychology
  5. Nature of psychology
  6. Goals of psychology
  7. Influence of research on psychology
  8. School of thoughts in psychology
  9. Relevance of psychology in health care
  10. Summary
  11. Review questions

**1.1 Introduction**

Welcome to section one of this course. Here you will learn the basic concepts of psychology. This will form the foundation of your study. We all use the principles of psychology everyday and probably don’t even realize it. When we praise our child for doing well in school, we are utilizing the learning principle of reinforcement. When we get nervous just before being ushered into the interview room, we are activating our autonomic nervous system. When we engage in self-talk in our minds, urging oneself to "relax," "try harder," or "give up," we are utilizing cognitive approaches to modify our emotions and actions.

At the end of this section you should be able to:

1. Define the term psychology
2. Outline perspectives of psychology
3. Explain the nature of psychology
4. Explain the goals of psychology
5. Explain the influence of research in psychology
6. Describe various schools of thought in psychology
7. Outline relevance of psychology in health care

Psychology is defined as scientific study of the mind ie cognitions, emotions, and behaviors. The term Psychology is derived from two Greek words psyche, meaning the mind and logos signifying a logical course of study. Definition of psychology is organized in terms of the study of mental processes (cognitions and feelings) and observable behaviors.

**1.3 Perspectives of psychology**

**Table 1: Types of perspectives of psychology**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **S/NO** | **Type of Perspective** | **Description of perspective** |
| 1 | Biological perspective | It is an orientation towards understanding the neurobiological processes that underlie mental processes and behavior. |
| 2 | Behavioral perspective | An orientation towards understanding observable behavior in terms of conditioning and reinforcements |
| 3 | Cognitive perspective | These are psychological orientations toward understanding mental processes such as perceiving, remembering, reasoning, deciding and problem solving and their relationship to behavior. |
| 4 | Psychoanalytic perspective | This perspective strives to understand observable behavior in terms of unconscious motives stemming from sexual and aggressive impulses. |
| 5 | Subjectivist perspective | These are psychological orientations toward understanding observable behavior and mental processes in terms of subjective realities people actively construct. |

I hope you have understood the various types of perspectives in psychology and their description. Let us now address the next objective, which is on the nature of psychology.

**1.4 Nature of psychology**

It is an appreciated reality that psychology is a science. This fact has been established and accepted by eminent psychologists, thinkers and researchers in psychology. This can also be inferred from the definition of psychology, in terms of the scientific study or science of the mind and behaviour. Let’s however try to analyze why psychology should be called a science.

1. Psychology possesses a body of knowledge based on scientifically derived empirical facts which can be supported through universal laws and principles.
2. It emphasizes systematic and scientific search for truth.
3. It does not believe in hearsay, stereotypes or superstition.
4. It believes in scientific cause and effect relationships.
5. It adopts the method of objective investigations, systemic and controlled observation and a scientific approach.
6. Psychology stands for logical generalization, verifiability and modification of observed results or deduced phenomena
7. Helps in predicting future developments, and
8. Psychologists are able to turn psychological theories into practice through application

**1.5 Goals of psychology**

**Psychology as a science aims at making an impact on human existence through it,s goals as follows;**

i) . **Describe** – The first goal is to observe behavior and describe, often in minute detail, what was observed as objectively as possible

Ii). **Explain** – While descriptions come from observable data, psychologists must go beyond what is obvious and explain their observations. In other words, why did the subject do what he or she did?

3iii). **Predict** – Once we know what happens, and why it happens, we can begin to speculate what will happen in the future. There’s an old saying, which very often holds true: "the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior."

iv). **Control** – Once we know what happens, why it happens and what is likely to happen in the future, we can excerpt control over it. In other words, if we know you choose abusive partners because your father was abusive, we can assume you will choose another abusive partner, and can therefore intervene to change this negative behavior.

v). **Improve** – Not only do psychologists attempt to control behavior, they want to do so in a positive manner, they want to improve a person’s life, not make it worse. This may not always be fully achieved, but should always be the intention.

**1.6 Influence of Research on Psychology**

Psychology is a social science as opposed to being a pure science. This is because it deals with human thoughts, emotions, and actions. As we are all aware, humans are not always predictable.  Instead, we interact with our environment in ways that alter how wethink, feel and behave.  If one aspect changes in the environment, there will be the domino effect which can result in alterations of many other dimensions. Nevertheless, research plays an extremely important role in psychology.

Research assists us to understand what makes people think, feel, and behave in certain ways. It also allows us to classify psychological disorders in order to understand the symptoms and impact on the individual and society. Additionally, psychological research assists us to understand how intimate relationships, development, schools, family, peers, and religion affect us as individuals and as a society. Development of appropriate interventions to improve the quality of life of individuals and families ans communities are based on knowledge derived from research.

Psychological research is typically used for the following:

1. Study development and external factors and the role they play on individuals' mental health
2. Study people with specific psychological disorders, symptoms, or characteristics
3. Develop tests to measure specific psychological phenomenon
4. Develop treatment approaches to improve individuals' mental health

**1.7; Schools of thought in Psychology**

Over the years, schools of thought with their various viewpoints on basic tenets of psychology have emerged. Many more are at their various stages of development and evolution, however, only a few are presented in this section as follows;

**Nature-nurture debate of psychology**

The nature-nurture debate centres on the question of whether human capabilities are inborn or acquired. The nature perspective holds that human beings enter the world with an inborn store of knowledge, capabilities and understanding of reality. Early philosophers believed that this knowledge and capabilities could be accessed through careful reasoning and introspection.

Descartes supported the nature view by arguing that some ideas (such as God, the self, geometric axioms, perfections and infinity) are innate. Descartes is also notable for his conception of the body as a machine that can be studied much as other machines are studied. This is the root of modern information-processing perspectives on the mind.

The nurture school of thought holds that knowledge is acquired through experiences and interactions with the world. Although some of the early Greek philosophers had this opinion, it is most strongly associated with the 17th century English philosopher John Locke. According to Locke, at birth the human mind is tabula rasa, a blank slate on which experience ‘writes’ knowledge and understanding as the individual matures.

This perspective gave birth to associationist psychology. Associationists denied that there were inborn ideas or capabilities. Instead, they argued that the mind is filled with ideas that enter by way of the senses and then become associated through principles such as similarity and contrasts. Current research on memory and learning is related to early association theory.

The classic nature-nurture debate has become much more nuanced in recent decades. Although some psychologists still argue that human thought and behaviour result primarily from experience, most psychologists take a more eclectic approach. They acknowledge that biological processes (such as hereditary processes in the brain) affect thoughts, feelings, and behaviour, but say that experience leaves its mark, too. So the current question is not whether nature or nurture shapes human growth and development but rather how nature and nurture combine to do so.

**Structuralism and functionalism**

This is a branch f psychology describing the analysis of mental structures, while functionalism is the study of how the mind works to enable an organism to adapt to and function in its environment.

Now attempt the following question

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Intext Question | **In text question 1.2**  What are the proponents and opponents of structuralism and functionalism in psychology? |

Congratulations compare your response with what is provided below:

**Behaviorism**

Watson and others ascribing to behaviourism argued that nearly all behaviour is as a result of conditioning and environment shapes behaviour by reinforcing specific habits.

**Gestalt psychology**

Gestalt psychologists’ primary interest was perception, and they believed that perceptual experiences depend on the patterns formed by stimuli and organization of experience.

**Psychoanalysis**

Psychoanalysis with it,s contributions to theories of personality and techniques in psychotherapy has it’s origins from Sigmund Freud around the turn of the 20th century. At the centre of Freud’s theory is the concept of the unconscious thoughts, attitudes, impulses, wishes, motivations and emotions of which we are unaware about.

**1.8 Relevance of psychology in health care**

The significance of psychology in health care includes;

1. Psychological techniques are used in establishing therapeutic patient-clinicial relationships
2. Psychological interventions are utilized in management of psychosomatic and psychiatric illnesses.
3. Facilitates professional relationship among health care workers.
4. Psychological techniques are used in the implementation of family and community programmes.

