



MUHIBB ALI

**NATURE OF
PSYCHOLOGY
NOTES**

For B.ed, BA, And other Programs

www.24hpdf.com

Unit 3:- Nature Of The Subject Psychology

***Meaning and Definitions of Psychology:**

Psychology is the scientific study of behaviour and mental processes. Behaviour includes all of our outward or overt actions and reactions, such as verbal and facial expressions and movements.

Mental processes refer to all the internal and covert activity of our mind such as thinking, feeling and remembering. It is a scientific study because to study behaviour and mental processes, the psychologists use the scientific methods for understanding more precisely and accurately.

The word Psychology has its origin from two Greek words 'Psyche' and 'Logos', 'psyche' means 'soul' and 'logos' means 'study'. Thus literally, Psychology means 'the study of soul' or 'science of soul'.

1. The first definition of the Psychology was the study of the soul:

The earliest attempts at defining Psychology owe their origin to the most mysterious and philosophical concept, namely that of soul. What is soul? How can it be studied? The inability to find answers to such questions led some ancient Greek philosophers to define psychology as the study of the mind.

2. In terms of the study of the mind:

Although the word mind was less mysterious and vague than soul, yet it also faced the same questions, namely what is mind? How can it be studied, etc. This definition was also rejected.

3. In terms of the study of consciousness:

The description and explanation of the states of consciousness is the task of Psychology which is usually done by the instrument introspection—process of looking within.

4. In terms of the study of behaviour:

The most modern and widely accepted definition of psychology even today, is the study of behaviour, both humans and animals.

5. William McDougall:

In his book *An Outline of Psychology*, “Psychology is a science which aims to give us better understanding and control of the behaviour of the organism as a whole”.

6. JB Watson:

Psychology is “the science of behaviour” (taking into account the human as well as animal behaviour).

7. NL Munn:

“Psychology is the science and the properly trained psychologist is a scientist, or at least a practitioner who uses scientific methods and information resulting from scientific investigations”.

***Scope of Psychology:**

The field of psychology can be understood by various subfields of psychology making an attempt in meeting the goals of psychology.

1. Physiological Psychology:

In the most fundamental sense, human beings are biological organisms. Physiological functions and the www.24helpof.com work together to influence our behaviour. Biopsychology is the branch that specializes in the area. Biopsychologists may examine the ways in which specific sites in the brain which are related to disorders such as Parkinson’s disease or they may try to determine how our sensations are related to our behaviour.

2. Developmental Psychology:

Here the studies are with respect to how people grow and change throughout their life from prenatal stages, through childhood, adulthood and old age. Developmental psychologists work in a variety of settings like colleges, schools, healthcare centres, business centres, government and non-profit organizations, etc. They are also very much involved in studies of the disturbed children and advising parents about helping such children.

3. Personality Psychology:

This branch helps to explain both consistency and change in a person’s behaviour over time, from birth till the end of life through the influence of parents, siblings, playmates, school, society and culture. It also studies the individual traits that differentiate the behaviour of one person from that of another person.

4. Health Psychology:

This explores the relations between the psychological factors and physical ailments and disease. Health psychologists focus on health maintenance and promotion of behaviour related to good health such as exercise, health habits and discouraging unhealthy behaviours like smoking, drug abuse and alcoholism.

Health psychologists work in healthcare setting and also in colleges and universities where they conduct research. They analyse and attempt to improve the healthcare system and formulate health policies.

5. Clinical Psychology:

It deals with the assessment and intervention of abnormal behaviour. As some observe and believe that psychological disorders arise from a person's unresolved conflicts and unconscious motives, others maintain that some of these patterns are merely learned responses, which can be unlearned with training, still others are content with the knowledge of thinking that there are biological basis to certain psychological disorders, especially the more serious ones. Clinical psychologists are employed in hospitals, clinics and private practice. They often work closely with other specialists in the field of mental health.

6. Counselling Psychology:

This focuses primarily on educational, social and career adjustment problems. Counselling psychologists advise students on effective study habits and the kinds of job they might be best suited for, and provide help concerned with mild problems of social nature and strengthen healthy lifestyle, economical and emotional adjustments.

They make use of tests to measure aptitudes, interests and personality characteristics. They also do marriage and family counselling, provide strategies to improve family relations.

7. Educational Psychology:

Educational psychologists are concerned with all the concepts of education. This includes the study of motivation, intelligence, personality, use of rewards and punishments, size of the class, expectations, the personality traits and the effectiveness of the teacher, the student-teacher relationship, the attitudes, etc. It is also concerned with designing tests to evaluate student performance. They also

help in designing the curriculum to make learning more interesting and enjoyable to children.

