

Module 5: Life Span Development

Topic 1 Content: Studying Nature vs. Nurture

Introduction

studying nature vs. nurture



What influences your personality more: your genetics or your experiences? Delve into the complexities of how researchers use twins to uncover the mysteries of nature versus nurture. Click the next button to begin.

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Twin Studies

Twin studies



- Involve adopted siblings, identical twins, and fraternal twins
- Enable researchers to discover the role of genetics or environment on each twin

Behavior geneticists do research on people to determine which traits are due to heredity, and which traits are due to the environment. One of the most common methods used in their work is the twin study.

Twin studies involve all types of siblings, including adopted siblings, identical twins, and fraternal twins. Studying twins proves incredibly valuable to behavioral geneticists because this population enables researchers to discover the role of genetics or environment on each twin's biology and psychology.

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Identical Twins

Identical Twins



- Share almost 100% of their genetics
- Almost every difference is due to environmental experiences
- If separated at birth, environmental differences are further highlighted

Identical twins share almost one hundred percent of their genes. Therefore, almost every difference between the twins is due to environmental experiences, rather than shared genetics. These differences may include things like weight, academic capabilities, or attitude. If identical twins are separated at birth, the environmental differences are even further highlighted, since the twins were not raised in the same household and most likely did not go to the same school.

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Adopted Siblings

Adopted siblings



- Grow up in similar environments
- Allow researchers to study factors not examined in twin studies
- Tend to act more like their biological parents than adoptive parents

Siblings who are adopted do not share genetic material; however, they do grow up in similar environments. By studying adopted siblings, behavior geneticists are able to research other factors that are not examined in twin studies. Such studies have revealed that adopted children tend to act more like their biological parents than their adoptive parents. This indicates a strong connection between a person's traits and a person's genetics.

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Influences of Nature

influences of nature



- Temperament
- Core personality traits
- Intelligence
- Predisposition to psychological disorders

Researchers believe the following traits are more influenced by genetics, than environment:

- temperament;
- core personality traits;
- intelligence; and
- predisposition to psychological disorders.

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Influences of Nurture

influences of nurture



- Values
- Attitude
- Religious beliefs
- Political beliefs

Researchers believe the following traits are more influenced by environment, than genetics:

- values;
- attitude;
- religious beliefs; and
- political beliefs.