Good! This is the end of this section; let’s now sum

**1.9 Review Questions**

1. Define psychology
2. State five functions of the perceptual system
3. Explain biological perspective of psychology
4. Outline significance of psychology in nursing practice

Describe consciousness

**SECTION TWO: BIOPSYCHOLOGY**

**2.0: Section outline**

2.1: Introduction

2.2: Section objectives

2.3: Neurotransmitters

2.4: Brain and Nervous System

2.5: Summary

2.6: Review Questions

**2.1: Introduction**

Research in psychology, physiology and pathophysiology has revealed intricate mind and body connections.Most experts in the field of psychology and biology agree that the mind and the body are connected in more complex ways than we can even comprehend. Research constantly shows us that the way we think affects the way we behave, the way we feel, and the way our bodies respond. The opposite is also true, physical illness, physical exhilaration, exercising, insomnia all affect the way we feel and behave, but also the way we think about ourselves and the world.

Let us now look at the objectives that we will achieve in this section

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Aim or Objective | **2.2 Section Objectives**  At the end of this section you should be able to:   1. Explain the mind- body connection 2. Explain the influence of various neurotransmitters on thinking, emotions and behavior 3. Explain the influence of specific parts of the brain on cognitions, feelings and behavior. |

**2.3: Neurotransmitters**

The communication system in our bodies comprises of both structural and chemical components. The structural component comprises of neurons, spinal cord, brain and receptors in various body tissues. The chemical component comprises of several neurotransmitters including hormonal and other chemical substances.

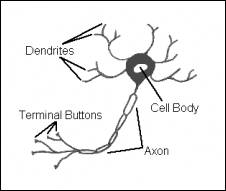
A Neuron is a specialized nerve cell that receives, processes, and transmits information to other cells in the body. It is the basic communication structure in the body and is non-regenerative.

Let’s look at activity 2.1 and attempt to answer it.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Activity | **Activity 2.1**  Draw and label a neuron. |

That is a good attempt!

Information comes into the neuron through the dendrites from other neurons. It then continues to the Cell Body – (soma) which is the main part of the neuron, which contains the nucleus and maintains the life sustaining functions of the neuron. The soma processes information and then passes it along the Axon. At the end of the axon are bulb-like structures called Terminal Buttons that pass the information on to glands, muscles, or other neurons.



Information is carried by biochemical substances called [neurotransmitters](http://allpsych.com/dictionary/n.html), which we will talk about in more detail shortly. The terminal buttons and the dendrites of other neurons do not touch, but instead pass the information containing neurotransmitters through a Synapse. Once the neurotransmitter leaves the axon, and passes through the synapse, it is caught on the dendrite by what are termed Receptor Sites.

Neurotransmitters have been studied extensively in relation to psychology and human behavior. Research has established that several neurotransmitters play a role in the way we think, learn, sleep, feel and behave. Some have been associated with etiology, remission and exacerbation of mental illnesses. The following are neurotransmitters that have been associated with mental health issues;

Acetylcholine – involved in voluntary movement, learning, memory, and sleep; too much acetylcholine is associated with depression, and too little in the hippocampus has been associated with dementia.

Dopamine – correlated with movement, attention, and learning; too much dopamine has been associated with schizophrenia, and too little is associated with some forms of depression as well as the muscular rigidity and tremors found in Parkinson’s disease.

Norepinephrine – associated with eating, alertness; too little norepinephrine has been associated with depression, while an excess has been associated with schizophrenia.

Epinephrine – involved in energy, and glucose metabolism; too little epinephrine has been associated with depression.

Serotonin – plays a role in mood, sleep, appetite, and impulsive and aggressive behavior; too little serotonin is associated with depression and some anxiety disorders, especially obsessive-compulsive disorder. Some antidepressant medications increase the availability of serotonin at the receptor sites.

GABA (Gamma-Amino Butyric Acid) – inhibits excitation and anxiety; too little GABA is associated with anxiety and anxiety disorders. Some antianxiety medication increases GABA at the receptor sites.

Endorphins – involved in pain relief and feelings of pleasure and contentedness

Please note that these associations are merely correlations, and do not necessarily demonstrate any cause and effect relationship. We don’t know what other variables may be affecting both the neurotransmitter and the mental illness, and we don’t know if the change in the neurotransmitter causes the illness, or the illness causes the change in the neurotransmitter.

**2.4: Brain and Nervous System**

The nervous system is broken down into two major systems: Central Nervous System (CNS) and Peripheral Nervous System (PNS). We’ll discuss the Central Nervous System first.

The Central Nervous System consists of the brain and the spinal cord. The Cerebral Cortex, which is involved in a variety of higher cognitive, emotional, sensory, and motor functions is more developed in humans than any other animal. The brain is divided into two symmetrical hemispheres: left (language, the ‘rational’ half of the brain, associated with analytical thinking and logical abilities) and right (more involved with musical and artistic abilities). The brain is also divided into four lobes:

i) Frontal – (motor cortex) motor behavior, expressive language, higher level cognitive processes, and orientation to person, place, time, and situation

ii) Parietal – (somatosensory Cortex) involved in the processing of touch, pressure, temperature, and pain

iii) Occipital – (visual cortex) interpretation of visual information

iv) Temporal – (auditory cortex) receptive language (understanding language), as well as memory and emotion

Typically, the brain and spinal cord act together, but there are some actions, such as those associated with pain, where the spinal cord acts even before the information enters the brain for processing. The spinal cord consists of the Brainstem which is involved in life sustaining functions. Damage to the brainstem is very often fatal. Other parts of the brainstem include the Medulla Oblongata, which controls heartbeat, breathing, blood pressure, digestion; Reticular Activating System (Reticular Formation), involved in arousal and attention, sleep and wakefulness, and control of reflexes; Pons – regulates states of arousal, including sleep and dreaming.

Good! Now attempt the question below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Intext Question | **In text Question 2.2**  What is the relationship between neurotransmitters and the brain in influencing thinking, feeling and behavior? |

Cerebellum – balance, smooth movement, and posture

Thalamus – "central switching station" – relays incoming sensory information (except olfactory) to the brain

Hypothalamus – controls the autonomic nervous system, and therefore maintains the body’s homeostasis, which we will discuss later (controls body temperature, metabolism, and appetite. Translates extreme emotions into physical responses.

Limbic System – emotional expression, particularly the emotional component of behavior, memory, and motivation

Amygdala – attaches emotional significance to information and mediates both defensive and aggressive behavior

Hippocampus – involved more in memory, and the transfer of information from short-term to long-term memory

 The Peripheral Nervous System is divided into two sub-systems.  The Somatic Nervous System – primary function is to regulate the actions of the skeletal muscles. It is oftenly regarded as the mediator of voluntary activity.  The other sub-system, called the Autonomic Nervous System, primarily regulates involuntary activity such as heart rate, breathing, blood pressure, and digestion.  Although these activities are considered involuntary, they can be altered either through specific events or through changing our perceptions about a specific experience or stimulus.  This system is further broken down into two complimentary systems:  Sympathetic and Parasympathetic Nervous Systems.

The Sympathetic Nervous System controls what has been called the "Fight or Flight" phenomenon because of its control over the necessary bodily changes needed when we are faced with a situation where we may need to defend ourselves or escape.  Imagine walking down a dark street at night by yourself.  Suddenly you see two menacing men approaching you rapidly.  What happens?

Your Sympathetic Nervous System kicks in to prepare your body: your heart rate quickens to get more blood to the muscles, your breathing becomes faster and deeper to increase your oxygen, blood flow is diverted from the organs so digestion is reduced and the skin gets cold and clammy, and your pupils dilate for better vision.  In an instant, your body is prepared to either to defend yourself or escape.

Now imagine that the two men are your brother and his friend who catches up to you and offers to walk you home.  You feel relief instantly, but your body takes longer to adjust.  In order to return everything to normal, the Parasympathetic Nervous System kicks in.  This system is slow acting, unlike its counterpart, and may take several minutes or even longer to get your body back to where it was before the scare. These two subsystems are at work constantly shifting your body to more prepared states and more relaxed states.

Good! This brings us to the end of this section and before we continue let’s look at the summary for this section.