Educational psychology is used in elementary and secondary schools, planning and supervising special education, training teachers, counselling students having problems, assessing students with learning difficulties such as poor writing and reading skills and lack of concentration.

8. Social Psychology:

This studies the effect of society on the thoughts, feelings and actions of people. Our behaviour is not only the result of just our personality and predisposition. Social and environmental factors affect the way we think, say and do. Social psychologists conduct experiments to determine the effects of various groups, group pressures and influence on behaviour.

They investigate on the effects of propaganda, persuasion, conformity, conflict, integration, race, prejudice and aggression. These investigations explain many incidents that would otherwise be difficult to understand. Social psychologists work largely in colleges and universities and other organizations.

9. Industrial and Organizational Psychology:

The private and public organizations apply psychology to management and employee training, supervision of personnel, improve communication within the organization, counselling employees and reduce industrial disputes.

Thus we can say that in organizational and industrial sectors not only the psychological effects of working attitude of the employees are considered but also the physical aspects are given importance to make workers feel healthy.

10. Experimental Psychology:

It is the branch that studies the processes of sensing, perceiving, learning, thinking, etc. by using scientific methods. The outcome of the experimental psychology is cognitive psychology which focuses on studying higher mental processes including thinking, knowing, reasoning, judging and decision-making. Experimental psychologists often do research in lab by frequently using animals as their experimental subjects.

11. Environmental Psychology:

It focuses on the relationships between people and their physical and social surroundings. For example, the density of population and its relationship with crime, the noise pollution and its harmful effects and the influence of overcrowding upon lifestyle, etc.

12. Psychology of Women:

This concentrates on psychological factors of women's behaviour and development. It focuses on a broad range of issues such as discrimination against women, the possibility of structural differences in the brain of men and women, the effect of hormones on behaviour, and the cause of violence against women, fear of success, outsmarting nature of women with respect to men in various accomplishments.

13. Sports and Exercise Psychology:

It studies the role of motivation in sport, social aspects of sport and physiological issues like importance of training on muscle development, the coordination between eye and hand, the muscular coordination in track and field, swimming and gymnastics.

www.24hpdf.com

14. Cognitive Psychology:

It has its roots in the cognitive outlook of the Gestalt principles. It studies thinking, memory, language, development, perception, imagery and other mental processes in order to peep into the higher human mental functions like insight, creativity and problem-solving. The names of psychologists like Edward Tolman and Jean Piaget are associated with the propagation of the ideas of this school of thought.

***The Nature of Psychology-**

Psychology is the scientific study and practical application of observable behavior and mental processes of organisms. Psychology differs from other social sciences such as: Sociology, History, or Economics, because psychology specifically deals with the study of an individual. The other social sciences will study groups, or history. Psychology is less a science of reported findings, it attempts asks and answers questions using observable behavior and what can be determined as mental processes of the subject. The symbol for psychology is the Greek letter "psi" (Ø).

The subject matter of psychology is, affect, behavior, and cognition. The affect for psychology is the actual mental processes that make up: moods, feeling, and emotional state. An example for affect would be feeling sad about something happening. Behavior includes the actually actions and responses of organisms. Behavior can include the way we act in any given situation, for example when we get up in the morning. The order in the way we prepare ourselves for going out into public can be categorized as our behavior. Cognition is the actual mental events and the processes that result from them. Memories of an event are a great example of an organism's cognition. The components and corresponding faces of psychology include the body of knowledge which is considered the teaching face, set of investigative methods or research face, and array of techniques the therapy face. The goals of psychology are: to explain behaviors, to describe behaviors, to predict behavior, and to modify inappropriate behaviors. Explaining behaviors would be a question similar to "Why does this happen?", and example of how describing behavior could be accomplished would be asking "What causes this behavior, where does it come from?". Predictions can be elaborated on by asking "When will the behavior occur?". An example of a behavioral modification question is "What can be changed in the environment to www.24hourpdf.com?"

3.4 Relation of the Subject Psychology with Natural Sciences-

****Psychology and Biology:***

Psychology is a science of the experience and behaviour. However experience cannot be adequately explained without the concomitant physiological processes. The environment acts on the mind through the sense-organs; and the mind reacts to the environment through the muscles. The sense-organs and muscles are organs of the body. So mental processes are closely related to bodily processes.

In fact, mental processes are regarded by many psychologists as functions of life. They are devices for better adaptation of the psycho-physical organism to the environment. Many modern psychologists treat psychology from the biological point of view.

They hold that consciousness emerges when the innate reactions fail to adapt the organism to the environment, and that higher mental processes are evolved in order to adjust the organism more and more effectively to the complex environment.

