

# PSYCHOLOGY

Psychology is mainly concerned with the way the mind works. Psychologists study the processes, motives, reactions, feelings and nature of the human mind. Their treatment is based on changing the behavioral patterns of the patients without medication. They counsel and help people by bringing about changes in their thought process, thus improving their quality of life. Let us now take a peek into a psychologist's nature of work.

Very often, psychologists are innovators, evolving new approaches from established knowledge to meet the changing needs of people, organizations and societies. Psychologists conduct both basic and applied research, serve as consultants to communities and organizations, diagnose and treat people, and teach future psychologists and those who will pursue other disciplines.

They test intelligence and personality. Many psychologists work as health care providers. They assess behavioral and mental function and well-being.

In some educational boards in India, Psychology is introduced at school levels. However, an in depth study of the subject takes strong roots only at the undergraduate level. Students will be able to opt for a BA (Hons.) in Psychology, a B. Sc. in Psychology or a B. A. in Psychology, depending on the institution they opt to study in. Students get to study a range of subjects including general psychology, statistics, systems, abnormal behavior, physiological psychology, and applied psychology to name a few. They will also be required to do practical experiments as part of each course.

## **Degrees offered in Psychology:**

Bachelor of Arts and Bachelors of Science in Psychology are the two popular degrees. This course is mainly offered as a B. A. Psychology degree with a few colleges offering B. Sc. Psychology.

Generally, the graduate (Bachelors) degree programs are for 3 years, the postgraduate (Masters) degree programs are for 2 years, and the Doctoral (M. Phil. or Ph. D.) programs are for 3-5 years.

## **Subject Requirements for students of class 12:**

There is no specific subject requirement to study Psychology. Though it does not mandate any pre-requisite subjects, studying Biology, Psychology, and Mathematics in class 12 will help students in understanding the subject better. It should be noted that for B. Sc. Psychology courses, the students should be from the science stream and should have studied Biology in classes 11 and 12. In addition to this, they could also have psychology as a subject in class 12.

## **Top Colleges for Psychology:**

**Following are some of the top colleges which offer degrees in Psychology in India:**

### **Lady Sri Ram College for Women (New Delhi):**

Lady Shri Ram College for Women has been recognized as a top college of higher education for women in India. It is affiliated to the University of Delhi. It is one of the most reputed institutions for Social Sciences, Humanities and Commerce. Courses like Psychology and Journalism are among its strengths. According to the national magazine, India today, this college is ranked #2 in India for its quality education in Arts courses. The college has approximately 2000 students, over 150 faculty members, administrative and support staff and more than 16 courses of study.

**Admission:** Students will be admitted on the basis of merit i.e. marks obtained in Class 12. The aggregate required for admission will be calculated on the basis of "best of four" subjects, which are: marks secured in a language, marks secured in the subject in which admission is sought, and marks secured in any other 2 academic/elective subjects. The degree offered is B. A. Psychology (Hons.).

Admission to LSR is very competitive and the cut offs are generally in the range of 96% to 98% across the different cut off lists. This of course comes as no surprise, because the institute is known for having high cut offs and for being very competitive.

### **Christ (Deemed to be University) (Bengaluru):**

Christ is the top academic institute in Karnataka offering courses in Management, Science Humanities, Law and more. It has been recognized by the University Grants Commission (UGC) as an institution with "Potential for Excellence".

**In this University, the following degrees are offered in Psychology:**

- Bachelor of Science (B. Sc.) Honors in Psychology
- Bachelor of Arts (B. A.) in Psychology, Sociology, and Economics
- Bachelor of Arts (B. A.) in Journalism, Psychology, and English
- Bachelor of Arts (B. A.) in Performing Arts, English, and Psychology
- Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Psychology, Sociology, and English

**Admission:** Of the aforementioned degrees, for B. A. (Hons.), B. Sc. Psychology and B. A. Communication and Media Studies with Psychology, the admission is based on Entrance Test, Skill Assessment and Personal Interview, and Academics. For the other degrees in, the admission is based on Skill Assessment and Personal Interview and Academic Prowess.

