

Psychology:

The term psychology comes from two Greek words: psyche, which means

1. The spirit or soul.
2. The human mind.
3. In psychoanalysis, the mind functioning as the center of thought, emotion, and behavior.

And logos, "the study of." or according to modern researches "science"

These root words were first combined in the 16th century, at a time when the human soul, spirit, or mind was seen as distinct from the body.

Definition of Psychology:

Psychology is one of the youngest sciences. It is still going through the process of its development. There has been much fierce controversy about its definition. It has been variously defined as the science of soul, the science of mind, the science of consciousness, the science of behavior.

The science of soul:

Psychology was first defined as the science of soul. But it was not accepted, for the reason that it had too much of religious flavour. Soul generally conveys the idea of a supernatural thing. It is immortal, beyond one's control. It is not easy to observe and study the soul so this theory was discarded.

The science of mind:

Then, Psychology was defined as the science of mind. Later, it was changed to mental processes, by Psychologists as Hume and Tichener. This "invisible" world of mind involves many different aspects, functions and potentials. Imagination, attention, intellect, awareness, intention, reason, will, responsibility, memory, and many other things exist in each of us. They are a vital and important part of us. This definition was not rejected but it was considered incomplete.

The science of Consciousness:

William James defined Psychology as being the science of consciousness. Being conscious means to be aware of the ambience. This definition was also rejected on the basis of the fact that at times our behavior is governed by our subconscious and unconscious. Great psychologist like Sigmund Freud support this fact.

The science of Behavior:

J.B. Watson described Psychology as the science of Behavior.. He said that external action or behavior is the only concern of Psychology. He totally ignored mental processes. He said that what goes on in our mind eventually comes out as our behavior. But this is not true for all times so this was considered incomplete.

Now a days the most comprehensive definition of Psychology is:

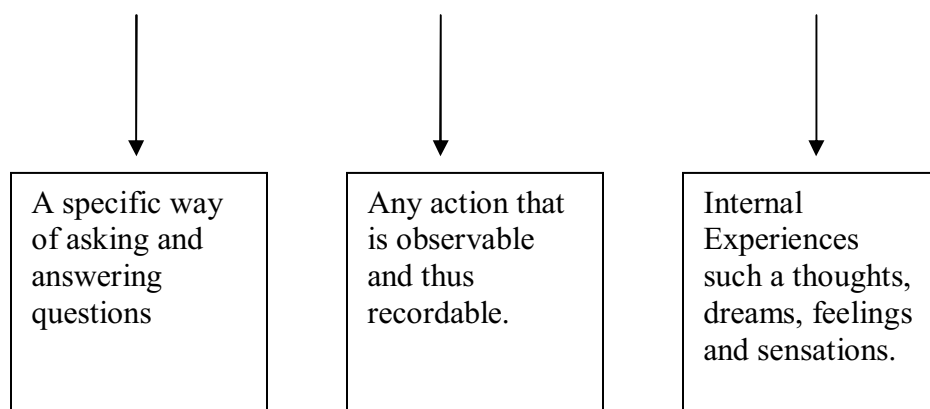
“Psychology is the scientific study of mind and behavior, and its application to solve human problems”

OR

“Psychology is the schematic study of behavior and mental processes”

This definition contains three elements. The first is that psychology is a scientific enterprise that obtains knowledge through systematic and objective methods of observation and experimentation. Second is that psychologists study behavior, which refers to any action or reaction that can be measured or observed—such as the blink of an eye, an increase in heart rate, or the unruly violence that often erupts in a mob. Third is that psychologists study the mind, which refers to both conscious and unconscious mental states. These states cannot actually be seen, only inferred from observable behavior. In psychology, behaviors and mental processes are fundamentally interwoven. In order to understand a behavior, we must know something about additional mental processes- the emotion or emotions that underlie the behavior.

PSYCHOLOGY=THE SCIENCE OF BEHAVIOR AND MENTAL PROCESSES



Now a days the knowledge of Psychology is the need of the hour. One can not afford to ignore such an important study. It touches virtually all aspects of our life. It gives answers to the problems like these: How does the way we are raised

effects the way we will raise our children? How can we overcome drug addiction and dependency? Can fathers take care of mothers as ably as mothers? Can hypnosis help in recovering trauma of a child caused by early childhood experiences? How machines can be designed to ensure minimum possible human error? How immune system is effected by prolonged stress? Can learning be improved by the use of drugs facilitating the transmission of neurons? Psychology works on these and many more questions and problems.

Psychology also affects our life through its influence on the making of laws and public policies. Psychology theories and research have influenced laws concerning discrimination, capital punishment, pornography, sexual behavior, and personality responsibility for actions.

As psychology has a great vitality in our everyday life, even people who do not intend to specialize in this field must know about its research methods. With its broad scope, psychology investigates an enormous range of phenomena: learning and memory, sensation and perception, motivation and emotion, thinking and language, personality and social behavior, intelligence, infancy and child development, mental illness, and much more. Furthermore, psychologists examine these topics from a variety of complementary perspectives.

No matter what a psychologist's specialty or work setting, however - they all seek to understand why we think, act, and feel as we do (e.g. Psychologists study the "ABC's" of a person {a=affects or emotions, b=behaviors, c=cognition or thoughts}).