The relation between psychological science and biological science is very close. Experience and behaviour of an individual can be explained in terms of some of the basic concepts of biological science. E. R. Hess has shown that there are close correlations between psychic and neuronal processes in human personality.

****Psychology and Physiology:***

Psychology is a science of experience. Experiences of an individual are intimately connected with physiological processes, especially of the nervous system. Hence, psychology studies these physiological processes in order to adequately account for mental processes.

It does not study those physiological processes which are not related to mental processes, because it is primarily concerned with mental processes and behaviour.

Psychology and Philosophy:

Philosophy has two parts epistemology and ontology. Psychology is related to epistemology. Psychology enquires into the nature of knowing, feeling, and willing. It deals with knowing as a fact, and the nature and development of knowledge of an individual mind www.24hpdf.com

It is concerned with the validity of knowledge. Psychology assumes the possibility of knowledge and merely traces its growth and development in an individual mind.

But Epistemology enquires into the conditions under which knowledge is possible, and deals with the validity of knowledge.

****Psychology and Sociology:***

Psychology deals with the behaviour pattern of an individual in relation to the environment which is physical as well as social. The external world or light, sound, taste, smell, heat, cold, etc., constitute the physical environment. Parents, relatives, friends, enemies, playmates, companions and all the people with whom an individual comes into contact and interacts constitute his social environment.

The individual mind grows and develops through interaction with the society. He develops his personality through social intercourse. There is constant interaction between the individual and the society.

Sociology deals with the nature, origin, and development of society. It investigates into manners, customs and institutions of a society in all its stages of development from the savage to the civilized state. Hence, psychology is intimately related to sociology.

Sociology is primarily concerned with the study of the interrelationships between human personalities in social groups. It is concerned with the study of the bonds which inter-relate individuals in society. The nature of inter-personal relationships has become quite intelligible through investigations in the field of psychology.

It is obvious, then, that there is considerable overlapping between the provinces of psychology and sociology. However, in spite of the fact that there is close relation between psychology and sociology there are certain points of difference between the two.

Psychology is primarily concerned with the experience and behaviour of an individual. Sociology, on the other hand, is concerned with the role that an individual plays in society.

www.24hpdf.com

Social psychology deals with the collective behaviour. It investigates the peculiar characteristics of the individuals which they acquire as members of groups. It studies the behaviour of the crowd and the mob. It studies the psychological principles of social organisation. It is the meeting ground of psychology and sociology.

Psychology, sociology and social psychology are the various branches of social science. Psychology and sociology are concerned with the study of behaviour of individuals in social setting. They study behaviour from different points of view.

***Relation of the Subject Psychology with Education-**

Psychology is the science of the behaviour of the individual in relation to the environment. Education is the science of unfolding the powers, of the pupil and moulding his character and behaviour in such a manner that he becomes a useful and well-adjusted member of the community.

Education is the process of developing the powers of the individual harmoniously, and adjusting him to the social environment by modifying his behaviour.

Therefore, educational psychology applies the general principles of psychology to the practical needs of education. It gives a psychological foundation to education and makes it sound.

Education implies two agents—viz., the teacher and the pupil. The teacher should know the mind of the pupil. Otherwise, he cannot impart appropriate education to him. There are special characteristics of the child mind which differ according to different stages of its development.

A teacher should utilize the principles of psychology to develop the child's powers of observation, attention, memory, imagination, thinking, emotion, volition, and character.

Psychology helps an educationist by telling him of the innate endowment of the child, of the laws of his mental development, of the effect of the environment on his mind. It helps an educationist by telling him how one person acts on another, how the group life influences the individual and how the corporate life of a school moulds the personality of a child.

It helps an educationist by telling him how knowledge systems are built up, and how new knowledge is received and assimilated into the system of knowledge already formed.

During recent years psychological techniques are employed for evoking creative behaviour. Jackson and Messick maintain that human invention results from the interaction between the creative person, his product of creativity, and the responses of the environment to it.

Psychological principles have been very successfully applied to educational designs. **“Man has himself created the human civilization through his educational designs.”** It is evident, then, that the relation between psychology and education is very close.

Education is a normative science. It lays down the end of education. Psychology cannot help the science of education in defining its end. But it can point out the

means of realizing the end of education. It studies mental processes, e.g., motives, emotions, and sentiments of the child, the adolescent and the adult.

Therefore, it can help the education of the child, the adolescent and the adult. It studies the behaviour of the individual and the group. Therefore, it can help the science of education which seeks to stimulate the intellectual growth of a learner.

