

Every human being behaves in a different way. In our day-to-day conversation, we comment that a particular child or an individual behaves/ acts in a different way from the other. Sometimes individuals adapt or cope up very easily in any situation, but some are over anxious, angry, furious or quarrelsome. Thus, the question arises, why do we feel angry? Why do we feel sad or happy? What makes us different from others in our reactions to the same situation? Why do we differ from others in abilities, likes and dislikes, interest and attitudes? Why do some people prefer to be alone? All these and many more questions arise in our minds. The study of psychology will enable us to answer these questions in scientific manner¹⁻¹.

Not only does a nurse want to understand herself, she also wants to understand other people. Nurses are always working with the people. In the hospitals, there are patients, in the homes there are peoples who need care, in the public health nursing fields and there are people of all ages who need to be educated. Also, nurses are working with many other members of health team such as doctors, nurses, dieticians, physiotherapists, hospital technicians, medical social workers and others. Every one of these people can be understood better if the nurse knows something of human behavior and how it is caused through the study of psychology. The nurse who enjoys studying, understanding and using psychology in her work becomes a better and successful team member¹⁻¹.

Meaning of Psychology:

The word psychology was used by **Rudolf Goeckle** in 1590. It is derived from 2 Greek words '*Psyche*' & '*logos*'. '*Psyche*' means '*spirit*' or '*Soul*' & '*logos*' means the '*study of*' or '*knowledge*'. Therefore the earliest meaning of Psychology was study of soul.

The word soul means the spiritual or immortal element in a person & was used vaguely and there were many interpretations that could be given to it. Therefore, **William James** used the term '*mind*' or '*mental processes*' in place of '*soul*' in 1890³⁻²⁰.

But this meaning also become unsatisfactory because mind was abstract and could not be seen or understood, unless what the mind did was seen. Behavior is what the mind does. So later on the term '*mind*' was replaced with the term '*Behavior*'. Therefore the most modern & most widely accepted meaning of psychology is the systematic study of human and animal behavior^{1-1&4-2}.

Meaning of behavior:

Any manifestation of life is activity and behavior is a collective name for these activities. The term behavior includes cognitive, conative & affective activities.

Sl. No.	Type	Meaning	Activity(Example)	Nature ⁴⁻²
1.	Cognitive	Mental	Thinking, Perception, reasoning, imagining, etc	Cannot be observed.

Sl. No.	Type	Meaning	Activity(Example)	Nature
2.	Conative or Psychomotor	Physical activity or motor	Swimming, Walking, dancing, etc.	Can be observed.
3.	Affective	Emotional	Feeling happy, sad, angry, etc	Can be observed.

Behavior includes not only the conscious behavior and activities of the human mind but also the subconscious and unconscious. It covers not only the overt behavior but also the covert behavior involving all the inner experiences and mental process.

In nutshell the term behavior refers to the entire life activities and experiences of all the living organisms^{2-1 & 4-2}.

Definitions of psychology:

- 1) “Psychology is the science of human and animal behavior and it includes the application of this science to solve human problems or behavior”. - Clifford T Morgan⁴⁻².
- 2) “Psychology is the science of human behavior”. – Walter Bowers Pillsbury
- 3) “Psychology is the science which aims to give us better understanding and control of the behavior of the organism as a whole”. – William Mc Dough hall
- 4) “Psychology is the investigation of human and animal behavior and of the mental and physiological processes associated with the behavior”. – Jackson²⁻⁴

Father of psychology:

In 1879, the first psychological laboratory was established at the University of Leipzig, Germany by the German Philosopher & Psychologist **William Wundt** (1832 - 1920). **Wundt** was the first to measure human behavior accurately and is known as the “*Father of psychology*”²⁻².