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| --- | --- |
| Summary | **2.5 Summary**  The communication system in our body comprises of both structural and chemical components. The structural component comprises of neurons, spinal cord, brain and receptors in various body tissues. The chemical component comprises of several neurotransmitters including hormonal and other chemical substances. The neurotransmitters and brain have significant influence in initiation and perpetuation of certain patterns of thinking, emotions and behavior. |

Well done for reaching this far with your studies. Please attempt the following review questions.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Activity | **2.6Review Questions**  1.Outline the components of the communication system of the body  2. Explain the role of amygdala in regulation of behavior.  3. Describe the influence of endorphins on behavior. |

**SECTION THREE: HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVLOPMENT**

**3.0 Section Outline**

3.1. Introduction

* 1. 3.2. Section objectives
  2. 3.3Definitions of growth and development
  3. 3.4Principles of developmental process
  4. 3.5Processes of human development
  5. 3.6Motor development in infants and children
  6. 3.7Cognitive development in children
  7. 3.8Theories of psychosocial and sexual development
  8. 3.9Summary
  9. 3.10Review questions

**2.1 Introduction**

Welcome to this section where you will learn about human growth and development. We will briefly look at the basic principles of growth and development processes across life span. We will also look at some theories of growth and development.

Let us look at the section objectives

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| --- | --- |
| Aim or Objective | **2.2 Section Objectives**  By the end of this section you should be able to: -   1. Distinguish between growth and development 2. Describe the basic principles of developmental process 3. Explain human developmental processes 4. Describe theories of psychosocial and sexual development |

We will begin by defining growth and development.

**2.3 Definitions of Growth and development**

The processes of growth and development are the medium and means for bringing about changes in organisms. The nature of structural and functional changes in various dimensions of an individual’s personality and existence are qualitative and quantitative.

**Growth** is the progressive increase in the size of a child or part of the child. The changes are quantitative in nature including increase in size, length, height, and weight etc. **Development** is progressive increase in complexity of a child, hence the changes are qualitative in nature including acquisition of various skills (abilities) such as head support, speaking, learning, expressing the feelings and relating with other people.

Let’s look at activity 2.1 and attempt to answer it.

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| --- | --- |
| Activity | **Activity 2.1**  List six qualitative changes occurring during human growth and development |

Thanks a lot for taking time to attempt this activity.

Development is a process and therefore there are basic principles guiding this process.

**2.4 Principles of developmental process**

Although development is an individual and unique phenomenon, it has been found to follow a logical and sequential pattern from conception onwards. When discussing any type of development, most researchers and theorists break it down into specific stages.  These stages are typically progressive.  In other words, you must pass through one stage before you can get to the next.  Think about how you learned to run; first you had to learn to crawl, then you could learn to walk, and finally you could develop the skills needed to run.  Without the first two stages, running would be impossibility.

It seems development is operated by some general rules or principles. These rules or principles may be referred to as principles of development. Let us discuss these principles briefly.

1. **Continuity**

A person’s life appears to be one continuous process, starting with conception and ending with death. The changes however small and gradual continue to take place in all dimensions of an individual’s existence.

1. **Lack of uniformity in the development rate**

Development, though continuous, does not exhibit steadiness and uniformity in terms of the rate of development in various dimensions of personality or in the developmental periods and stages of life.

1. **Individual difference**

Every organism is a distinct creation in itself, therefore the development which it undergoes in terms of the rate and outcome in various dimensions is quite unique and specific.

1. **Uniformity of pattern**

Development follows definite pattern which is uniform and universal with respect to the members of the same species. For instance developmental stages are typically progressive.

1. **Proceeding from general to specific response**

While developing in relation to any aspect of personality, the child first picks up or exhibits general responses and learns to show specific and goal-directed responses afterwards.

1. **Integration**

By observing the principle of proceeding from the general to the specific or from the whole to the parts, it does not imply that only the specific responses are attained, rather an integration of both structure and function ultimately desired and attained.

1. **Interrelation**

The various aspects or dimensions of one’s growth and development are interrelated.

1. **Interaction**

The process of development involves active interaction between the forces within the individual and the forces belonging to his environment.

1. **Cephalocaudal and proximodistal tendencies**

Cephalocaudal and proximodistal tendencies are found to be followed in maintaining the orderly sequence and direction of development.

1. **Predictability**

Development is predictable, that is, with the help of uniformity of pattern and sequence of development, we can, to a great extent, forecast the general nature and behavior of a child in one or more dimensions at any particular stage of its growth and development.

1. **Spiral versus linear advancement**

The path followed in development by the child is not straight and linear and development at any stage never takes place with a constant or steady pace.

Good! Now attempt the question below.

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| --- | --- |
| Intext Question | **In text Question 2.1**  Explain the differences between growth and development. |

**2.5 Processes of human development**

Life’s journey begins with conception in the womb of the mother. The approximate nine months period spent in the mother’s womb is known as the prenatal period. A child is said to be born when it (foetus) emerges from the internal environment (womb) and has its first contact with the external environment. It is called post natal period and it is in fact the beginning of computation of chronological age as illustrated in table 2.

Table 2: Age span for the human developmental stages

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Period or stages of development** | **Approximate age** |
| Infancy | From birth to 2 years |
| Childhood  Pre- school childhood  Later childhood | From 3rd year to 12 years  From 3rd year to 6 years  From 7th year to 12 years, that is up to onset of puberty |
| Adolescence | From 13th year to 19 years, that is from onset of puberty till attainment of maturity |
| Adulthood | From 20 year to 60 years or in a strict sense from attaining maturity to the age one ceases to produce one’s own kind. |
| Old age or ageing | From 61 years, that is from the end of the production capability till death. |

**2.6: Motor Development in Infancy and Childhood**

Most infants develop motor abilities in the same order and at approximately the same age. In this sense, most agree that these abilities are genetically preprogrammed within all infants. The environment does play a role in the development, with an enriched environment often reducing the learning time and an impoverished one doing the opposite.

The following chart delineates the development of infants in sequential order. The ages shown are averages and it is normal for these to vary by a month or two in either direction.

* 2 months – able to lift head up on his own
* 3 months – can roll over
* 4 months – can sit propped up without falling over
* 6 months – is able to sit up without support
* 7 months – begins to stand while holding on to things for support
* 9 months – can begin to walk, still using support
* 10 months – is able to momentarily stand on her own without support
* 11 months – can stand alone with more confidence
* 12 months – begin walking alone without support
* 14 months – can walk backward without support
* 17 months – can walk up steps with little or no support
* 18 months – able to manipulate objects with feet while walking, such as kicking a ball

**2.7: Cognitive Development in Children**

Probably the most cited theory in the cognitive development in children is Jean Piaget (1896-1980). As with all stage theories, Piaget’s Theory of Cognitive Development maintains that children go through specific stages as their intellect and ability to see relationships matures. These stages are completed in a fixed order with all children, even those in other countries. The age range however can vary from child to child.

**Sensorimotor Stage**. This stage occurs between the ages of birth and two years of age, as infants begin to understand the information entering their sense and their ability to interact with the world. During this stage, the child learns to manipulate objects although they fail to understand the permanency of these objects if they are not within their current sensory perception. In other words, once an object is removed from the child’s view, he or she is unable to understand that the object still exists.

The major achievement during this stage is that of *Object Permanency*, or the ability to understand that these objects do in fact continue to exist. This includes his ability to understand that when mom leaves the room, she will eventually return, resulting in an increased sense of safety and security. Object Permanency occurs during the end of this stage and represents the child’s ability to maintain a mental image of the object (or person) without the actual perception.

**Preoperational Stage**. The second stage begins after Object Permanency is achieved and occurs between the ages of two to seven years of age. During this stage, the development of language occurs at a rapid pace. Children learn how to interact with their environment in a more complex manner through the use of words and images. This stage is marked by Egocentrism, or the child’s belief that everyone sees the world the same way that she does. The fail to understand the differences in perception and believe that inanimate objects have the same perceptions they do, such as seeing things, feeling, hearing and their sense of touch.

