CRITICAL
ISSUES
in Lifespan
Development

Examples for the
Helping Professions

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⬚NTRODUCTION

Psychology

Education

Health Care

The authors of this text have written in response to the needs of students. Student with a diversity of majors take the lifespan development course at the undergraduate level, the texts have been written primarily by psychologists and the courses taught almost exclusively by psychology faculty. We think the major texts on the market are good, but few attempts have been made to apply the content of the lifespan course to the reality of working in the helping professions. This text represents our effort to bridge that gap. Given that the authors come from backgrounds in psychology, education, and health care, we represent a diversity of viewpoints and experience. From these viewpoints, then, we have written a text that illustrates how major concepts in lifespan development become relevant in and can be applied to the helping professions.

Many questions arise when contemplating the writing of a text. This effort proved to be no exception. It was our goal to write a text that would be beneficial in aiding students to apply the critical issues in lifespan development regardless of their major. For this reason, each of us had to consider how to step outside the mold of our own discipline and generate discussion and examples that were more global in nature. In addition to this consideration, decisions had to be made about how many examples to include, how many times to "revisit" the intragenerational family we created, how to aid students in developing the critical thinking skills necessary for working successfully in the helping professions, and how to accomplish all of these and still keep the book small and user-friendly. The text you are holding is the culmination of that decision making process.

It is our hope that you find the book both practical and stimulating. As you contemplate the profession you might want to pursue, it is important that you be able to analyze complex issues and problems in ways that are going to aid you in pursuing that profession. The critical thinking questions included within each chapter are designed to serve as a model for how professions approach issues of lifespan development. Additional critical thinking questions, and case analyses, then, are also included at the end of each chapter. Suggested readings are included to provide additional resources for students to pursue issues they find to be of particular interest.

Much of an individual's understanding of his or her own development is tempered by that very development. How we think and feel about who we are is intricately intertwined with what we have experienced. In other words, our assessment of our own development cannot be completely removed from the very developmental process we have experienced. This is a critical consideration in the helping professions. One cannot look at a particular case, say a child brought to the emergency room with unusual burns on his arm, and simply treat the outward problem. In order to provide the best possible care to that individual, we have to know many things. Is he allergic to any medication? Has he been brought to the hospital in the past? If so, was it under similar circumstances? Do the burns appear to be self-inflicted? Are there any signs that would indicate that the burns are the result of abuse?

Although the answers to these questions do not alter the medical treatment that is provided, per se, they should provide insights to us as professionals about what other care this individual should receive. It is this model of learning, "to ask the next question", that has guided our development of this text. Each of the professions included have particular questions they would want to ask about the same case. As the reader will discover, the answers one receives about a case and the recommendations one would make about what to do are only as "good" as the questions the professional thinks to ask. The questions one thinks to ask, however, are often influenced by one's personal perspective. If a doctor, for example, assumes that reports of child abuse are greatly exaggerated, he or she might be less likely to ask questions about the "unusual" nature of the burns than a doctor who believes that abuse occurs often. One's perspective, therefore, becomes an important part of one's professional approach.

We adopted a particular perspective in the development of this text and it is important that you, as a reader, understand our reasons for adopting this perspective. Many assumptions are made when one considers a lifespan perspective on human development. It is our opinion that a lifespan perspective of development should take the lead of Baltes, Reese, and Lipsitt (1980) in making five assumptions about the lifespan. This text, then, uses these assumptions as underlying themes that weave themselves through the chapters, the case examples, and the critical reflection exercises we have included. The lifespan perspective assumes that:

Development is a lifelong process. This approach moves beyond the traditional emphasis on childhood and adolescent development and assumes that development is a dynamic and lifelong process. Critical factors and issues affect development. Rather than looking at development within stages or phases as isolated events, development should be studied as a dynamic, lifelong, multi-directional process. Studying core concepts and issues and then discussing examples from Education, Health care profession, and Psychology will not only reinforce readers' understanding of the lifelong nature of development but will also enhance students' abilities to relate the material to their own disciplines.

