**Theoretical Perspectives**

**Structural Functionalism-** a sociological theory that attempts to explain how a society is organized to perform its required functions effectively

**Social Exchange Theory-** a psychological theory that explains the social factors that influence how individuals interact within reciprocal relationships

**Symbolic Interactionism –** a psychological theory that explains how individuals choose how they will act based on their perceptions of themselves and others

**Systems Theory-** a sociological theory that explains how groups interact as a system, or how different parts work together and influence one another in a relatively stable way over time

**Life Course Approach/Developmental Theories –** examines behaviours demonstrated by individuals or families at various stages in their lives**.** It attempts to describe patterns of growth and change throughout the human life span

**Conflict Theory –** an interdisciplinary sociological and political theory that explains how *power*, **not** function, holds a society together, **not** by individuals and groups needing and depending on each other

**Feminist Theories-** developed to explain the impact of sex and gender on behaviour from the point of view of women. They consider the power and control issues of men over women.

**Ecological Systems Theory** – modern psychological theory that looks at individuals and families as members of interlocking systems within society that influence each other