***Lecture Method-**

Lecture method is one of the most commonly used method in teaching. Definition It is a method of teaching whereby the teacher attempts to explain facts, principles or relationship to help students to understand. The teacher is an active participant, the students are passive listener. The teacher talks more or less continuously to the class. The class listens, writes, and notes facts and the ideas for remembering and to think them over later. Usually the students do not converse with the teacher during lecture by the teacher. It is a one way method. A few questions may be asked by the students to clarify a point but no discussion is usually held. As used in teaching of nursing, it has however, many modifications. It is formal and narrative in nature; It presents a series of www.24hourpdf.com It explores problem It is the most dominating method today and is liked by majority of teachers.

Merits of the Lecture Methods

It is economical; a single teacher can teach a large number of students at a time which is not possible by using other methods.

It saves much time and the syllabus can be very easily covered within a limited time.

It simplifies the work of the teacher. The teacher has to put much less efforts to prepare her lessons, and can develop the presentation according to her plan.

She need not worry for demonstrating a procedure. It is useful for imparting factual information and drawing attention to its vital elements.

It gives a feeling of security to the teacher. Interruptions and distractions are avoided.

Demerits of the Lecture Methods

Provides very little opportunity for student activity, unless the teacher takes special care to make the class interesting.

Does not facilitate learning of how to solve problem. Offers limited opportunities for checking learning progress, whether the students are attending and understanding all that the teacher is explaining.

' The interests, abilities, and intelligence of students are not taken care of. Does not allow individual pace of learning.

Has low receptivity. The rate of imparting information by the teacher may be too fast for the learner to get necessary connection of thought.

***Seminar -**

Seminar as a method of group discussion is similar in many ways to a symposium. It is usually used with students in the colleges and universities. It can also be used for higher level students in the schools. Purpose The purpose of seminar is to provide opportunity to students to actively participate in finding answers to questions or solution to problems using scientific approach of doing analysis and synthesis of facts observed. The Technique Used for Seminar In this method, the class as a whole or in several groups or individual students selects problems and systematically applies the steps of problem solving. In the process, students do lots of literature search and collect facts from primary source when necessary and feasible. The facts are compiled, analyzed, and critically evaluated and summarized under the close supervision and guidance of teacher. The periodic reports and discussions are held at various phases of problem solving to share the experience and do critical evaluation under the control and direction of the chairman. The chairman usually is the student. The role of the chairman is the same as that of a chairman of symposium. But the teacher needs to lead and control the discussion. She should encourage all students to participate in discussion. The effectiveness of seminar would depend upon selection and preparation of the topic. The teacher needs to help the students to select, plan and organize, prepare and collect data, analyses and report to the group as students.

Advantages

Seminar has the following advantages:

It gives training in self learning. It promotes independent thinking.

It promotes team spirit and co-operative attitude.

Disadvantages

The main disadvantage like in symposium, it consumes considerable time on the part of students and teacher in planning, organizing, preparing etc; for investigations, library search, analysis, and presentation etc; and thus can be used for selected problem areas.

***Curriculum and syllabus-**

Curriculum is the tool in the hands of the artist (teacher) to mold his material (pupil) according to his ideas (objectives) in his studio (school)."

– CUNNINGHAM

"The curriculum may be considered as the vehicle whereby and through which we hope to enable children to achieve the objectives of education."

– HENRY J.OTTO

"Curriculum includes all those activities which are utilized by the school to attend the aims of education."

– MUNROE

"Curriculum is all the experiences a learner has under the guidance of the school."

– FOSHAY

***MEANING AND DEFINITION OF SYLLABUS**

The syllabus is a part of the curriculum. It is a plan of learning experiences of a particular subject to be provided to the learners to meet their needs of a particular standard in a year/semester

It refers to the content of what is to be taught and the knowledge skills and attitudes which are to be deliberately grown together with stage-specific objective.

The syllabus determines the basic content of instruction in a given subject and the range of knowledge and skill which the pupils must acquire and establish in detail.

In short, the syllabus includes-

- Specific content
- Particular subject
- Methods, materials, and media
- Evaluation and guidance
- References

CURRICULUM	SYLLABUS
● It is the complete set of taught materials in a school system.	● The syllabus is the content, list of topics, concepts to be taught.
● It is prescriptive in nature.	● It is descriptive in nature.
● The curriculum prescribes the objectives of the system.	● The syllabus describes the means to achieve them.
● It is for a course. www.24hpdf.com	● It is for a subject.
● It provides a baseline for the syllabus.	● It provides the baseline for textbooks.
● It is decided by the government or the school or college administration.	● The syllabus is prepared by teachers.
● It is quite an extensive and massive concept.	● It is quite narrow and small.
● It prepares for life.	● It prepares for an exam.
● It is based on philosophy, goals, and values of life.	● It is not primarily based on these.
● It aims for a change in behavior.	● It aims for achieving the objectives of a course.