Methods of Psychology:

Psychology is termed as the scientific study of human behavior. Special tools and procedures help us in gathering and organizing its subject matter or the essential facts about behavior. These procedures are termed as methods, which are used to study human behavior. The important methods of Psychology are^{2-9 & 1-14}:

- 1) Introspection/ Self Observation Method
- 2) Observation Method
- 3) Experimental Method

- 4) Survey Method
- 5) Test Method
- 6) Case Study Method
- 7) Developmental/Genetic Method

1) Introspection or self observation

Means to look within. It is internal perception or self observation. The individual himself observes his internal activities and processes whenever and wherever he likes to do so. For eg. A patient after an operation may be asked to report how he feels. The patient will try to look within and recall what happened and how he is feeling now.

Advantages:

- 1) It does not involve any expenditure as it does not need any laboratory or apparatus.
- 2) We get a direct knowledge of the mental experience of the individual.
- 3) This method gives us direct, immediate & exact knowledge of the mental experience of the individual.

Disadvantage:

- 1) This method cannot be used by children or animal or mental deficiency patients because they cannot introspect.
- 2) It cannot be verified by other observer because it is purely private affair.

2) Observation method:

It consists of collection of data of an individual behavior by the other individual. Eg. When a nurse is assessed to make an observational report on a patient with an undiagnosed illness then nurse reports her observation such as patient's TPR, color, facial expression, restlessness etc.

It is widely used in studying behavior of children and animals.

Steps in observation:

1. Observation of behavior.
2. Noting of behavior.
3. Interpretation & analysis of behavior.
4. Generalization.

Advantages:

1. It is economical, natural & flexible.

2. Results can be verified & relied.
3. Observation method is suitable for observing developmental characteristics of children's habit & interest.

Disadvantages:

1. By Observation method we can observe only external behavior but not the things that happening in the mind. Eg. Some patients are expert in hiding his feelings and emotions from others.
2. Behavior observed is dependent on the particular time & place & on particular individual or groups of individuals involved. It lacks repeatability as each natural situation can occur only once.

3) Experimental Method:

The word experiment is derived from a Latin word meaning 'to try'. This method made popular by Wundt. In this method the psychologist studies the effects of dependent variables on changes in independent variables. eg. Effect of anxiety on the behavior.

Here the psychologists use objective observations under controlled environment/conditions to observe the behavior performed by the individuals. eg. Effect of noise on learning.

From these observations certain conclusions are drawn and theories, principles or laws established.

Many experiments are being conducted on people & animals dealing with learning, forgetting any many other mental activities. The tremendous progress of psychology during the 20th century is mainly due to this method.

Advantages:

1. Experiments are objective.
2. Experiments can be repeated for result confirmation

Disadvantages:

1. It cannot always be used due to difficulties such as dangerous to subjects, difficulty in artificial situations of laboratory.
2. It has difficulty in getting cooperation of subjects.
3. It causes biases as spontaneous behavior may qualitatively be different from artificial behavior of laboratory results.

4) Survey method:

It involves collection or gathering of information from a large number of people by using questionnaire or interview method. eg. Political opinion, attitudes, health care needs etc. It is commonly employed in social psychology.

Survey is done by means of self-report, personal interviews and telephonic interviews by using questionnaires, checklist, rating scales, ranking and inventories. It assesses different aspects of behavior, emotional experience, aptitudes, knowledge, opinions, attitudes and values.

Advantages:

1. A large amount of data can be collected in a shorter time.
2. Flexibility.
3. Can be applied to many populations.
4. Broadness of scope.
5. Can focus on wide range of topics/ can be used for many topics.

Disadvantages:

1. Tends to be relatively superficial.
2. Behavior not observed directly.
3. Rarely probe deeply in to such complexities or contradictions of human behavior & feelings.

5) Test method:

In this method we use carefully devised and standardized tests to measure abilities, interests, attitudes & intelligence of individuals or group of people. It can be administered to a large number of personnel at the same time saving a lot of time energy & dislocation of routine work.