Development must be viewed in a historical context. Development does not occur in a vacuum and, as such, the historical influences of the time will have an impact. A lifespan approach to development considers the impact of such factors as family, economic conditions, and culture. Of course, differing factors may be relevant given the particular discipline the student is studying. The interdisciplinary nature of this text with examples from each of the three areas illustrates this historical importance.

Development can take multiple directions. Traditional views of development tended to assume that developmental changes were always "additive" in direction. This view holds that persons will experience incremental changes toward more mature levels of functioning in all areas as they develop. A lifespan approach, however, assumes that humans develop through a series of starts and stops, gains and losses, positives, and negatives. Factors such as health, education, self-certainty, self-concept, and self-esteem are dynamic and fluid. As such, they will wax and wane right along with the events in the individual's life and how the individual experiencing them is interpreting those events.

As individuals progress across their lifespan (maturing as some have said "from womb to tomb"), there will be many peaks and valleys to endure. Are we truly finished

needing constant care when we mature from the overwhelming dependency of infancy to the increased independence of middle childhood? Although many of us would prefer not to ponder such issues, will we ourselves need such constant care again due to disease or illness in old age? Students will gain a more integrated understanding of these complex issue as they see the multiple influences on development from the three perspectives.

This lifespan approach also assumes that multiple factors, both internal and external to the person, must be considered if an accurate view of development is to be possible. Both maturation and learning have been shown to contribute to the development of individuals. Each of these disciplines is particularly attuned to the internal and environmental influences on development and it is critical that students in these disciplines have this reinforced within the context of studying lifespan development. A complete understanding of development necessitates an analysis of both the internal (maturational or biological) factors that influence development as well as the external (social, environmental or learning) variables that impinge upon the individual. Cultural differences are also extremely important within this framework. What is "acceptable" treatment (treatment being defined broadly to include medical treatment, acceptable parental discipline strategies, educational methods, etc.) of others may differ dramatically from culture to culture.

Development in any phase of life can best be understood in context of the lifespan. This, in essence, is the heart of the lifespan approach to understanding development. For too long, development has been broken into ages or phases and researchers would expose particular ages or phases to microscopic analysis. Although such an analysis results in a detailed understanding of the specific age or phase being addressed, it does little to shed light on the interconnections among these ages or phases. Certainly the behavioral choices that an adolescent makes are determined, in part, by earlier experiences. These current choices will also, in some fashion, influence future options.

Let us return to the case of the child with the unusual burns on his arm. Without addressing this child within the context of the lifespan, we would be unable to realistically understand the complete picture. Let us say that we discover the burns are self-inflicted. Could we truly understand the impact of this on the child's development without considering what previous experiences might have led to such behaviors and what implications such actions have for the future development of this child? The goal of this text, then, is to help you, as a student in the lifespan development course, develop critical thinking and analysis skills that will aid you in applying course content to the analysis of cases from a variety of the helping professions. In this fashion, we believe you will have a more sophisticated understanding of not only lifespan development but also of how the issues in lifespan development relate to the professions you and your student colleagues may be pursuing.

Learning Objectives:

Before moving on to a description of the intragenerational family that we will visit several times throughout the pages of this text, it would be wise to establish the major learning objectives for the text. After you have reached the last pages of this text and have completed the critical thinking exercises included, you will understand the importance of viewing lifespan development in context of the helping professions. The following list summarizes the concepts that will be illustrated within the examples used in the text. As a reader, then, you should be able to discuss and develop well-informed answers to questions about each one.

- **The interaction of physical, cognitive, personal, and social development that gives each period of the lifespan, and each individual, a distinctive and coherent quality.**

- **There is both a universality and an individuality to our development.**

- **We are individuals, becoming more diverse with age.**

- **Development proceeds in multiple directions, entailing at times gains, at other times losses, and at still other times just change.**

- **With age, behavior becomes more complex and organized, more differentiated and integrated.**

    There is both continuity and discontinuity in development.

