

Revision Notes - History, Methodology and Philosophy of Psychological Science

Levels of analysis

- Biological
 - The physical body's contribution to the mind and behaviour
 - Eg. Brain imaging, neurotransmitters, hormones, drugs
- Individual
 - Differences in personality and mental processes that affect how each person views the world
 - Eg. Personality, gender, age, decision making, language, seeing, hearing, physical movements
- Social
 - How groups affect human interaction and how other humans influence one another
 - Eg. Workplaces, groups, relationships, persuasion, stereotypes
- Cultural
 - How thoughts, feelings and action are similar or different across cultures
 - Similarities between cultures demonstrate that some phenomena is universal to all humans
 - Eg. Norms, values, beliefs, ethnicity, symbols

Music

- Musical training changes brain function and anatomy
 - Changes structures involved in learning and memory
- Pleasant music causes activity in areas of the brain associated with positive experiences
 - Recruits areas of the brain involved in a number of functions, unlike spoken word
- Treated by the brain as a special category of auditory information
- Listening to sad background music makes people interpret a story more sadly than with happy background music
- Ethnomusicology - study of cross-cultural music preferences

Types of Psychologists

- Neuroscience/biological: how biological systems give rise to behaviour and mental processes
- Cognitive: cognition, perception and action

- Developmental: how people change across the lifespan
- Personality: understand enduring characteristics that display over time and across circumstances
- Social: how people are affected by the presence of others
- Cultural: how people are influenced by social rules present within a culture
- Clinical: interested in factors that cause disorders
- Counselling: seek to improve everyday life
- School: help students with problems that affect learning
- Organisational: behaviour and productivity in the workplace
- Forensic: identify dangerous offenders
- Sports: work with athletes to improve performance
- Health: study factors that promote or interfere with physical health

History of Psychology

Key figures in the development of psychology

- The King of Egypt conducted the first psychological experiment (700 BC)
 - to determine whether Egyptian was the 'original' language
 - gave two newborns to a shepherd and told him not to speak to them and their first word would be in the original language
- trepanation
 - holes used to be cut into the parietal skull to treat mental disorders, headaches, etc
 - this procedure did not kill the people as the hole in the skulls have rounded edges, indicating that the bone has healed
 - purpose was to let out the demons
 - demonstrates that they did attribute thoughts to the brain
- Democritus (460-370 BC)
 - Greek philosopher
 - gave rise to determinism
 - human behaviour follows lawful patterns
 - everyone will behave the same way under the same circumstances
- Socrates
 - Greek philosopher
 - first to propose scientific approach to psychology
 - objective truth
 - thoughts, feelings and behaviours have multiple causes
 - behaviour is not predetermined (opposite to determinism)

- challenged people's thought
 - eg. he would ask if a good person is honest, can you still be good and lie occasionally?
- Plato
 - introduced the term 'psyche'
 - soul and mind
 - thought mental disease was caused when our natural desire to satisfy bodily needs (appetitive urges) dominated the rational psyche
 - eg. of appetitive urges: impulsivity, asocial and beastlike parts of us
 - rationalist
 - opposed determinism
- Aristotle
 - psyche is independent of the body
 - empiricist (reality can only be known via perception)
 - opposed determinism
 - thought the heart was the seat of the soul
 - because it is central, mobile, hot, and supplied with structures that served to communicate between it and the rest of the body
- Galen
 - doctor in the Roman Empire
 - noticed that gladiators with head injuries had altered thoughts whereas those with other injuries did not
- Rene Descartes - Dualism
 - behaviour operates like a machine
 - proposed the concept of spinal reflexes
 - pineal gland was the junction where the mind and the body connected
 - dualism - humans have a nonmaterial soul and a material body

The changing location of the soul/mind

- cardiocentrists
 - Ancient Egyptians
 - Aristotle
- cerebro centrists
 - Galen

Ventricular theory

- Galen
- 3 cell theory
- different mental functions took place in each of the 4 ventricles