5) Case history/ clinical method:

It is a research method that involves a thorough, in-depth analysis of an individual, group, institution or other social units. It uses case histories, interviews, home visits and psychological tests. It aims at studying the causes and basis of people anxieties, fears and personnel maladjustments. It is scientific biography consisting of collecting all the information about the individuals past. This can be done by interviewing the individual himself and/his family members, friends. Classmates, teachers and others who know him and who can provide information about his past. Documents like cumulative records, personal diaries and articles directly or indirectly can be used. Here we use methods like observation, interview, home visit and psychological tests to collect information.

This method is also known as ***clinical method*** because it is widely used in hospitals by Nurses, Doctors and other health team members to collect complete data from the patient.

7) Developmental or genetic method:

It studies growth and changes in behavior in terms of its development from birth till death and influence of heredity and environment in the development of the person's behavior and conditions favorable & unfavorable for normal development and abnormality^{2-9 & 1-14}.

Nature of psychology:

The nature of psychology is scientific.

1) *Psychology uses scientific methods:*

Almost all the method used in psychology are almost scientific in nature. Out of these the experimental method is the most exact one. In the experimental method dependent and independent variables are distinguished, the dependent variables controlled and the effect of the independent variables observed. Thus in experimental method the psychologist observes a certain phenomenon in controlled environment. Here the psychologist use new and exact instruments to observe the phenomenon, notes it, compares and classifies it and finally discovers various principles through generalization.

2) *Psychology is factual:*

Psychology studies the facts of behavior. The psychologist is objective in his observations and experiments. The field of psychology is not value but facts.

3) *The laws of psychology are universal:*

At all times and places the laws of psychology have been found to be same under similar conditions.

Eg. Theory of mind discipline.

4) *The laws of psychology are verifiable:*

By verification and re-verification psychological principles have been found to be true everywhere. They can be verified by any one.

5) *Psychology discovers the cause-effect relationship in human behavior:*

Psychology not only observers behavior, but also finds out cause-effect relationship in it. Eg: psychology has discovered why and in what circumstances a child becomes a delinquent or a degenerate. These findings have been put to use and found correct. Thus psychology discovers the 'how' of behavior together with its 'what'.

6) *Psychology predicts human behavior:*

By discovering the cause-effect relationship, psychologists also predict human behavior and these predictions are generally correct.

From the above characteristics it can be said that Objectivity, reliability, validity and predictability are characteristics of science, therefore the nature of psychology is scientific^{2-4 & 4-2}.

SCOPE OF PSYCHOLOGY

The scope of subject psychology is discussed under the following two headings as follows:

- I. The field of operation and application of Psychology
- II. The branches of Psychology

I. *The field of operation and application of Psychology*

- 1) It studies, describes and explains the behavior of living organisms.
- 2) It describes all types of life activities and experiences like cognitive, conative or affective, overt or covert behavior, conscious, subconscious or unconscious behavior of an organism.
- 3) It studies not only human behavior but also the human experience, languages and other forms of communication. It also studies about individual differences and also how an individual and society interact and how they behave as a member of small and large groups.
- 4) Psychology is applied to all the living organisms on the earth irrespective of species, caste, color, age, gender, mental or physical state. Thus in subject psychology all are studied like normal, abnormal, children, adolescents, youth, adults, old persons, criminals, patients, students, teachers, parents, employee, employers etc
- 5) It also studies the behavior of the animals, insects, birds and plant life.

II. *The branches of Psychology*

Psychology is broadly divided in to two branches as follows

- A) **Pure psychology:** it provides the framework and theory. Its contents deal with the formulation of psychological principles and theories. It suggests various methods and techniques for analysis, assessment, modification and improvement of behavior. It is theoretical in nature.
- B) **Applied psychology:** here the theory generated through pure psychology finds its practical application. Here we discuss ways and means of application of psychological rules, principles, theories and techniques with reference to the real practical life situations. It is practical in nature.

