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Lecture 1

What is psychology?

Scientific study of mind and behaviour.

It springs from the subject of philosophy.

Mind: cognition, perception and thinking patterns.

Behavior: overt(outward) and covert(internal).

Overt	Covert
Facial expressions, way of talking.	Thoughts, dreams, feelings.

Why is psychology a science?

- It involves the study of brain structure and function, like neurotransmitters and synapses which is a part of biology.
- It builds its theories based on **empirical evidence**, which is evidence gathered through observation and experimentation, rather than just opinions or assumptions.

Scope of Psychology:



Why study psych as CS students? Conflict resolution, communication, building perspectives, empathizing and leadership.

Research:

- **Basic Research:** Purely theoretical, with the intent of increasing our understanding, but no application. Answer “why” and “how” problems.
- **Applied Research:** methods and findings of scientific psychology to solve practical problems of human and animal behavior and experience. Solution oriented. Answers “how to” problems.

Goals of psychology:

■ To describe what is an organism doing?

Documenting the symptoms and behaviors associated with anxiety disorders.

■ To explain and understand why organism behave in certain ways?

Investigating how genetic, environmental, and cognitive factors contribute to the development of depression.

■ To predict how organism will behave in the future?

Predicting how a person with high stress levels might react to future stressors based on past behaviors and coping mechanisms.

■ To control behavior or to modify the particular behavior?

Designing and applying therapeutic techniques to help individuals manage anxiety or developing educational programs to enhance learning and memory.

Difference between a psychologist, psychiatrist and neurologist:

- **Psychiatrist:** Does not deal with the structure of the brain and can prescribe medicines.
- **Psychologist:** Does not deal with the structure of the brain and can not describe medicines.
- **Neurologist:** Does also deal with the structure and function of the brain and can prescribe medicines.

Most treatments: therapy and medicines.

Lecture 2

Cognitive Behavior Therapy:

- Understanding of yourself
- Understanding of others
-

CBT is based on the concept that your thoughts, feelings, physical sensations and actions are interconnected (source: [CBT\(NHS\)](#)).

Procedure(ChatGPT):

1. **Cognitive Restructuring:** This involves identifying and challenging negative or unhelpful thoughts, replacing them with more balanced, realistic ones.
2. **Behavioral Activation:** If someone is feeling down or stuck, CBT helps them identify small, manageable activities that can improve their mood or sense of accomplishment.
3. **Problem-Solving:** CBT encourages you to break down problems into smaller, more manageable parts and develop specific strategies to address them.
4. **Mindfulness and Relaxation Techniques:** CBT often incorporates mindfulness practices to help you stay present and reduce anxiety or stress, improving both self-awareness and emotional regulation.

Readmore: [Procedure](#)

It helps you gain a greater understanding of yourself and helps you combat your issues in a manner that is under your own control, focusing more on current matters rather than those in the past.

School of thought:

- **Sigmund Freud**
- **Behaviorism**
- **Humanistic and Existential Approach**

Lecture 3

- Revision of lecture1
- Our actions and emotions are not just dependant on our personal psyche and actions but they are influenced by the environment and people around us.

Key debates:

- **Nature vs Nurture:**

❖ How much people's behavior is due to their genetically determined nature

VS

❖ How much is due to the influences of the physical and social environment in which a child is raised

- **Conscious vs Unconscious Mind:**

How much of our behavior is produced by forces of which we are fully aware

and

How much is due to unconscious activity
– mental processes that are not accessible to the conscious mind

- **Observable behavior vs Internal Mental processes:**

- Psychology should solely be concentrating on behavior that can be seen by outside observers
- Behavioral psychologists think that the only source of information is behavior that can be observed directly

OR

Psychology should focus on unseen thinking processes because according to cognitive psychologist what goes on inside a person's mind is critical to understanding behavior.

- **Free will vs determinism:**

- How much of our behavior is due to choices made freely by an individual?

- How much is produced by factors beyond that individual's voluntary control?

- **Individual differences vs universal principles:**

- Focus on the uniqueness of every individual.
- Every person's behavior is a reflection of their distinct and special individual qualities.

OR

- Based on cultural and societal norms and values.

So like generalization of a group based on race or ethnicity vs seeing the as an individual.

- **General intelligence vs multiple intelligences:**

- Intelligence is a **single, unified ability** that influences a person's performance across different tasks

VS

- Intelligence is **diverse** and includes a range of distinct abilities or "intelligences," each independent from the others

Activity: mindfulness exercise.