A second important factor in this stage is that of Conservation, which is the ability to understand that quantity does not change if the shape changes. In other words, if a short and wide glass of water is poured into a tall and thin glass. Children in this stage will perceive the taller glass as having more water due only because of it’s height. This is due to the children’s inability to understand **reversibility** and to focus on only one aspect of a stimulus (called **centration**), such as height, as opposed to understanding other aspects, such as glass width.

**Concrete Operations Stage**. Occurring between ages 7 and about 12, the third stage of cognitive development is marked by a gradual decrease in centristic thought and the increased ability to focus on more than one aspect of a stimulus. They can understand the concept of grouping, knowing that a small dog and a large dog are still both dogs, or that pennies, quarters, and dollar bills are part of the bigger concept of money.

They can only apply this new understanding to concrete objects (those they have actually experienced). In other words, imagined objects or those they have not seen, heard, or touched, continue to remain somewhat mystical to these children, and abstract thinking has yet to develop.

**Formal Operations Stage.** In the final stage of cognitive development (from age 12 and beyond), children begin to develop a more abstract view of the world. They are able to apply reversibility and conservation to both real and imagined situations. They also develop an increased understanding of the world and the idea of cause and effect. By the teenage years, they are able to develop their own theories about the world. This stage is achieved by most children, although failure to do so has been associated with lower intelligence.

**2.8 Theories of psychosocial and sexual development**

Various theories tracing the developmental processes in one or the other dimensions of personality at definite developmental stages have emerged. A few of these well-known theorists are;

1. Freud’s theory of psychological development
2. Jean Piaget’s theory of cognitive development
3. Erickson’s theory of psychosocial development
4. Kohlberg’s theory of moral development

Good! We are going to beginning with Erickson’s theory of psychosocial development. This theory postulates eight stages of psychosocial development as follows;

**Table 3: Stages of psychosocial development by Erik Erikson**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Stage of psychosocial development** | **Period** | **Specific age** | **Characteristics** |
| Trust versus mistrust | Infant | Birth to 1 year | Needs maximum comfort with minimal uncertainty to trust himself/herself, others and the environment |
| Autonomy versus shame and doubt | Toddler | 1-3 years | Works to master physical environment while maintaining self-esteem |
| Initiative versus guilt | Pre-school | 3-6 years | Begins to initiate, activities; develops conscience and sexual identity |
| Industry versus inferiority | School-age-child | 6-12 years | Tries to develop a sense of self worth by refining skills |
| Identity versus role confusion | Adolescence | Adolescence (12-20 years) | Tries integrating many roles (child, sibling, student, athlete, worker) into a self-image under role model and peer pressure |
| Intimacy versus isolation | Young adult | Early adulthood (20-45 years) | Learns to make personal commitment to another as a spouse, parent or partner. |
| Generativity versus stagnation | Middle-age-adult | Middle adulthood ( 45-65 years) | Seeks satisfaction through productivity in career, family and civic interests |
| Ego integrity versus despair | Older adult | Later adulthood (65 onwards) | Reviews life accomplishments, deals with loss and preparation for death |

Good! Let us now turn our attention to Sigmund Freud’s theory of psychosexual development.

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) is probably the most well known theorist when it comes to the development of personality. Freud’s Stages of Psychosexual Development are, like other stage theories, completed in a predetermined sequence and can result in either successful completion or a healthy personality or can result in failure, leading to an unhealthy personality. This theory is probably the best known as well as the most controversial; as Freud believed that we develop through stages based upon a particular erogenous zone. During each stage, an unsuccessful completion means that a child becomes fixated on that particular erogenous zone and either over– or under-indulges once he or she becomes an adult.

**Oral Stage (Birth to 18 month**s). During the oral stage, the child if focused on oral pleasures (sucking). Too much or too little gratification can result in an Oral Fixation or Oral Personality which is evidenced by a preoccupation with oral activities. This type of personality may have a stronger tendency to smoke, drink alcohol, over eat, or bite his or her nails. Personality wise, these individuals may become overly dependent upon others, gullible (too willing to accept other people’s opinion and therefore easily tricked), and perpetual followers. On the other hand, they may also fight these urges and develop pessimism and aggression toward others.

**Anal Stage (18 months to three years).** The child’s focus of pleasure in this stage is on eliminating and retaining feces. Through society’s pressure, mainly via parents, the child has to learn to control anal stimulation. In terms of personality, after effects of an anal fixation during this stage can result in an obsession with cleanliness, perfection, and control (anal retentive). On the opposite end of the spectrum, they may become messy and disorganized (anal expulsive).

**Phallic Stage (ages three to six)**.The pleasure zone switches to the genitals. Freud believed that during this stage boy develop unconscious sexual desires for their mother. Because of this, he becomes rivals with his father and sees him as competition for the mother’s affection. During this time, boys also develop a fear that their father will punish them for these feelings, such as by castrating them. This group of feelings is known as Oedipus complex (after the Greek Mythology figure who accidentally killed his father and married his mother).

Later it was added that girls go through a similar situation, developing unconscious sexual attraction to their father. Although Freud Strongly disagreed with this, it has been termed the Electra complex by more recent psychoanalysts.

According to Freud, out of fear of castration and due to the strong competition of his father, boys eventually decide to identify with him rather than fight him. By identifying with his father, the boy develops masculine characteristics and identifies himself as a male, and represses his sexual feelings toward his mother. A fixation at this stage could result in sexual deviancies (both overindulging and avoidance) and weak or confused sexual identity according to psychoanalysts.

**Latency Stage (age six to puberty).** It’s during this stage that sexual urges remain repressed and children interact and play mostly with same sex peers.

**Genital Stage (puberty on).** The final stage of psychosexual development begins at the start of puberty when sexual urges are once again awakened. Through the lessons learned during the previous stages, adolescents direct their sexual urges onto opposite sex peers, with the primary focus of pleasure being the genitals.

Well done! Let us now move on and learn about Kohlberg’s six stages of moral development.

Although it has been questioned as to whether it applied equally to different genders and different cultures, Kohlberg’s (1973) stages of moral development is the most widely cited. It breaks our development of morality into three levels, each of which is divided further into two stages:

**Preconventional Level (0- 9years): Self Focused Morality**

Morality is defined as obeying rules and avoiding negative consequences. Children in this stage see rules set, typically by parents, as defining moral law.

That which satisfies the child’s needs is seen as good and moral.

**Conventional Level (age nine to adolescence): Other Focused Morality**

Children and adolescence begin to understand what is expected of them by their parents, teacher, etc. Morality is seen as achieving these expectations.

Fulfilling obligations as well as following expectations are seen as moral law for children and adolescence in this stage.

**Post conventional Level (adulthood): Higher Focused Morality**

As adults, we begin to understand that people have different opinions about morality and that rules and laws vary from group to group and culture to culture. Morality is seen as upholding the values of your group or culture.

Understanding your own personal beliefs allows adults to judge themselves and others based upon higher levels of morality. In this stage what is right and wrong is based upon the circumstances surrounding an action. Basics of morality are the foundation with independent thought playing an important role.

Well, we have come to the end of section three; let us summarize this section.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Summary | **2.7 Summary**  Growth is the progressive increase in the size of a child or part of the child. The changes are quantitative in nature including increase in size, length, height, and weight etc.Development is progressive increase in complexity of a child, hence the changes are qualitative in nature including acquisition of various skills (abilities) such as head support, speaking, learning, expressing the feelings and relating with other people. Some of popular growth and development theorists include   1. Freud’s theory of psychosexual development 2. Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development 3. Kohlberg’s theory of moral development |

Well done! Now attempt the following questions.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Activity | **2.8 Review Questions**   1. Define personality 2. Distinguish between growth and development 3. Explain characteristics of intimacy versus isolation in Erickson’s theory of psychosocial development 4. Explain second level of Kohlberg’s theory of moral development |

**SECTION FOUR: LEARNING AND COGNITIONS**

**4.0 Section Outline**

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Section objectives

4.3 Definition of learning

4.4 Theories of learning

4.5 Human memory and forgetting

4.6 Human language and intelligence

4.7Sensation and perception

4.8 Summary

4.9. Review questions

**3.1 Introduction**

You are now in section four. In this section you will learn principles of learning, learning theories, memory, forgetting, language, intelligence, sensation and perception.