Branches of Pure and Applied Psychology			
Sl. No	A) Pure Psychology	Sl. No	B) Applied Psychology
1	General Psychology	1	Educational Psychology
2	Abnormal Psychology	2	Clinical Psychology

3	Social Psychology	3	Industrial Psychology
4	Physiological Psychology	4	Legal Psychology
5	Para-Psychology Psychology	5	Military Psychology
6	Geo-Psychology Psychology	6	Political Psychology
7	Developmental Psychology	7	School Psychology
8	Experimental Psychology		
9	Comparative Psychology		
10	Cognitive Psychology		

A) Branches of Pure psychology:

- 1) **General Psychology:** it deals with fundamental rules, principles and theories of psychology in relation to study of behavior of normal adult.
- 2) **Abnormal Psychology:** it deals with the behavior of individuals who are unusual. It studies mental disorders, their causes and treatment.
- 3) **Social psychology:** it deals with the group behavior and interrelationships of people with other people (how an individual's behavior influences the group and how the group behavior influences the individual behavior). It studies various types of group phenomenon such as public opinion, attitudes, beliefs and crowd behavior.
- 4) **Physiological Psychology:** it describes and explains the biological and physiological basis of behavior. It concerns with the structure and function of sense organs, nervous system, muscles and glands associated with the behavior.
- 5) **Para Psychology:** it deals with extra-sensory perceptions, causes of rebirth and telepathy.
- 6) **Geo Psychology:** it describes and explains the relation of physical environment particularly weather, climate and soil with behavior.
- 7) **Developmental Psychology:** it studies the factors that influence the growth and development of human behavior from birth to old age. It also studies the influence of hereditary and environment on behavior. It is further subdivided in to branches like child psychology, adolescent, adult and old age psychology.
- 8) **Experimental Psychology:** it studies about ways and means of carrying out psychological experiments by using scientific methods. Here research method is applied to discover and understand the fundamental and general causes of behavior. It studies basic processes such as learning and memory, sensation, perception and motivation.
- 9) **Comparative Psychology:** it is concerned with the study of animal behavior. The study of animal behavior can lead to deeper and broader understanding of human psychology.
- 10) **Cognitive Psychology:** is the study of human thought processes and cognitions. Cognitive psychologists study topics such as attention, memory, perception, decision making, problem solving and language acquisition.

B) Branches of Applied Psychology:

- 1) **Educational Psychology:** it applies the principles, theories and techniques to human behavior in the educational situation. It is concerned with the ways and means of improving all aspects of the teaching/learning process. Educational psychologist applies the psychological knowledge about learning and motivation to increase the efficiency of learning in schools.

- 2) **Clinical Psychology:** this is the largest sub-field of psychology. This branch describes the causes of mental illness, abnormal behavior of a patient and suggests treatment and effective adjustment of the affected person in society.
- 3) **Industrial Psychology:** this branch of psychology applies the psychological principles, theories and techniques for the study of human behavior in relation to industrial environment. Industrial psychologists apply psychological principles to assist public and private organizations for hiring and recruitment programs, training and supervision of their personnel and the improvement of communication within the organization and between the organizations. They also counsel employees within the organization who need help with their personnel problems.
- 4) **Legal psychology:** this branch of psychology applies the psychological principles, theories and techniques to study the behavior of persons like clients, criminals, witnesses etc. It helps to understand the root cause for the crime, offence, dispute or any legal case.
- 5) **Military Psychology:** this branch of psychology applies the psychological principles, theories and techniques in the military science. This branch of psychology helps to keep the morale of soldiers and citizens during war and disaster time. It also helps for better recruitment of the personnel for the fighting capacities and to develop the leadership qualities in the personnel.
- 6) **Political Psychology:** this branch of psychology applies the psychological principles, theories and techniques in studying politics, deriving political gains, origin of political organization.
- 7) **School Psychology:** is a branch of psychology that works within the educational system to help children with emotional, social and academic problems^{1-9 & 2-4}.