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*By: Neena Kaushik*

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# QUESTION PAPER

(June - 2019)

(Solved)

## GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY

Time: 2 Hours ]

[ Maximum Marks: 50

Note: All sections are compulsory.

### SECTION-A

Answer the following questions:

**Q. 1. Define memory. Discuss short-term and long-term memory.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-12, Page No. 103, 'Model Definition of Memory', Page No. 104, 'Short-term Memory' and 'Long term Memory'.

**Q. 2. Elaborate the process of perception and perceptual constancy. Explain the laws of perceptual organisation.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-13, Page No. 120, Q. No. 1.

**Also Add:** Perceptual constancy, also called Object Constancy, or Constancy Phenomenon, the tendency of animals and humans to see familiar objects as having standard shape, size, colour, or location regardless of changes in the angle of perspective, distance, or lighting. The impression tends to conform to the object as it is or is assumed to be, rather than to the actual stimulus. Perceptual constancy is responsible for the ability to identify objects under various conditions, which seem to be "Taken into account" during a process of mental reconstitution of the known image. For example, snow appears white in the low illumination of moonlight, as well as in sunlight 800,000 times as bright. Perceptual constancy is reduced by limited experience with the object and by decreasing the number of environmental cues that aid in identification of the object.

**Also Add :** Wertheimer and his associates formulated a series of "Laws", called the laws of perception or perceptual organisation. These laws are identified by concepts pragnanz, similarity, proximity, closure, good continuation, and membership character.

Law of pragnanz is in fact the basic law of perception which includes the other laws to explain it. According to the basic law of pragnanz if a perceptual field is disorganized, when a person first experiences it, he/she imposes an order on that field in a "Predictable" way. The predictable way follows the remaining other five laws. Similarity means that similar items (dots for instance) tend to form a group in perception. Proximity means that perceptual groups are favoured according to nearness of their respective parts. Closure means that closed areas are perceptually more stable than unclosed ones. Good continuation in closely related to closure; it means that in perception one tends to continue straight lines as straight lines and curves as curves. According to the law of membership character a single part of a whole does not have fixed characteristics. It gets its characteristics from the context in which it appears.

**Q. 3. Describe the central nervous system, and its different parts.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-6, Page No. 54, Q. No. 4.

**Q. 4. Differentiate between intention, attitudes and interest. Describe Rosenberg's theory of affective-cognitive consistency.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-14, Page No. 134, Q. No. 1, Page No. 140, Q. No. 16, Page No. 134, 'Social Interest', and Page No. 128, 'Rosenberg's Theory of Affective-Cognitive Consistency'.

### SECTION-B

Answer the following questions:

**Q. 5. Describe Bogardus's social distance scale. Define social distance.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-15, Page No. 146, 'Bogardus Social Distance Scale' and 'Concept of Social Distance'.

**Q. 6. Discuss the Trichromatic theory of colour vision.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-11, Page No. 93, 'Trichromatic Theory'.

**Q. 7. Describe the evolutionary theory of Darwin and explain its influence on human development aspects.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-5, Page No. 39, 'Evolutionary' and Page No. 44, Q. No. 8 and Q. No. 6.

**Q. 8. Explain the different aspects of perceptual development.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-8, Page No. 70, Q. No. 1.

**Q. 9. Discuss the different kinds of conflicts and the methods of managing conflicts.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-16, Page No. 158, 'Conflicts of Interest'.

**SECTION-C**

**Write short notes on the following:**

**Q. 10. Biases in Attribution**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-13, Page No. 116, 'Biases in Attribution'.

**Q. 11. Bases of Power**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-16, Page No. 162, 'Power Bases'.

**Q. 12. Weber's Law**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-10, Page No. 87, Q. No. 4.



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# GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY

## INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY, OBJECTIVES, GOALS

### Introduction, Definition and Concept of Psychology



#### INTRODUCTION

What is psychology? Is it a subject dealing with having a disordered mind people and a means of treating such people? Can a psychologist make predictions about a person just by looking at the face of a person? Contrary to such view held by laymen, psychologists cannot be compared with astrologers, gemologists, numerologists, palmists and all such men. Since psychology is concerned with all aspects of our lives, there is curiosity to know about it.