Let’s look at the objectives of this section.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Aim or Objective | **3.2 Section Objectives**  By the end of this section you should be able to: -   1. Define learning 2. Outline theories of learning 3. Describe human memory and forgetting 4. Explain human language and intelligence 5. Describe sensation and perception |

You are doing well! Let us begin by defining learning.

**4.3: Definition of learning**

Learning can be defined as the process leading to relatively permanent behavioral change or potential behavioral change. In other words, as we learn, we alter the way we perceive our environment, the way we interpret the incoming stimuli, and therefore the way we interact, or behave.

**4.4; Theories of learning**

**4.4.1 Classical Conditioning by Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936).**

Classical Conditioning was discovered accidentally by Ivan Pavlov. Pavlov was a Russian physiologist who discovered this phenomenon while doing research on digestion. His research was aimed at better understanding the digestive patterns in dogs.

During his experiments, he would put meat powder in the mouths of dogs that had tubes inserted into various organs to measure bodily responses. What he discovered was that the dogs began to salivate before the meat powder was presented to them. Then, the dogs began to salivate as soon as the person feeding them would enter the room. He soon began to gain interest in this phenomenon and abandoned his digestion research in favor of his now famous Classical Conditioning study.

Basically, the findings support the idea that we develop responses to certain stimuli that are not naturally occurring. When we touch a hot stove, our reflex pulls our hand back. It does this instinctually, no learning involved. It is merely a survival instinct. But why now do some people, after getting burned, pull their hands back even when the stove is not turned on? Pavlov discovered that we make associations which cause us to generalize our response to one stimuli onto a neutral stimuli it is paired with. In other words, hot burner = ouch, stove = burner, therefore, stove = ouch.

Pavlov began pairing a bell sound with the meat powder and found that even when the meat powder was not presented, the dog would eventually begin to salivate after hearing the bell. Since the meat powder naturally results in salivation, these two variables are called the **unconditioned stimulus (UCS)** and the **unconditioned response (UCR),** respectively. The bell and salivation are not naturally occurring; the dog was conditioned to respond to the bell. Therefore, the bell is considered the **conditioned stimulus (CS),** and the salivation to the bell, the **conditioned response (CR).**

Many of our behaviors today are shaped by the pairing of stimuli. Have you ever noticed that certain stimuli, such as the smell of cologne or perfume, a certain song, a specific day of the year, and results in fairly intense emotions? It's not that the smell or the song are the cause of the emotion, but rather what that smell or song has been paired with...perhaps an ex-boyfriend or ex-girlfriend, the death of a loved one, or maybe the day you met you current husband or wife. We make these associations all the time and often don’t realize the power that these connections or pairings have on us. But, in fact, we have been classically conditioned.

**4.4.2: Operant Conditioning. Edward Thorndike (1905)**

Operant conditioning*,* sometimes referred to as instrumental learning, is a method of learning that occurs through reinforcements and punishments for behavior. It encourages the subject to associate desirable or undesirable outcomes with certain behaviors. The term **"Operant"** refers to how an organism operates on the environment, and hence, operant conditioning comes from how we respond to what is presented to us in our environment. It can be thought of as learning due to the consequences of our actions.

Let's explain that a little further. The classic study of Operant Conditioning involved a cat who was placed in a box with only one way out; a specific lever in the box had to be pressed in order for the door to open. The cat initially tries to get out of the box because freedom is reinforcing. In its attempt to escape, the lever in the box is triggered and the door opens. The cat is now free. Once placed in the box again, the cat will naturally try to remember what it did to escape the previous time and will once again find the lever to press. The more the cat is placed back in the box, the quicker it will press that lever for its freedom. Thus, after much trial and error behavior, the cat learns to associate pressing the lever (S) with opening the door (R). This S-R connection is established because it results in a satisfying state of affairs (escape from the box). The law of exercise specifies that the connection was established because the S-R pairing occurred many times (the law of effect) and was rewarded (law of effect) as well as forming a single sequence (law of readiness).

We learn this way every day in our lives. Imagine the last time you made a mistake; you most likely remember that mistake and do things differently when the situation comes up again. In that sense, you’ve learned to act differently based on the natural consequences of your previous actions. The same holds true for positive actions. If something you did results in a positive outcome, you are likely to do that same activity again.

**Thorndike's theory consists of three primary laws:**

**Law of effect**: responses to a situation which are followed by a rewarding state of affairs will be strengthened and become habitual responses to that situation.

**Law of readiness**: a series of responses can be chained together to satisfy some goal which will result in annoyance if blocked, and

**Law of exercise**: connections become strengthened with practice and weakened when practice is discontinued. A corollary of the law of effect was that responses that reduce the likelihood of achieving a rewarding state (i.e., punishments, failures) will decrease in strength.

**Principles of Thorndike’s theory**

1. Learning requires both practice and rewards (laws of effect /exercise)
2. A series of S-R connections can be chained together if they belong to the same action sequence (law of readiness).
3. Transfer of learning occurs because of previously encountered situations.
4. Intelligence is a function of the number of connections learned.

**4.4.3: SOCIAL LEARNING; ALBERT BANDURA**

The social learning theory of Bandura emphasizes the importance of observing and modeling the behaviors, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others. Bandura (1977) states: "Learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do. Fortunately, most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action."

Bandura’s learning theory examines the individual within the larger social context in which he or she is situated. They consider general attitudes and norms in social groups .This view sees the root of behavior in the person’s environment, specifically the behavior of significant others, mediated by cognition. According to Bandura’s learning theory, through observation of the outcomes of the behavior of significant others, an individual learns which behaviors, even socially inappropriate ones, achieve desired results without drawing a negative sanction.

When inappropriate behaviors are modeled for young children, these patterns of interaction may become entrenched and can be replicated in other social interactions. In other words, cognitive deficits are learned, not inherent in the individual, and these deficits can translate into inappropriate behavior. Also, as important is the fact that pro-social behaviors are less likely in individuals for whom effective communication, problem solving and interpersonal skills have been modeled.

**Principles of social learning theory:**

1. The highest level of observational learning is achieved by first organizing and rehearsing the modeled behavior symbolically and then enacting it overtly. Coding modeled behavior into words, labels or images results in better retention than simply observing.
2. Individuals are more likely to adopt a modeled behavior if it results in outcomes they value.
3. Individuals are more likely to adopt a modeled behavior if the model is similar to the observer and the admired status and the behavior has functional value.
4. Observational or social learning is based primarily on the work of Albert Bandura. He and his colleagues were able to demonstrate through a variety of experiments that the application of consequences was not necessary for learning to take place. Rather learning could occur through the simple processes of observing someone else's activity. This work provided the foundation for Bandura's later work in social cognition.

Bandura formulated his findings in a four-step pattern which combines a cognitive view and an operant view of learning.

**Attention:** the individual notices something in the environment.   
**Retention:** the individual remembers what was noticed.

**Reproduction:** the individual produces an action that is a copy of what was noticed.   
**Motivation;** the environment delivers a consequence that changes the probability that the behavior will be emitted again (reinforcement and punishment)

Bandura's work draws from both behavioral and cognitive views of learning. He believes that mind, behavior and the environment all play an important role in the learning process. In a set of well known experiments, called the "Bobo doll" studies, Bandura showed that children (ages 3 to 6) would change their behavior by simply watching others

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Intext Question | **In-text question 4.1**  Do you believe that observing other people is instrumental in changing behaviour? |

Thank you for attempting the questions.

**4.5 Human memory and Forgetting**

**4.5.2: memory**

Memory is the power that we have to ‘store’ our experiences and to bring them into the fields of our consciousness sometime after the experiences have occurred. It’s the faculty of mind that store the past experiences or learning and to produce them for use when required at later time.

Human memory, like memory in a computer, allows us to store information for later use. In order to do this we need to master three processes involved in memory. These are encoding, storage and retrieval.