    There is both qualitative and quantitative change.

    There is both consistency and inconsistency with age-mates.

    There is both stability and change in development over time.

- **Nature (maturation) and nurture (learning) truly interact.**

- **Because of learning, variation is possible.**

- **Maturation sets limits beyond which development cannot progress.**

- **Early experiences influence but do not determine later outcomes.**

- **Development is aided by stimulation.**

- **We are active in our own development.**

- **The family plays a central role in guiding and directing individual development.**

- **Development has multiple causes.**

    Normative maturational events - a biological clock

    Normative social events - a social clock

    Historical events - cohort effects

    Nonnormative events - unique, individualistic events

- **Development is a lifelong process and thus is best viewed from a lifespan perspective.**

- **We develop in a cultural and historical context; our knowledge of development is therefore culture bound and time bound. Much remains to be learned about development.**

If you would like to use resources on the World Wide Web as you explore Lifespan Development, we have made a list of resources available at:

http://www.iue.indiana.edu/psych/lifespan/index.html.

The Intragenerational Family

Contemporary families are becoming increasingly complex. As such, many of the issues in lifespan development arise within the context of everyday family life. Individuals experience many changes within the context of the family, or in response to crises that the family must confront and attempt to resolve. We will consider critical issues in lifespan development occasionally by looking at a specific individual. In other cases, we will underscore the complexity of these issues by considering them from the perspective of a diverse and extended fictional intragenerational family. Since we will revisit this family several times throughout our trek across the lifespan, we will introduce them to the reader now.

Grandparents:

Gene Tran

age 68. Recently widowed, Gene is attempting to "redefine" himself without his wife of 41 years. Gene, a foreperson for the state highway department, is the father of Thomas Tran.

Virginia Long

age 66. Virginia has taught private piano lessons for over twenty years. She seems agitated and depressed most of the time. She has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease and is currently suffering the middle stages of the disorder. She is Susan Tran's mother and Robert's wife.

Robert Long

age 67. Robert recently retired after forty years with the same manufacturing company. Although he and Virginia had made many plans to buy a motor home and travel once he retired, her Alzheimer's Disease has created a different pattern of retirement than either of them had planned. He is Susan Tran's father and Virginia's husband.

Parents:

Thomas Tran

age 40. Thomas is an upper level manager for a series of electronics stores. Of Asian decent, he prides himself on being culturally diverse and multiculturally aware. Thomas is the husband of Susan Tran.

Susan Tran

age 38. Susan teaches second grade for the local district and prides herself on her involvement with the Parent Teachers Organization. Susan is the wife of Thomas Tran.

Children:

Austin Tran

age 18. Austin enjoys being the "big brother" but is concerned about how his status in the family might be affected by his move to college.

Jessica Tran

age 14. Jessica is adjusting to recent changes brought on by adolescence. Although she loves her parents dearly, she expresses frustration over their recent battles concerning her attempts to secure increased autonomy.

Kyle Tran

age 10. Susan and Thomas describe Kyle as "generally a well-behaved boy." He is currently encountering some difficulties in school and was recently diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD).

CHAPTER 1

METHODS & THEORY IN STUDYING LIFESPAN DEVELOPMENT

Human behavior was primarily the field of inquiry of philosophers until the 19th century. Now it is the concern of several of the biological sciences a well as the social sciences. It is truly a multidisciplinary field. Developmental psychology is the largest of the disciplines and is concerned with identifying and explaining the changes that each individual undergoes across the life span. In addition to psychologists, many biologists, sociologists, anthropologists, educators, nurses, physicians, historians and others have made major contributions to the field of study. Today those who study human development are referred to by the term developmentalists.