There is a general curiosity to know how psychology evolved and what is its nature? Whether it is a science or an art and what are the criteria for a subject to be classified as scientific are questions which need to be answered. In this chapter we will be throwing light on these issues as well as the subject-matter of psychology.

We shall introduce the subject psychology to our students through which it will be easier to comprehend what psychology is.

#### CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

##### PSYCHOLOGY: ITS ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION

Originated in the 1970s, the word psychology is derived from two Greek words:

‘Psyche’ means soul or breath, and

‘Logos’ mean knowledge or study.

This field of study became popular in the middle of the 19th century and the name psychology was also coined sometime before that.

It was the German Professor Wilhelm Wundt who established the first psychology lab at the university of Leipzig in Germany. He had worked with some great physiologists and was himself a professor of philosophy. The combination of these two subjects served as the basis for the evolution of the beginning of psychology. Psychology then became an independent subject of study academically in 1879. Before this, one could not major in this subject as there was no psychology department or psychologists officially. According to Bolles (1993), Wundt was a medical doctor by training and is considered the father of modern psychology. He studied the structure of mind, which meant the conscious experience, and the contents and processes of subjective things as sensations, thoughts, feelings and emotions.

We shall now define what psychology is.

##### DEFINITION OF PSYCHOLOGY

Sometimes psychology has been called the science of mind, sometimes study of behaviour and sometimes the study of consciousness. Many definitions of psychology have been given by different psychologists. Let us discuss the various definitions since the subject was introduced.

##### Early Definitions

Bagga and Singh (1990) write that the word psychology was first used by Rudolf Goeckle in 1950. Psychology was a part of philosophy earlier, it was considered as the science of the soul. Since soul is a wide and comprehensive in meaning, it was

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considered vague, as the soul does not have a physical body and the dimensions of the soul itself are very questionable.

Dandapani (2004) feels that people are foolish to believe in concepts as soul, mind and consciousness. In his words: 'People were rather naïve to believe in esoteric terms such as soul, mind and consciousness. It was believed, and rightly so, that every human being is endowed with a soul that would remain sublime at all times. To a philosopher soul is the firm foundation upon which ethical values are erected. Realisation of one's soul was considered the chief mission of life.....Definition of psychology as the study of the soul became unacceptable primarily because no convincing proof or evidence of the precise nature of soul was furnished. It was discarded because of its Metaphysical nature. It was found inadequate to satisfy the canons of science;.....'

Psychologists found this definition unacceptable.

Later some Greek philosophers called it the science of the mind. It was considered a branch of mental philosophy, but since there are no means to measure the mind without noting the external behaviour, the definition was also rejected.

Lastly, it came to be recognized as the science of consciousness. Bagga and Singh opined that conscious experience formed the subject-matter of psychology. Consciousness enables us to develop awareness of our surroundings.

It was realized that objective study of consciousness is also not possible, it being subjective and changing from person to person. There was another development in psychology which began to recognize abnormal behaviour. Such behaviour has its roots in subconscious mind, again which does not come under the purview of this definition. Consciousness does not include in its purview behaviour of people or animals. This definition also sounds too philosophical and less scientific. Thus, the consciousness definition was also rejected on account of these criticisms.

The latest definition most widely accepted is that Psychology is a science of behaviour. Watson, who is considered the father of the school of behaviourism, Psychologists like Watson did not consider psychology as the study of the mind but strongly held it as the study of behaviour which can be observed in their activities. A large part of our behaviour can be studied from the activities of animals because it is believed that the behaviour of human beings and animals do not vary much. Watson lays stress on the learning part of behaviour, meaning that it can be learnt and unlearnt and nothing is innate.

To comment on the above developments in the definitions of psychology, Watson says that psychology first lost its soul, then its mind, then lost its consciousness. It still has a kind of behaviour. This word can be noted in all the modern definitions of psychology.

**Current Definitions**

Compilation of the recent definitions of psychology has been done by Hilgard, Atkinson and Atkinson (1975) beginning from the definition given by William James (1890) till the definition given by Kenneth Clark and George Miller (1970). The two definitions by Woodworth and Munn have been quoted by Bagga and Singh (1990):

"Psychology is the scientific study of the activities of the individual in relation to his environment".

