



METHODS

OF

INQUIRY

IN

PSYCHOLOGY



RAPID REVISION



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Introduction

Chapter 1 – Psychology

Psychology means the study of mind, mental processes, and behaviour.

Chapter 2 – Enquiry

Enquiry means research, investigation, and careful study.

This chapter explains **how psychology studies human mind and behaviour scientifically.**

Since human behaviour is complex, many different methods are used.

Goals of Psychological Enquiry

1. Description

To carefully describe behaviour.

Example:

Stress vs anxiety

2. Prediction

To predict future behaviour.

Example:

Exam stress may lead to anxiety

3. Explanation

To find causes behind behaviour.

Example:

Why students feel anxious before exams

4. Control

To reduce unwanted behaviour and improve positive behaviour.

Example:

Reducing stress through counselling

5. Application

Using psychological knowledge for welfare of society.

Example:

Yoga and meditation

Steps in Scientific Research

Scientific method should be:

- Objective
- Systematic
- Testable

Step 1: Conceptualising a Problem

Selecting topic and identifying problem

Example:

Why students face exam stress

Step 2: Collecting Data

Using participants, tools, methods, and procedure

Step 3: Drawing Conclusions

Using statistics to analyze results

Step 4: Revising Conclusions

Revising old theory or forming new theory

Alternative Paradigms of Research

It focuses on understanding behaviour from the person's own point of view.

It is called the **Interpretive Method**.

It gives importance to:

- Personal experience
- Context
- Subjectivity
- Real-life understanding

Human behaviour cannot always be understood only through numbers.

Nature of Psychological Data

Psychologists collect different types of data to understand behaviour.

Types of Data

1. Demographic Information

Name, age, gender, education, occupation

2. Physical Information

Home environment, facilities, economic condition

3. Physiological Data

Height, weight, heart rate

4. Psychological Information

Intelligence, personality, interests, values

Important Methods in Psychology

1. Observational Method

Observation means watching behaviour carefully.

Scientific Observation Steps:

- Observe
- Record
- Analyse
- Derive meaning

Types of Observation

A. Naturalistic Observation

Observation in natural setting without control

Example:

Watching children in playground

B. Controlled Observation

Observation in planned or controlled setting

Example:

Student behaviour in classroom

C. Non-Participant Observation

Observer watches from distance without joining

Example:

Teacher observing through CCTV

D. Participant Observation

Observer becomes part of the group

Example:

Teacher joins student activity to observe behaviour

2. Experimental Method

Studies **cause and effect relationship** between two variables in controlled setting.

Example:

Effect of noise on memorization

Variables

1. Independent Variable (IV)

Changed by experimenter

Example:

Noise level

(With noise / Without noise)

2. Dependent Variable (DV)

Depends on IV

Example:

Memorization performance

3. Extraneous Variable (EV)

Extra unwanted variables affecting result

Example:

Sleep, health, mood, room temperature

Controlling Techniques

1. Elimination

Remove unwanted variable

Example:

Closing windows to stop outside noise

2. Held Constant

Keeping conditions same

Example:

Same room, same test, same time

3. Randomization

Randomly selecting participants

Example:

Choosing students by chits

4. Matching

Selecting similar participants

Example:

Same age group students

5. Counterbalancing

Reduces practice and fatigue effect

Example:

Group A: silence → noise

Group B: noise → silence

Control Group & Experimental Group

Control Group

No manipulation of IV

Example:

Students studying without noise

Experimental Group

Receives manipulation of IV

Example:

Students studying with noise

Example

Topic:

Effect of noise on memorization

IV:

Noise

DV:

Memorization

Control Group:

Without noise

Experimental Group:

With noise

Field and Quasi Experiments

Field Experiment

Done in natural setting

Example:

Effect of disaster on lifestyle

Quasi Experiment

IV cannot be manipulated directly

Example:

Stress differences between boys and girls

3. Correlational Research

Studies relationship between 2 or more variables

Range:

-1 to +1

Types of Correlation

Positive Correlation

Both move in same direction

Example:

More study → better marks

Negative Correlation

Move in opposite direction

Example:

More stress → less performance

Zero Correlation

No relationship

Example:

Shoe size and intelligence

4. Survey Research

Mostly used in social psychology

Used for collecting opinions of people

Methods

1. Interview

Face-to-face interaction

2. Questionnaire

Written questions

3. Telephonic Survey

Calling and collecting responses

5. Psychological Testing

Psychological tests are:

- Standardized
- Systematic
- Objective

Uses of Psychological Testing

- Diagnosis of mental disorders
- Measuring intelligence and abilities
- Personality assessment
- Educational and career guidance
- Employee selection and placement
- Clinical treatment planning
- Research purposes
- Forensic and legal decisions
- Understanding individual strengths and weaknesses

Criteria of Good Test

1. Validity

Measures what it should measure

Example:

IQ test should measure intelligence

2. Reliability

Consistency of scores

3. Item Analysis

Every question should match topic

4. Norms

Standard criteria for comparison

Types of Tests

Based on Nature

- Verbal
- Non-Verbal
- Performance Test

Based on Administration

- Individual Test
- Group Test

Based on Classification

- Speed Test
- Power Test

6. Case Study

In-depth study of one person and their problem

Mostly used in clinical psychology

Example:

ADHD child study

Analysis of Data

Quantitative

Based on numbers and scores

Example:

Marks

Qualitative

Based on description and conclusions

Example:

Interview responses

Limitations of Psychological Enquiry

1. Lack of True Zero Point

Psychological qualities do not have absolute zero

2. Relative Nature of Tools

Tools differ according to culture and situation

3. Subjective Interpretation

Different people may interpret data differently

Ethical Issues

1. Voluntary Participation

Participation by choice

2. Informed Consent

Participants should know purpose before joining

3. Debriefing

Explaining full study after research

4. Sharing Results

Results should be honestly shared

5. Confidentiality

Privacy and personal information must be protected



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