Simply stated, development refers to systematic changes in the individual that occur between conception and death. Implicit to the developmentalist is the idea that change is orderly or patterned and that temporary or transitory change is to be excluded in the development of theory. The study of human development is in some ways no different from any other field of study. One must form hypotheses and scientifically test them.

The scientific method is used by modern-day psychologists to collect information and draw conclusions about how people develop. Although the scientific method comes in various forms, there are always the requirements that the researchers be objective and that their theories be supported by data. The scientific method is more of an attitude or value than a method and it therefore helps to protect the scientific community and society from flawed reasoning.

Critical Issue - The Functions of Theories

Theories perform many functions, but two of the most important functions are that they: (1) organize and give meaning to facts, and (2) guide research. Developmental theories most often disagree on two issues: (1) which facts or concepts are most important and (2) the significance of the relationships among concepts. While there is no one best theory, theories are important because they act as filters to screen out some facts and impose structure on those they consider. Therefore, theory influences the questions asked, the methods used and ultimately which results are found.

Alfred Baldwin (1980) reflects that, ideally, a theory should not only be logical but also supply clear definitions. A theory should make specific prediction about behaviors that are verifiable. Furthermore, a theory should be falsifiable. That is, it should be possible to prove that the theory does not make accurate predictions. Finally, a developmental theory should call attention to changes in types of behavior that occur during development. None of the theories discussed in developmental textbooks possess all the characteristics of an ideal theory. However, each needs to be studied because each one has made it possible to organize facts and has stimulated considerable research since its inception.

2 Critical Issue - Putting Theories into Perspective

All theories are concerned with identifying and explaining the processes involved in human behavior and development. In addition, they all assume that there are predictable and regular patterns to growth and development. The theories differ in terms of the aspects of development on which they focus and the nature of the explanation offered for any given behavior or process.

Theories of development attempt to explain four characteristics of age-related change:

1.) Orderliness

2.) Directionality

3.) Cumulativeness and

4.) Increasing differentiation and integration.

Most theories fall into two broad categories: **mechanistic and organismic**.

Mechanistic theories use the machine as a basic metaphor. Several corollaries of this view, when applied to human development, include the beliefs that:

- The infant's mind is a blank slate

- The organism is inherently at rest and that behavior therefore occurs only in response to external stimulation

- The child is passive

- Understanding of the world is a true reflection of an objective reality that is independent of the individual or naive realism

- Development is a continuous acquisition of knowledge and experience. Skinner's behavior-learning theory argues that behavior and development are a function of learning experiences.

The basic metaphor for **organismic theories** is the organism. Several corollaries specific to this view are:

1) The child is active

2) **Constructionism**, or the belief that the world cannot be known objectively; instead knowledge of it is constructed by the individual

3) Development is a discontinuous progression through a series of qualitatively different stages; and

4) Development is determined by the interaction between genetic maturation and experience. Piaget's theory states that the child is a constructionist and development consists of qualitatively different ways of knowing the world.

Critical Issue - The Implications of Theoretical Perspectives

Developmental theorists differ on five very basic issues:

1 Is the human organism good, neutral or inherently bad?

Early views of human development saw the individual as inherently bad (doctrine of original sin), as inherently good (doctrine of innate purity), or as neither bad nor good (doctrine of tabula rasa). Today's theories include these ideas, however, now theorists emphasize either the positive or the negative aspects. Understanding this is important because it helps us to see how theoretical content is influenced, hypothesis formed, and certain research questions are generated.

2 Is nature (biological forces) or nurture (environmental forces) the primary influence on human development?

This is one of the oldest controversies. The question simply asks whether genetics or environment is the primary influence on ones development. Today most developmentalists subscribe to what is often called the interactionist position (Anastasi, 1958). They want to know how nature and nurture work together to influence traits and capacities.

3 Is the human organism actively involved in the developmental process? Are we passively influenced by social and biological forces?