**Encoding** is the process we use to transform information so that it can be stores. It involves the transformation of the data into a meaningful form such as an association with an existing memory, an image, or a sound.

**Storage**, which simply means holding onto the information. For this to take place it requires that physiological changes to occur for the memory to be stored.

The final process is called **retrieval**, which is bringing the memory out of storage and reversing the process of encoding. In other words, return the information to a form similar to what we stored. It involves both recall and recognition processes.

1. **Types of memory**

There are different ways of classifying memory, however for the use in this section, we are going to classify memory into; immediate (Sensory), short term and long term memories among others. We are going to look at these types of memories;

1. **Sensory or immediate memory**

This is the memory that helps an individual to recall something immediately after its perception. In this type of memory, the retention time is extremely brief, generally from a fraction of a second to several seconds. Old sensory impressions disappear as they are ‘erased’ by new information.

1. **Short term memory**

This is also temporary, though not nearly as short lived as immediate memory.

1. **Long term memory**

This type of memory has limitless capacity to store information with little or no decay and requires little, if any rehearsal

**4.5.2: Forgetting**

Forgetting is the loss, permanent or temporary, of the ability to recall or recognize something learned earlier. It also means failure at any time to recall an experience, when attempting to do so or to perform an action previously leaned.

You can’t talk about remembering without mentioning its counterpart. It seems that as much as we do remember, we forget even more. Forgetting isn’t really all that bad, and is in actuality, a pretty natural phenomenon. Imagine if you remembered every minute detail of every minute or every hour, of every day during your entire life, no matter how good, bad, or insignificant. Now imagine trying to sift through it all for the important stuff like where you left your keys.

There are many reasons we forget things and often these reasons overlap. Like in the example above, some information never makes it to LTM. Other times, the information gets there, but is lost before it can attach itself to our LTM. Other reasons include decay, which means that information that is not used for an extended period of time decays or fades away over time. It is possible that we are physiologically preprogrammed to eventually erase data that no longer appears pertinent to us.

Failing to remember something doesn’t mean the information is gone forever though. Sometimes the information is there but for various reasons we can’t access it. This could be caused by distractions going on around us or possibly due to an error of association (e.g., believing something about the data which is not correct causing you to attempt to retrieve information that is not there). There is also the phenomenon of repression, which means that we purposefully (albeit subconsciously) push a memory out of reach because we do not want to remember the associated feelings. This is often sited in cases where adults ‘forget’ incidences of sexual abuse when they were children. And finally, amnesia, which can be psychological or physiological in origin.

1. **Theories of forgetting**

These theories include

1. **The trace decay theory:** this is where memory lapses with time
2. **The interference theory:**  whereby interference is responsible for forgetting
3. **The repression theory: this is** deliberate pushing of unpleasant and painful memories into the unconsciousness.
   1. **Human language and Intelligence**

**4.6.1: Language**

Language is structured at three levels

1. Sentence unit
2. Words and parts of words that carry meaning and
3. Speech sounds

The three levels of language are interconnected. Sentence units are built from words (and parts of words), and words are constructed from speech sounds. A phoneme is a category of speech sounds. Every language has its own set of phoneme with different sets for different languages and rules for combining them into words.

A morpheme is the smallest unit of language that carries meaning. Most morphemes are words, but others are prefixes and suffixes that are added to words.

Syntactic rules are used for combining words into phrases and phrases into sentences. The areas of brain that mediate language lie in the left hemisphere and include Broca’s area and Wernicke’s area.

**4.6.2: Intelligence**

Intelligencehas beendefined in many different ways, the following are some of them;

1. An Individual’s capacity for logic, abstract thought, understanding, self-awareness, communication, learning, emotional knowledge, memory, planning, creativity and problem solving.
2. A person’s ability to understand, learn and to deal with new or trying situations
3. The ability to apply knowledge to manipulate one's environment or to think abstractly as measured by objective criteria (as tests)
4. The capacity for learning, reasoning, understanding, and similar forms of mental activity; aptitude in grasping truths, relationships, facts, meanings, etc
5. The ability to acquire and apply knowledge and skills
6. the ability to retain knowledge, use reasoning to solve problems

There are probably as many definitions of intelligence as there are experts who study it. Simply put, however, intelligence is the ability to learn about, learn from, understand, and interact with one’s environment. . Environment in this definition doesn’t mean the environment of the earth, such as the desert, the mountains, etc., although it can mean that kind of environment. It has a wider meaning that includes a person’s immediate surroundings, including the people around him or her. Environment in this case can also be something as small as a family, the workplace, or a classroom

Intelligence is not quite the same as Intelligence Quotient (IQ), although people use the terms interchangeably. Intelligence Quotient is a score determined by an IQ test. These tests are designed to measure a person's intelligence, a general ability. This general ability consists of a number of specific abilities including:

* Adaptability to a new environment or to changes in the current environment
* Capacity for knowledge and the ability to acquire it
* Capacity for reason and abstract thought
* Ability to comprehend relationships
* Ability to evaluate and judge
* Capacity for original and productive thought

Additional specific abilities might be added to the list, but they would all be abilities allowing a person to learn about, learn from, understand, and interact with the environment

**Intelligence test,** series of tasks designed to measure the capacity to make abstractions, to learn, and to deal with novel situations.The most widely used intelligence tests include the [Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/563108/Stanford-Binet-Intelligence-Scale) and the Wechsler scales. The Stanford-Binet is the American adaptation of the original French Binet-Simon intelligence test; it was first introduced in 1916 by Lewis Terman, a psychologist at Stanford University. The individually administered test, revised in 1937, 1960, and 1972, evaluates persons two years of age and older and is designed for use primarily with children. It consists of an age-graded series of problems whose solution involves arithmetical, memory, and vocabulary skills.

The test is scored in terms of [intelligence quotient](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/289799/IQ), or [IQ](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/289799/IQ), a concept first suggested by German psychologist William Stern and adopted by Lewis Terman in the Stanford-Binet Scale. The IQ was originally computed as the ratio of a person’s mental age to his chronological (physical) age, multiplied by 100. Thus, if a child of 10 had a mental age of 12 (that is, performed on the test at the level of an average 12-year-old), and then the child was assigned an IQ of (12/10) X 100, or 120. A score of 100, for which the mental age equalled the chronological age, was average; scores above 100 were above average, scores below 100 were below average. A score of about 130 or above is considered gifted, while a score below about 70 is considered mentally deficient or retarded

**4.7 Sensation and perception**

Two characteristics are common to all sensory modalities. The first, ‘sensitivity’, describes sensory modalities at psychological level and the second, ‘perception’, means sensory coding, describes them at a biological level.

**4.7.1Sensation**

It’s a matter of common sense that the more intense a stimulus, the more strongly it affects the relevant sense organ. A bright light affects visual system more than a dimmer light; a loud sound affects auditory system more than a soft sound, and so on including taste, smell and touch.

Given some understanding of sensitivity of different senses, sensory coding explains how stimuli are transmitted from the sensory receptors to the brain.

Let’s answer the question below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Intext Question | **In text Question 2.2**  How does transduction takes place in sensory coding |

At the biological level, sensory processes involve the sense organs and the connecting neural pathways and are concerned with the initial stages of acquiring stimulus information. The sense organs include vision, audition, olfaction, gestation, the skin, which include pressure, temperature and pain.

At the psychological level, sensations are experiences associated with simple stimuli, as yet unassociated with anything meaningful. The senses include seeing, hearing, smell, taste, pressure and temperature, pain and the body senses. For all senses, sensitivity to stimuli intensity is measured by the absolute threshold (the minimum amount of stimulus energy that can be readily detected) or the difference threshold (the minimum difference between two stimuli that can be readily detected.

Psychophysical function is the relation between stimulus intensity and the magnitude of sensation for above-threshold stimuli. Sensation is often viewed as the process of detecting a signal that is embedded in noise. In some cases, a signal may be ‘detected’ even when only noise is present- a false alarm.

The use of signal detecting theory allows the process of detecting a stimulus to be separated into two numbers, one representing the observer’s sensitivity to the signal and the other representing the observer’s bias to respond to ‘signal present’. Every sense modality must recode or transduce its physical energy into neural impulses.