### **Banaras Hindu University (Varanasi):**

Banaras Hindu University is a reputed learning institute situated in the city of Varanasi. The university was founded by the great nationalist leader, Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, in 1916 with cooperation of great personalities like Dr. Annie Besant, who viewed it as the University of India.

**Admission:** The psychology degree for undergraduate studies offered is B. A. Psychology (Hons.). Admission will be based on the entrance (BHU UET) exam, which is conducted by the University.

**St. Xavier's College (Mumbai):**

The college, which is affiliated to University of Mumbai, offers around 28 undergraduate courses. It is known for excellence in imparting Science and Humanities studies.

**Admission:** The degree offered is B. A. in Psychology and admission to the college remains tough, as it is one of the most coveted colleges in India.

Selection is based on the scores secured in the class 12 examinations.

**Other top colleges for this course include:**

- Mithibai College of Arts (Mumbai)
- Ashoka University (Sonapat)
- Presidency College (Chennai)
- Sophia College for Women (Mumbai)
- Fergusson College (Pune)

**Fees:**

Another important factor that is taken into consideration when making a choice about the college is the fees that the students would have to pay. There is often seen a difference in the fees charged by government institutions, which could range between Rs. 10,000/- to Rs. 25,000/-, and the private institutions, where the fees could tentatively begin from about Rs.50,000/- to a few lakhs. However, it is important to note that the difference in the fee is not directly proportional to the difference in the quality of education. The difference could then be summed to the various other factors such as infrastructure, salaries offered to the professors, amenities available to the students, etc.

**Career Prospects:**

After earning a psychology degree, one can choose from a wide variety of career options. Some entry-level jobs are open to those with an undergraduate degree in psychology, while others require advanced or graduate level study.

Psychologists perform a large variety of duties in a number of diverse industries. For example, psychologists working in the field of health services may provide mental evaluation and healthcare services in clinics, hospitals, schools, or in the private sector.

They may also be employed in applied settings including industry, business, non-profit organizations, the government, providing training, conducting research, designing organizational systems, or acting as advocates for psychology.

Many psychologists work independently and also team up with other professionals, for example, with other scientists, physicians, lawyers, school personnel, computer experts, engineers, policymakers and managers, to contribute to every area of society. Thus we find them in laboratories, hospitals, courtrooms, schools and universities, community health centers, prisons, and corporate offices.

### **Specializations:**

A very common question that most students ask is that what does a psychologist do? This can be answered by the fact that Psychology offers different occupations and career opportunities in a diverse array of specializations. There is a huge array of specializations when it comes to psychology.

In India, the following are the most well-known branches:

- **Counselling Psychology:** Counselling Psychology is the branch of psychology which deals with a person's personal and interpersonal functioning across their lifespan. Child Psychology is a well-known branch under Counselling Psychology. It focuses on the development and behavior of children.
- **Clinical Psychology:** Clinical psychology is another famous branch of psychology. It is the branch which comes to the mind when we hear the word 'Psychology', as it deals with the treatment of mental illnesses, abnormal behavior and other psychiatric problems. This is generally taken by students from the Science stream.
- **Industrial - Organizational Psychology:** Another famous branch of psychology is the Industrial - Organizational Psychology. Professionals in this field apply psychological principles to research workplace issues such as productivity and employee behavior. This branch is closely related to the Human Resource Development, which has emerged as an important subject in business studies.
- **Social Psychology:** Social Psychology is a famous specialization pursued in the psychological field in India. It studies how people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of others.

The field of Psychology in India is at a growing stage. Due to this reason, the aforementioned traditional branches are enjoying the limelight. However, in the countries abroad where Psychology is a more established pathway, there is a wider offering of specializations that are available. These include:

- **Consumer Psychology:** The branch of psychology which deals with the study of why people buy things.

Professionals in this branch work directly with major companies to determine which kind of marketing garners more response from the people.