Organismic theories assure that change is from within the individual structures existing inside the organism that create a foundation for and control development. Therefore, we are viewed as active, purposeful beings that make sense of our world and determine much of our own learning. In contrast, mechanistic theories focus on the relationship between environmental inputs and behavioral outputs. Change is a passive reaction to the environment.

4 Is development continuous or discontinuous?

The continuous view of development regards development as a cumulative process of adding on more of the same types of skills with which he organism began. A discontinuous view assumes that new and different ways of interpreting and responding to the world emerge at particular time periods. These latter approaches assume that stages are present in development and qualitative changes characterize the particular stages or time periods in the life span. Some contemporary changes are characteristic of human development and may alternate with one another.

5 Do humans follow similar or different developmental paths?

Theorists also often disagree on whether developmental changes are individualistic or universal. Discontinuous (stage) theorists assure that the stages are universal. Other theorists argue that developmental change varies from culture to culture and is much less universal.

Critical Issue - How Do We Measure What Interests Us?

For research to be meaningful, the data that investigators collect must be **reliable** and **valid**. A research method is reliable if it produces consistent, replicable results. The method is valid if it measures precisely what it claims to measure. An instrument must be reliable and measure consistently before it can be valid. However, being reliable is not sufficient for validity.

As an example, we might have a technique that measures a person's foot. Except for small changes based on weather, etc. we would expect to get relatively the same result each time we use this technique to measure an adult's foot. If we do receive the same result each time we measure the same adult's foot, we can claim that our measurement technique is reliable (consistent). But is it valid? It depends on what we are claiming the technique measures. If we claim that the technique measures shoe size, then it would appear to be a valid measure. However, what if we are claiming that the technique measures "intelligence?" Then we would be hard pressed to convince someone else that our technique provides a valid measurement.

The most common methods of collecting data on human development include self-report measures such as interviews, questionnaires, case studies, and clinical procedures. Data can also be collected through direct observations that are made either in the natural environment or in structured laboratory settings.

Naturalistic observation is a valuable method that often uses time-sampling techniques although observer bias can interfere with scientific objectivity and thus must be carefully avoided, by checking observer reliability. Another problem is that the observer's presence can cause people to behave differently. In naturalistic observation it is difficult to determine what the actual causes of behavior are and thus naturalistic observation often provides a starting point for research on causes.

In the **interview method**, the researcher asks a series of carefully selected questions. A structured interview makes it possible to compare answers directly because each participant is asked the same questions and the questions are asked in the same order. Although it is hard to know whether answers are honest and accurate, interviews can be designed to challenge subjects to answer accurately by posing problems. A variation is the clinical method, in which the researcher asks varying questions according to how the person responds. This method yields protocols such as those of Piaget in his studies of cognitive development. Problems with this method include difficulty in comparing responses of different people, plus the increased possibility that the researcher's subjectivity can affect the results.

Another variation of the interview method is the **case study,** in which an individual or case is assessed repeatedly and extensively through observation, testing, or interviews, as in Freud's work. Case studies are a rich source of information and are particularly useful when what is to be studied is extremely rare or other methods might be unethical.

Let us say we are interested in gathering information about the characteristics of women who have flown on NASA Space Shuttle missions. It would not make sense to create surveys and collect data from a random sample of women. Instead, we want to intensively investigate just those women who have served in that role. A case study, then, would allow us to collect rich data on just the individuals we are interested in examining. With case studies, there are problems with accuracy and generalizability to other people, as well as difficulties in comparing results from different cases.

The experimental method is considered to be objective and also allows the researcher to assess causes for behavior. Typically, the participants are sorted into groups who receive different treatments, thus establishing an independent variable. In turn measuring the dependent variable shows the researcher whether the different treatments caused an effect.