**3.7.2; Perception**

The study of perception deals with the question of how organs process and organize incoming raw sensory information in order to form coherent representation or model of the world within which the organism dwells and use that representation to solve naturally occurring problems, such as navigating, grasping and planning.

Five major functions of the perceptual system are

1. Determining which part of the sensory environment to attend to
2. Localizing, or determining where objects are
3. Recognizing, or determining what objects are
4. Abstracting the critical information from objects, and
5. Keeping the appearance of objects constant, even though their retinal images are changing.

Good! That marks the end of this section. Let us look at the summary for this section.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Summary | **3.7 Summary**  In this section you have learnt principles and theories of learning. In addition you are now enlightened on the definitions and concepts of various cognitive function of the mind including memory, forgetting, language, intelligence, sensation and perception. |

Congratulations for reaching this far with your studies. Let’s look at the review questions and proceed.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Activity | * 1. **Review Questions**  1. Define intelligence 2. Explain the three processes involved in memory. 3. Describe Bandura’s theory of learning. |

**SECTION FIVE: PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT**

**5.0. Section Outline**

5.1 Introduction

5.2 Section objectives

5.3Definition of personality

5.4Psychoanalytic theory

5.5 Behaviourist theory

5.6 Personality assessment

5.7 Summary

5.8 Review questions

**5.1 Introduction**

Welcome to this section five where our main interest is to learn about personality development. This is a common term that has been either used correctly or incorrectly in daily life. Today you will enlightened on definition and theories of personality development.

Let us look at the section objectives

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Aim or Objective | **5.2 Section Objectives**  By the end of this section, you should be able to: -   1. Explain the concept of personality 2. Describe psychoanalytic theory 3. Describe behaviorist theory 4. Outline personality assessment |

Good! Let’s continue!

**5.3 Definition of personality**

Personality can be defined as the totality of the distinctive and consistent characteristics and qualities including traits, patterns of thinking perceiving, feeling and behaving that makes a person unique, peculiar and different from another individual.

In some ways we are all the same. We all have the same human nature. We share a common humanity. We all have human bodies and human minds, we all have human thoughts and human feelings. Yet in other ways we are all completely different and unique. No two people are truly alike. No two people can ever have the same experience of life, the same perspective or the same mind. Even identical twins are unique in this respect.

Let us now discuss a few theories of personality development

**5.4 Psychoanalytic theory**

The basic premise of psychoanalytic theory, created by Sigmund Freud, is that much of what we think and do is driven by unconscious process. Despite its shortcomings, the theory remains one of the most popular theory on personality ever postulated.

In his career as a neurologist, Freud, discovered the method of free association, in which a patient is instructed to say everything that comes to mind, regardless of how trivial or embarrassing it may seem. Through these verbal associations, he detected consistent themes that he believed were manifestations of unconscious wishes and fears.

He compared the human mind to an iceberg. The small part that shows above the surface of the water consists of the conscious-our current awareness –and the preconscious, all the information that is not currently “on our mind” but that we could bring into consciousness if called upon to do so ( for example, the name of a prominent person such as a president). The much larger mass of the iceberg below the water represents the unconscious, a storehouse of impulses, wishes, and, inaccessible memories that affect our thoughts and behavior. Freud believed in determinism of human behavior. Psychological determinism is the doctrine that all thoughts, emotions and actions have causes. Freud maintained that not only are all psychological events caused but most are also caused by unsatisfied drives and unconscious wishes. In one of his publications, he argued that dreams, humor, forgetting and slips of the tongue all serve to relieve psychological tension by gratifying forbidden impulses or unfulfilled wishes.

As we saw in section three, Freud postulated psychosexual stages of human development, and believed that special problems at any stage could arrest, or fixate development and have a lasting effect on personality. For example; early weaning denies a child sucking pleasure and as an adult, the individual may become excessively dependent on others and overly fond of oral pleasures such as eating and drinking.. Fixation at the anal stage may result to an individual abnormally concerned with cleanliness, orderliness perfectionism.

Freud’s psychoanalytic theory holds that many behaviors are caused by unconscious motivations. Personality is determined primarily by biological drives of sex and aggression and by experiences that occur during childhood.

Freud postulated a structural model of personality that comprised of three structures namely id, ego and superego. Let us now turn our attention to these three structures;

**Id**: According to Freud, we are born with our Id.  The id is an important part of our personality because as newborns, it allows us to get our basic needs met.  Freud believed that the id is based on our pleasure principle.  In other words, the id wants whatever feels good at the time, with no consideration for the reality of the situation.  When a child is hungry, the id wants food, and therefore the child cries.  When the child needs to be changed, the id cries.  When the child is uncomfortable, in pain, too hot, too cold, or just wants attention, the id speaks up until his or her needs are met.

The id doesn't care about reality, about the needs of anyone else, only its own satisfaction.  If you think about it, babies are not real considerate of their parents' wishes.  They have no care for time, whether their parents are sleeping, relaxing, eating dinner, or bathing.  When the id wants something, nothing else is important.

**Ego**: Within the next three years, as the child interacts more and more with the world, the second part of the personality begins to develop.  Freud called this part the **Ego**.  The ego is based on the reality principle.  The ego understands that other people have needs and desires and that sometimes being impulsive or selfish can hurt us in the long run.  It’s the ego's job to meet the needs of the id, while taking into consideration the reality of the situation.

**Superego:** By the age of five, or the end of the phallic stage of development, the Superego develops.  The Superego is the moral part of us and develops due to the moral and ethical restraints placed on us by our caregivers.  Many equate the superego with the conscience as it dictates our belief of right and wrong.

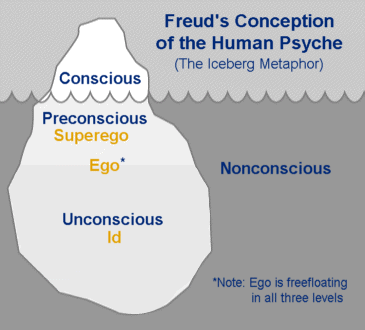
In a healthy person, according to Freud, the ego is the strongest so that it can satisfy the needs of the id, not upset the superego, and still take into consideration the reality of every situation.  Not an easy job by any means, but if the id gets too strong, impulses and self gratification take over the person's life.  If the superego becomes to strong, the person would be driven by rigid morals, would be judgmental and unbending in his or her interactions with the world.  You'll learn how the ego maintains control as you continue to read.

On the other hand Freud postulated that personality was topographically comprised of the conscious, subconscious(preconscious) and the unconscious. Freud believed that the majority of what we experience in our lives, the underlying emotions, beliefs, feelings, and impulses are not available to us at a conscious level.  He believed that most of what drives us is buried in our **unconscious**.  If you remember the Oedipus and Electra complex, they were both pushed down into the unconscious, out of our awareness due to the extreme anxiety they caused.  While buried there, however, they continue to impact us dramatically according to Freud.

The role of the unconscious is only one part of the model.  Freud also believed that everything we are aware of is stored in our **conscious**.  Our conscious makes up a very small part of who we are.  In other words, at any given time, we are only aware of a very small part of what makes up our personality; most of what we are is buried and inaccessible.

The final part is the **preconscious or subconscious**.  This is the part of us that we can access if prompted, but is not in our active conscious.  It is right below the surface, but still buried somewhat unless we search for it.  Information such as our telephone number, some childhood memories, or the name of your best childhood friend is stored in the preconscious.

Because the unconscious is so large, and because we are only aware of the very small conscious at any given time, this theory has been likened to an iceberg, where the vast majority is buried beneath the water's surface.  The water, by the way, would represent everything that we are not aware of, have not experienced, and that has not been integrated into our personalities, referred to as the nonconscious.



Freud’s theory of personality dynamics proposes that there is constant amount of psychic energy (libido) for each individual. If a forbidden act or impulse is suppressed, its energy will seek an outlet in some other form, such as dreams or neurotic symptoms. The theory assumes that unacceptable id impulses cause anxiety, which can be reduced by defense mechanisms.