"Psychology today concerns itself with the scientific investigation of behaviour, including from the stand point of behaviour, much of what earlier psychologists dealt with as experience."

The recent definitions are given below chronologically:

- Psychology is the science of animal and human behaviour. It includes the application of this science to human problems. (Morgan et al., 1986)
- Feldman (1996): The scientific study of behaviour and mental processes.
- Tavis and Wade (1997): The scientific study of behaviour and mental processes and how they are affected by an organism's physical state, mental state and external environment.
- Das (1998): Psychology is all about human behaviour, mental processes, and about the context in which behaviour and mental processes occur.
- Lahey (1998): The science of behaviour and mental processes.
- Baron (1999): The science of behaviour and cognitive processes.
- Nairne (2003): Scientific study of behaviour and mind.
- Eysenck (2004): A science in which behavioural and other evidence is used to understand the internal processes leading people (and members of other species) to behave as they do.
- Ciccarelli and Meyer (2006) Coon and Mitterer (2007, 2008): The scientific study of behaviour and mental processes.
- Rathus (2008): The science that studies behaviour and mental processes.

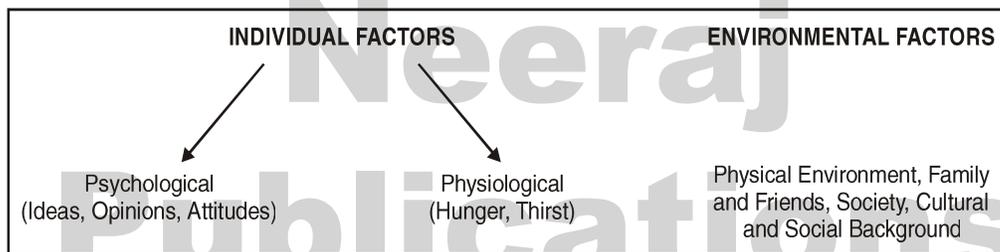
On taking a look at all of the definitions above, we notice that behaviour is commonly mentioned in all of them and some of them also contain the use of mental or cognitive processes. Next we will discuss the nature and characteristics of behaviour.

### Nature and Characteristics of Behaviour

We need to study the nature and characteristics of behaviour as it is a very complex phenomenon. Behaviour means the way we act in day-to-day situations, our actions our interaction with our environment and our response to it. All our actions and responses that are measurable, directly or indirectly are a part of behaviour. It includes our physical actions as well as mental and cognitive processes such as feelings, attitudes, thoughts, emotions and other expressions of self. Different people talk and behave differently, and a study of the way they talk, etc., directly and indirectly helps us to understand their behaviour.

Human behaviour has certain peculiar characteristics. They have been described by Parmeshwaram and Beena as follows:

- **Behaviour is influenced by a number of factors:** There are many factors such as biological, cultural, social, environmental, past experience, motivational, emotional. Cognitive such as feelings emotions, motivation, thought, etc., that influence behaviour.
- **Behaviour varies in complexity:** Some activities of people are simple while others are complex. Holding a pen is a simple activity while climbing Mount Everest, river rafting and flying on a space mission are quite complex activities. Sneezing, etc., is a simple reflex action. The simple actions are a part of simple behaviour and complicated activities form complex behaviour.
- **The factors influencing behaviour are of different kinds:** Two types of factors influence behaviour are individual factors and environmental factors.



The above two set of factors have their impact on the behaviour of individuals.

### Individual Differences

Different people exhibit different behaviour because they have differences individually. Each person is different from the other in unique ways and thus, every person is unique. There is a difference in their physique, in their background, in their past experiences, abilities, background, etc that is why ever. In the same situations, each person would react differently, sometimes to a great degree, sometimes to a small degree, but not two people would behave in the same manner.

### Behaviour Also Show Similarities

There are individual differences among people, but there are similarities as well. Sometimes the behaviour of people show similarities in given situations. Reflexes, like avoiding a car coming towards oneself is an example of a universally similar behaviour.