Let us say that we are interested in determining if ingesting caffeine before a quiz will improve performance. We would randomly divide our students into two groups. The first group will be given coffee with caffeine. The second group will be given decaffeinated coffee. Neither group knows whether they are receiving caffeine. Then we measure performance on the quiz. An independent variable is what is manipulated between the groups and a dependent variable is an outcome that is measured. So, in this example, the independent variable (what is manipulated) is the presence of caffeine (it is also just the difference between what is done to the two groups). The dependent variable (the outcome that is measured) would be quiz scores. The reason that this variable is called "dependent" is that we assume that quiz score performance "depends" on whether or not the students ingested caffeine.

To be confident of the causes, researchers strive for **experimental control**. This includes treating the subjects the same in all ways other than the independent variable (that is why both groups in the example above were given coffee to drink.) The groups are made as much alike as possible through **random assignment** (when we let chance divide our students in the above example into two groups, we were using the concept of random assignment). We use random assignment to make sure that it is as likely as possible that there are not significant differences between our groups before the study even starts. If we told our students, for example, that we wanted to test the impact of caffeine on performance and had them volunteer to receive or not receive caffeine, that might bias our data. Perhaps there is already something different about people who want to ingest caffeine versus those who do not.

One recurring criticism is that laboratory experiments may be artificial, and so researchers often conduct field experiments in natural settings such as home or school, as in contrast, quasi-experiments take advantage of naturally occurring independent variables rather than experimentally controlled ones. But it is difficult to assess causation versus correlation.

Measuring developmental "change" requires special research designs. A research design in which groups of participants of different ages are studied at the same point in time is an example of the **cross-sectional** comparison. But, researchers are often mislead on changes in development since factors other than developmental change can influence the findings in cross-sectional research. Some of these problems are eliminated in **longitudinal** comparisons, but new problems are created. With this technique the same people are studied at different points across time, thus allowing more of a look at individual differences in development; but such projects are costly and very time-consuming. Loss of subjects can produce a nonrepresentative sample. And there is the cohort effect or cross-generational problem that our world is continuously changing at the same time that the subjects are developing.

Thus, the **longitudinal-sequential design** combines the first two methods. This method saves time and money, and it also provides the clearest information about developmental change. A recent modification of the longitudinal approach, called the microgenetic design is becoming popular because it offers unique insights into how development takes place. Researchers track change while it occurs, observing frequently from the time it begins until **it stabilizes.**

The **generalizability of research** findings across different cultures is also an issue, and thus **cross-cultural comparisons** assess whether findings are universal or culturally relative. Culture-specific patterns of behavior are also important to an understanding of human development.

Critical Issue - Ethical Considerations in Developmental Research

In studying human development, the issue of research ethics is always present. The most basic guideline is that all subjects must be protected from potential mental or physical harm. Two important principles are (1) **informed consent** or written consent to participate (children by age 7 should also sign a consent form) and (2) **right of privacy**: subjects must be assured that highly personal information they may provide will be kept entirely private. Researchers can use the information "collectively" but can not report individually unless specific permission has been given.

With children in particular, the investigator must bear in mind that the child's rights come first, that the responsibility for maintaining ethical practices rests with the investigator, that the child must be informed and can refuse to participate at any point, that parental consent is required, and that no operation can be employed that may harm the child either physically or psychologically. When in doubt, and since it is always necessary to weigh the possible benefits of the research against the potential risks to the participants, research is typically reviewed and evaluated by professional committees in making a decision about whether to proceed. These considerations apply to all research involving human participants. But, many questions remain as to what is ethical in research. For example questioning:

- whether children can be exposed to situations in which socially inappropriate behavior will occur,

- whether asking children about parental discipline is an invasion of privacy,

- whether subjects can be deceived in the course of research, whether naturalistic observation can occur without informing the participants, and

- whether verbal punishment can be used.

Research Question

A major contribution of Piaget's theory is his view of children as naturally curious beings who actively explore and try to understand. His theory is the most detailed and integrated version of cognitive development. Critics of his theory point out that one difficulty with his theory is the timing of his stages. Another problem is the implication that development occurs abruptly, in stages, rather than continuously. Finally, Piaget's theory has been criticized as being merely descriptive of cognitive development rather than explanation.

