

# Essay on theoretical concepts in practice

[Environment](#), [Nature](#)



## **Psychology: Theoretical Concepts in Practice**

### Observation 1

Location: A blog article posted on The Wall Street Journal (<http://blogs.wsj.com/economics/tag/education/>)

The article reviewed a study that had been released a few days earlier that had reached a conclusion that popular kids in high school earn more later on in life than their counterparts (Derby, 2012). In his review, Derby (2012) observed that the study, which was published by the National Bureau of Research, suggested that popularity is not an inborn personality trait, but rather a trait that can be acquired through building social skills and benefits the individuals.

### **Psychological application**

This case study best illustrates the concept of nature versus nurture with respect to Decartes' mind. Under this concept, the extent to which one's heredity and environmental interactions shape their personality is the issue of debate. Here, it can be argued that the prowess exhibited by the popular students as regards popularity is a matter of inheritance and cannot be changed (Chow, 2002). On the other hand, Derby (2012) noted that the findings of the research argued for the nurture perspective. It recommended that popularity among all students be promoted by schools through adopting initiatives that will help them build on social skills. According to Mysterud (2003, p. 189), the nature-nurture dichotomy is false since genes take their discourse from nature, and therefore the two are related. Even so, the findings still support the nurture view.

## **Observation 2**

Location: CNN Politics; Election Center (<http://edition.cnn.com/POLITICS/pollingcenter/polls/3293>)

The news article presented the latest opinion polls for the presidential race as per 24th October, 2012. The source of the data reported is Time (CNN, 2012). This poll reported that the two presidential candidates, Mitt Romney and Barack Obama, tied at 45% to 45% votes. Americans were asked who they would vote for if the elections were to be held then. 45% chose Obama against Romney's similar margin of 45%. 6% of voters did not know yet while a further 3% would not vote for any of them. The sample was drawn from 683 likely voters in Ohio. CNN reported a margin of error of +/-3%.

## **Psychological application**

The case incorporates various research techniques to come up with summary measures of the likely poll outcome. These include the sampling technique. Chow (2002) argued that this technique is often used when the population under study is very large and presents challenges that may not be overcome conveniently. Various data analysis techniques have also been employed in the presentation of percentages. These measures, according to Chow (2002, p. 9), are important in presenting precise but comprehensive statistical data in psychology. Data from which these summarizing figures are drawn may at times be too large to be interpreted easily. Another important psychological concept identified in the article is the referencing technique. CNN has identified the source of the data presented as Time (CNN, 2012). This is an application of ethic in research, a practice that is strongly encouraged in psychological research.

## References

Derby, S. M. (2012). Popular Kids in High School Earn More in Life. The Wall Street Journal, Thursday, October 23, 2012. Retrieved from: <http://blogs.wsj.com/economics/tag/education/>

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Mysterud, I. (2003). Long Live Nature via Nurture. Evolutionary Psychology, 1: pp. 188-191