### Behaviour is also Purposeful and Goal Directive

The human beings are unique and different from other animals in fact whatever actions they do, have a purpose behind it. All actions are means to achieve a

pre-determined goal. When we go to the kitchen to cook something, our goal is to cook and purpose is satisfying our hunger. When we lie on the bed, our goal is to go to sleep, our purpose is to take rest. When we get up in the morning and take a glass of water, our goal is to take a glass of water and the purpose is to quench our thirst. Whatever actions we perform, all are done with a purpose and a goal. In this case we notice two types of behaviour – Approach behaviour and Avoidance behaviour. The former is positive goal directed and the later is negative goal directed.

### Behaviour is Changeable to a Large Extent

A person's behaviour is not permanent. It means that it is not something that would remain the same in all circumstances and in all conditions. According to varying circumstances, behaviour also tends to change. The challenges thrown up by life tends to shape and reshape behaviour patterns. People become good and bad according to circumstances. Adjustment in life is possible because of this changeable nature of a person. Change in practices bring about change in behaviour.

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**Behaviour also Shows Stability**

But the above point does not mean that behaviour is completely changeable. There are certain aspects in behaviour that remain the same, whatever the circumstances may be, exhibiting some stability as well. Every time the environment changes, behaviour does not change. Certain things remain static owing to the fixed nature of behaviour. For example, old people are found to prefer the same old ideas and old ways of life, although living in an ultra modern society.

**Behaviour is Integrated**

There are many factors and a number of purposes which influence behaviour which may be physiological, psychological, personal and social.

Every person is exposed to different learning experiences. Still, there is a certain order and hierarchy of purpose in the behaviour of a person. The behaviour of the individual is a result of his complete personality formed as a result of different purposes, different learnings and different influencing factors.

Therefore, each person has a certain way of behaving, which is predictable even in different situations. This leads us to conclude that a person has a pleasant, an aggressive, a dominating or a moody personality. The term personality is given by scientists to this integration of behaviour. The more learning experiences, the greater integration of behaviour, the more effective will be the person's behaviour.

Thus, we see that due to the complexity of behaviour, it is not easy to study it.

**PSYCHOLOGY AS A SCIENCE**

We were discussing earlier that a characteristic of psychology is that it is a science but whether it is a science like Physics or Chemistry or Biology is discussed in this section. We first discuss what is science and then elaborate on the characteristics of Psychology.

The following are a few definitions of science:

It is a systematized knowledge gathered through carefully observing and measuring events.

Science is approach to knowledge based on systematic observation (Lahey, 1998)

Science seeks to classify, understand and unify the material objects all around us. The tools that are used are logic and intuition, observation and experimentation and try to decipher the rules that govern this universe. We discuss below the characteristics of science.

**Characteristics of Science**

Just as other sciences observe phenomena around them and systematize that data to find general principles,

psychology, too uses various methods of systematization to classify and establish general principles and laws which are useful in predicting new events. Just as other sciences have their own subject matter, psychology also studies and analyzes behaviour in the same way. There are a number of common features that psychology has with other sciences.

The following are the features given by Morgan et al. (1986):

**Empirical Observation**

Psychology is an empirical subject. This means that it is not based on the belief of a person or on someone's opinion, or argument but based on experiment and observation.

**Systematic Approach and Theory**

In a scientific subject, experiments and observations helps to collect data. But the collected data needs to be ordered and organized, only then it will gain meaning. From the vast array of data, a limited number of principles are drawn which act as a summary of the data. These scientific theories act as tools to organize the data.

**Measurement**

The more the possibility of numerical measurement of the objects or events in a science, the more accurate it is. That is the reason why physics is the most accurate science, because the most accurate measurements are possible in it.

**Definition of Terms**

Clarity in the terms is possible when terms are classified clearly. In Psychology concepts are determined by relating them with observable behaviour (operational definition). An operational definition of a concept is in terms of measurable and observable operations. Observable operations are such actions which can be performed for measurement purpose, such as length, heat, energy, etc., in physics and intelligence, motivation, personality in psychology. Still, many of the behaviours like bravery, friendship, love, beauty in psychology are not capable of being defined operationally.

Though psychology is a science because it has the above characteristics common to all science disciplines, it is different from others. In exact sciences such as Physics and Chemistry, events are measurable and constant, and accurate measurements are possible, but in psychology it is not so. The subject of study in Psychology is human behaviour, which is complicated. Controlled conditions cannot be created and the reactions of human beings are much more complicated