What research can you find to address these criticisms and fill the gaps?

Recent research indicates that preoperational children are less egocentric than Piaget supposed. They sometimes take others points of view, although not always. Piaget may have also underestimated the peroperational child's causal reasoning. For example, various researchers have found that conservation problems can be taught to preoperational children by methods such as identity training. How could you find out if reversibility and compensation are necessary for conservation?

Conclusions

Development refers to those changes that occur in association with increasing chronological age or the passing of time. Change does not occur without purpose. Developmentalists assume that change will lead the individual to attain his/her potential as a unique, fully functioning human being. Change is studied by a variety of methods and research designs. Often more than one method is used to gather data. Each method and design has its own unique reliability and validity. Research is usually found to be based on a particular theory (ies). As yet no one theory best describes human development. The one thing common to all research and investigation into human development is the strict adherence to ethical practices and the presentation of human subjects.

Paper Topics

- John Lock and Jean-Jacques Rousseau had very different perspectives on development. Compare and contrast their position and show how recent theory has evolved for these.

- Choose either Skinner's Walden Two or Neil's Summer Hill and analyze the contents with regard to parenting, education, health or any area which may impact you as a professional or citizen.

- Choose one of the major theorists discussed in your text. Research the individual's background and identify specifics that may have influenced their theory. For example, Freud's theory has been criticized on the basis that it was designed around problems of sexually repressed, upper class Victorians.

Suggested Readings

Kagan, J. (1984). The nature of the child. New York: Basic Books.

Kessen, W. (Ed.), & Mussen, P. H. (Series Ed.). 1983. Handbook of child psychology: Vol. 1. History, theory and methods. New York: Wiley.

Miller, P. H. (1993). Theories of developmental psychology (3rd ed.). New York: W. H. Freeman and Company.

Seitz, V. (1988). Methodology. In M. H. Bornstein & M. E. Lamb (Eds.), Developmental Psychology: An advanced textbook (2nd ed.) (pp. 51-84).Hillsdale, NJ: Earlbaum.

Thomas, R. M. (Ed.) (1990). The encyclopedia of human development and education. Theory, research, and studies. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Exercise 1
Research Methods

Read each of the following two examples and identify

1) variables (e.g. independent, dependent, etc.)

2) method (e.g. experimental, interview, case study, etc.)

3) design (cross-sectional/longitudinal, etc.)

4) questions concerning reliability and/or validity

Researchers set up lab to look much like a family home. Pairs of one-year olds, two-year olds and three-year olds were brought into the setting and allowed to play in the family room while two adults had a conversation in an adjacent room. One of each pair experienced a "warm" atmosphere in which the adult conversation was friendly and calm. The second child in each pair experiences a situation in which the adults began to argue and shout and make loud noises. The research hypothesis was that the quality of adult interaction would effect the children's emotional reaction while playing with a familiar companion. The results of the study showed the even short periods of time spent with intense adult anger can create negative emotions and antisocial behavior.

A group of researchers was interested in whether the amount of positive vs. negative reinforcement received by a group of adults in an adult day care facility was relative to their satisfaction with life in general. Through a two way observation window the researchers were able to view the adults in a recreation room. The researchers developed a "Satisfaction Towards Life Scale," consisting of twenty open ended questions. Each adult was asked the twenty questions and the answers were recorded. For seven days the researchers observed the adults noting any positive or negative exchanges between guests, staff and/or other clients and each adult. Results of the study supported the hypothesis that the more positive or negative the responses to an individual the more positive or negative the response to others. A post test with the Satisfaction Towards Life Scale showed a similar result. The research concluded the reinforcement history of the individual is directly related to their satisfaction, and is no doubt universal.

Exercise 2
Theory

Think of several people that you know.

Which theory or theories best explain(s) each of these individuals.

You might choose characteristics, needs, or behavior as your focus for analysis.