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| **Take note** | **Take note 4.1**  The value of Sigmund Freud’s impact on psychology is a subject of great debate. |

Good! Let’s continue.

Freud’s theory of personality development proposes that individuals pass through psychosexual stages and must resolve the oedipal conflict, in which the young child sees the same sex parent as a rival for the affection of the opposite sex parent. Over the years, Freud’s theory of anxiety and defense mechanisms has fared better than his structural and developmental theories have.

Let’s attempt question 4.1

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| Intext Question | **In-text question 4.1**   1. What is your opinion on the value of Freud’s legacy? 2. Can you identify some of your own assumptions about other people that are rooted in Freudian theory |

**5.5 Behaviorist theories**

This is a behaviorist’s approach to personality emphasizing the importance of environmental /situational determinants of behaviour. Environmental conditions shape behaviour through learning; a person’s behaviour, in turn, shapes the environment. To predict behaviour, know how the characteristics of the individual interact with those of the situation.

1. **Social learning and conditioning**
2. **Operant conditioning:** The effects of other people’s actions-the rewards and punishments provide an important influence on an individual’s behaviour.

Operant conditioning is the type of learning that occurs when we learn the association between our behaviours and certain outcomes. Behaviour patterns can be through direct experience (reward and punishment) or through observational learning i.e. by observing others’ actions and noting consequences of those actions.

1. **Classical conditioning:** The type of learning that occurs when specific

Situations become associated with specific outcomes-to their account of personality; e.g. when a child is punished for engaging in a forbidden activity. The punishment elicits the psychological responses that we associate with guilt or anxiety. The behaviour becomes a conditioned stimulus by being paired by unconditioned stimulus of punishment; the anxiety becomes the conditioned response. For the behaviorists, it is classical conditioning that produces the internalized source of anxiety that Freud labeled the superego.

**Evaluation of the behaviorists approach**

Behavioural theory has made a major contribution to both clinical psychology and personality theory. It has led us to see human actions as reactions to specific environments, and it has helped us focus on how environments control our behaviour and how they can be changed to modify behaviour.

Behavioural theorists have been criticized for overemphasizing situational influences on behaviour. But the learning theorists’ finding on the cross-situational consistency of personality has forced other personality psychologists to re-examine their assumptions. The result has been a clearer understanding of the interactions between people and situations and an enhanced appreciation of each person’s individuality.

Behaviorist theory hold that individual differences in behaviour result primarily from differences in the kinds of learning experiences a person encounters in the course of growing up. Through operant conditioning, people learn to associate specific behaviors with punishment or reward. They can also learn these associations through observation learning.

Through classical conditioning, people learn to associate specific situations with certain outcomes, such as anxiety.

Attempt question 4.2

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| **Intext Question** | **In-text question 4.2**   1. Think about your own tendency to be friendly or unfriendly. To what extent is the situation important in determining your level of friendliness? What are some of the reinforcements and punishments you have had in your life that might have contributed to your tendency to be friendly or unfriendly? 2. Behavioural theorists view all types of human behaviour as modifiable. Do you think there are any types of behaviour that are not modifiable? Why or why not? |

1. **Social learning theory**

It has its roots in early behavioral theory but was later considered a radical departure from behaviorism when it was first introduced. According to social learning theorists, internal cognitive processes influence behaviour, as well as observation of the behaviors of others and the environment in which behaviour occurs.

Albert Bandura, one of the leading contemporary theorists in this area, developed the social –cognitive theory. This theory emphasizes reciprocal determinism, in which external determinants of behaviour (such as rewards and punishments) and internal determinants (such as beliefs, thoughts, and expectations) are part of a system of interacting influences that affect behaviour but also behaviour can affect the environment. The relationship between the environment and behaviour is reciprocal, that is to say, the environment influences our behaviour, which then affects the environment we find ourselves in, which may in turn influence our behaviour.

Bandura also points out that most behaviour occurs in the absence of external rewards or punishments. Most behaviours stems from internal processes of self regulation. Individuals have personal sources of behavioural control and therefore it is quite a challenge to change a personality. The internal personal sources of control develop through observation of the behaviour of others or by reading or hearing about it. We do not need to actually perform the behaviours we observe, instead, we can note whether those behaviours were rewarded or punished and store that information in the memory. When situations occur, we can behave according to the expectations we have accumulated on the basis of the observation of models.

Walter Mischel, another social learning theorist, has attempted to incorporate individual differences into social learning theory by introducing the following set of cognitive variables. These include;

**Competencies:** What can you do? These include intellectual abilities, social and physical skills and other special abilities.

**Encoding strategies:** How do you see it? People differ in the way they selectively attend to information, encode events, group information into categories etc.

**Expectancies:** What will happen? Expectations about the consequences of different behaviours will guide the individual’s choice of behavior e.g. consequences of cheating in an examination.

**Subjective values:** What is it worth? Individuals who have similar expectancies may choose to behave differently because they assign different values to the outcomes.

**Self regulatory systems and plans:** How can you achieve it? People differ in the standards and rules they use to regulate their behaviours including self imposed rewards for success or punishment for failure, as well as in their ability to make realistic plans for reaching a goal.

All these variables interact with the conditions of a particular situation to determine what an individual will do in that situation.

Albert Bandura developed social cognitive theory, which holds that internal cognitive processes combine with environmental pressures to influence behaviour, and that cognitive processes and environment have reciprocal effects on each other.

1. **Psychodynamics Theorist (Bandura’s self-efficacy)**

**Steps in social learning theory**

Self efficacy is the belief that one is capable of performing in a certain manner to attain certain goals. It is a belief that one has the capability to execute the courses of action required to manage situations e.g. a person with high self efficacy may engage in a more health related activity when an illness occurs, whereas a person with low self efficacy will harbor feelings of inefficiency.

According to Bandura we do not blindly respond to environmental stimuli rather we pick and choose from many environmental options basing our decisions on our own insights and past experiences. This we do through observational learning by incorporating and imitating the behavior of those around us. An individual’s sense of self efficacy can play a major role in how one approaches goals, tasks and challenges. The concept of self-efficacy lies at the center of Bandura’s social cognitive theory which emphasizes the role of observational learning and social experience in the development of personality.

According to Bandura’s theory those who believe they can perform well are more likely to view difficult tasks as something to be mastered rather than to be avoided.

**5.6 Personality assessment**

The methods used to assess personality may be classified as subjective, objective or projective. As it is not possible, however to clearly demarcate subjectivity from objectivity and even effectively insulate projective processes against the subjectivity and personal biases of the examiner, it is necessary to look for other ways to classify the techniques of personality assessment. The commonly employed assessment technique may be classified as follows;

1. Where an individual’s behavior in actual life situations can be observed, namely observation techniques and situation tests.
2. Where the individual is required to speak about himself namely, autobiography, questionnaire and personality inventory and interview may be used.
3. Where other people’s opinion about the individual whose personality is under assessment are ascertained. These are biographies, case history rating scales and sociometric techniques.
4. Projective techniques involving fantasy which aim at assessing the individual’s reaction to imaginary situations.
5. Indirect techniques in which some personality variables may be determined in terms of physiological responses by the use of machines or technical devices.

This is the end of this section. Let’s look at the summary for the section.

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| Summary | **5.7 Summary**  In this section, you have learnt about the concept of personality, its definition and some theories that explain personality development. For instance, summary Freud’s theory of personality structure views personality as composed of the id, the ego and the superego. The id operates on the pleasure principle, seeking immediate gratification of biological impulses. The ego obeys the reality principle, postponing gratification until it can be achieved in socially acceptable ways. The superego (conscience) imposes moral standards on the individual. In a well integrated personality, the ego remains in firm but flexible control over the id and superego, and the reality principle governs.  Behaviorist’s approaches assert that environmental conditions shape behaviour through learning; a person’s behaviour, in turn, shapes the environment. |

Now carry out the assignment given below.

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| ASSIGNMENT | **Assignment 4.1**  Describe cognitive theories of personality development |

Before we leave this section, lets us look at some review questions.

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| Activity | **5.8 Review Questions**   1. Discuss the role of nature and nurture in personality development. 2. Describe the psychodynamic theory of personality development |

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