***Psychology laboratory-**

What is a Psychology Lab?

To explain what happens in a psychology lab, we must first answer the question, “What is a psychology lab?” The answer to this question really depends on the type of lab that’s being discussed.

As you well know, psychology is a widely varied discipline with dozens of areas of specialty. This means that there are many different areas of psychological research, each of which requires a lab environment that might vary from one specialty to the next.

We’ll get into some of the different types of psychology labs in a moment, but for now, just understand that the general purpose of any psychology lab is to create a controlled environment in which researchers can study human behavior. This level of control is of the utmost importance in psychology laboratory work.

This is because psychology labs are founded on the notion of the scientific method – that a hypothesis must be formed, tested, and accepted or rejected under very strictly designed conditions. www.24hpdf.com

The goal, of course, is to manipulate the independent variable (the factor that causes behavior) and measure the dependent variable (or the effect caused by the independent variable) in a setting that minimizes confounding conditions.

The goal of doing so is to establish a better understanding of why people do the things they do. Of course, this is the whole purpose of psychology – to study human behavior. But to do so in an environment in which researchers have pinpoint control over what happens and when allows psychologists to study very fine details of human behavior and thought.

What Kind of Psychology Laboratories are There?

As noted earlier, psychology is a widely varied field, so depending on the research under study, psychology labs might have a very different look.

For example, let’s assume that the research being conducted is on cognition and brain functioning.

This being the case, the psychology lab might be equipped with a functional MRI machine that allows psychological researchers to measure and record a subject's brain activity.

These measurements rely on the changes in blood flow in the brain – movement of blood in the brain goes hand in hand with the activation of neurons. That means that depending on the task the subject is performing, a different area of their brain will be activated. The fMRI shows this by highlighting the active areas of the brain.

So, a lab like this uses very sophisticated equipment to answer questions about how people think, factors that influence attention, and that might lead to insights on how people can improve their ability to focus as they complete a task.

On the other side of the spectrum is a psychology lab built to simply observe what the subject or subjects are doing.

For example, some labs have a room set up with a two-way mirror. This allows researchers behind the mirror to silently observe what's going on on the other side. A lab like this might be used by developmental psychologists to observe the playmaking activities of toddlers in a social setting.

Likewise, many labs have small interview rooms in which a researcher can meet with a subject in a one-on-one setting for things like interviews or for administering a questionnaire or a test of some kind, like an IQ test.

There are even virtual psychology labs today where psychology students can engage in learning about classic psychology research, see how to design and carry out experiments, and learn about the science of investigation.

In other words, no two psychology labs are alike.

What Equipment is Used in Psychology Labs?

As you might have guessed, the psychology lab equipment list will be different from one lab to the next.

Most labs will have basic office equipment like computers and computer software, writing utensils, desks, chairs, and so forth. But as the type of research becomes more specialized, different kinds of lab equipment are necessary.

For example, if the research question relates to how attractive a person's face is perceived to be based on the symmetry of the person's face, researchers would need the appropriate software to create sample images of faces with varying degrees of symmetry. What's more, they would need a computer and screen to display the faces of the experimental subjects.

Some labs look more like classroom settings, while others have more of an office feel. Yet others are full of complex machinery that's used to collect or interpret data.

Despite these examples being quite different from one another, the ultimate goal of the lab is the same – to collect data from subjects in an environment that is as controlled as possible from outside variables or influence.

By controlling possible confounding variables in a lab setting, researchers can more clearly establish a cause and effect relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

What is the Importance of Psychology Laboratory Research?

As noted earlier, laboratory research allows psychologists to more clearly link cause and effect, thus pinpointing why certain behaviors occur in certain conditions. And since experiments are undertaken in a controlled environment using standardized procedures, they are much more easily replicated by other researchers.

This replication component is crucial, as it allows researchers to:

- Identify potential mistakes in the original research
- Provide an opportunity for other researchers to review the work
- Publish their research (published work must have a section on experimental methods that allow others to replicate the study)
- Check for confounding variables, or variables that unintentionally influenced the results of the study
- Avoid retractions (if research is replicated and confirmed, the likelihood that a researcher has to retract their findings is minimized)

Aside from the research components above, psychology laboratory research is important for developing a better understanding of human behavior.

While other research methods like naturalistic observation and self-reporting are extremely valuable tools for psychological research, they cannot offer researchers nearly the same level of control over the environment as laboratory studies.