- **Educational Psychology:** This branch of Psychology deals with students and their education. Professionals of branch help students by aiding them in solving education related problems, stress and how to plan for their future. They are also known as educational or school counsellors.
- **Military Psychology:** Soldiers who fight wars often go through post war trauma and stress which takes a heavy toll on their lives. To help them deal with it, a separate branch of psychology has emerged, called Military Psychology. Military psychologists help soldiers in dealing with mental as well as physical stress. This branch of psychology is emerging as the most in demand and complicated branch among others in many countries.
- **Forensic Psychology:** Forensic Psychology is the branch of psychology which deals with criminals and other legal disputes. Professionals in this branch help the law enforcement authorities by applying their psychological knowledge to assess situations in various issues. Forensic Psychologists assist in a wide variety of legal matters, including child custody/family law, violence risk assessment and social science research among others.
- **Media Psychology:** Since research shows that 90% of our daily communications are now screen-based, Media Psychology is the branch of psychology that focuses on the relationships between human behavior and the media. This branch is a relatively new field of study but is rapidly advancing.

**Apart from these, there are many other branches of psychology in which students can specialize. These include:**

- **Abnormal Psychology,** which deals with psychopathology and abnormal behavior. Mental health professionals help assess, diagnose, and treat a wide variety of psychological disorders including anxiety and depression.
- **Cognitive Psychology:** This branch focuses on internal mental states. Psychologists who work in this field often study things such as perception, motivation, emotion, language, learning, memory, attention, decision- making, and problem-solving.
- **Neuropsychology:** This deals with understanding the relationship between the physical brain and behavior.
- **Sports Psychology:** This is the branch of Psychology which focuses on how individuals are affected by playing sports as well as how to improve a person's

mindset in order to excel at sports.

### **A Day in a Psychologist's life:**

A Psychologist's typical day could include administering psychological tests, counselling the clients, helping families understand and cope with the illness of a loved one, contribute to an ongoing research, and mainly spending time on keeping themselves updated with the new advancements in the field!

Psychologists assess individuals using diagnostic tests and interviews. They diagnose mental, behavioral and emotional disorders and decide what treatment methods to use. These tests may evaluate intellectual skills, cognitive strengths and weaknesses, vocational aptitude and preference, personality characteristics and neuropsychological functioning.

Psychologists also help individuals deal with short-term personal issues that may result from a crisis such as the breakup of a relationship, death of a loved one, a traumatic event, or the loss of a job. Or, they sometimes look for help with a chronic condition that could be interfering with their lives or physical health.

Psychologists mainly aim to help people in learning to cope with stressful situations, manage their chronic illnesses, and also identify and break past any barriers that keep them from reaching their goals.

It is also seen that in some conditions, medication and therapy/counselling work together and help in the management/treatment of the condition. In the cases where people mainly benefit from medication, psychologists work along with the primary care physicians, pediatricians, or psychiatrists on their overall treatment.

Let us also take a look into the typical day of a School Psychologist, since this would be the most related scenario to us right now.

### **School Psychologists:**

A school psychologist is a type of psychologist that works within the educational system to help children with emotional, social, and academic issues. They evaluate students' performances, consult with other school personnel, students and parents. They study productivity, management styles and individuals' work styles, solve workplace problems using psychological principles, identify an organization's training needs and then devise and implement programs that address them.

Psychologists deal with the most complicated and sensitive creatures: human beings. Good communication skills along with patience, ability to work with all kinds of social/ cultural and age groups are the essential qualities of a psychologist. They should have a genuine interest in people, their behavior and have empathy for their problems. They have to be sensitive and caring and also have the ability to understand people of very different backgrounds and up-bringing.

### **KEY TAKEAWAY**

- Psychology is one of the most challenging and well-known careers in Arts. There are many branches in Psychology, in which students can specialize.
- Psychology is basically the study of mind. It does so to help so various mental and psychological problems
- Bachelor of Arts and Bachelors of Science in Psychology are the two popular degrees. This course is mainly offered as a B. A. Psychology degree with a few colleges offering B. Sc. Psychology.
- Some of the best colleges which offer courses in Psychology in India are: Lady Sri Ram College for Women (New Delhi), the Christ (Bangalore), Banaras Hindu University (Varanasi), and St. Xavier's College (Mumbai).
- Some famous specializations in Psychology include Counselling Psychology, Clinical Psychology, Industrial - Organizational Psychology, Social Psychology, Educational Psychology, and Forensic Psychology.