

# Human Behaviour Study

## Lecture 1: Introduction

### Learning outcomes:

- What is psychology
- Psychological perspectives

### What is psychology?

- Psyche: essence, soul, mind. Logos: knowledge
- Study of the behaviour of individuals and their mental processes

### Levels of analysis

- Biological
- physical basis
- Psychological factors
- Social and cultural context

### Goals of psychology

- Describe
- Explain
- Predict
- Control

### Conceptual issues

- Conscious vs unconscious
- Nature vs nurture
- Free will vs determinism

### Psychological perspectives

- Humanism- we have control over our processes
- Cognitive revolution- understanding through technology
- Evolutionary- natural selection, survival of the fittest
- Biological- underlying physical structures
- Sociocultural- environmental influence
- Psychoanalyst- focus on mental processes
- Behaviourism- focus on behaviour

## **Why is history important?**

- Development of alternative perspectives
- Use of different levels of analysis
- Knowledge develops over time, based on what we've learned before
- Historical context to development of the field

## **Worldviews**

- A way of viewing and describing the "world"
- Beliefs, assumptions, that define a world, all that is in it, whether it is good or bad, how it can be done...
- Influences approach to e.g. well-being (science-logic or transcendent)

## **Lecture 2: Critical Thinking (in the exam)**

### **Learning Outcomes:**

- **Explain two different ways to evaluate an argument: a) Structure, b) Content**
- **Apply critical thinking to academic writing (i.e. your Literature Review) and real life**
- **Identify common logical fallacies**

### **Critical Critical thinking and argument in psychology**

- First distinguish the meanings and how to apply it
- Critical meaning to be able to hear different ideas and identify what is good and what is not
- Taking multiple perspectives and analysing something
- Need to separate the specific meaning of critical thinking from the social meaning and from personality and interpersonal interactions
- Logically examining evidence

### **General outcomes**

- As humans we tend to have pet ideas about behaviour which are often wrong, ie common sense explanations
- Train ourselves in improved thinking and avoid bias
- In normal life we tend to make mistakes in how we argue points
- Skills that will help us in all areas of our lives
- Move away from anecdotal evidence ie testimonials

### **Critical thinking isn't**

- Not just a matter of objection or criticising someone else's point of view
- Taking a negative approach
- Being critical

### **What is critical thinking**

- A skill that has a wide application in many areas in life but particularly in academic research. It involves carefully examining and analysing evidence in order to assess its validity and worth
- It probing beneath what appears on the surface, taking into account alternative views and searching for multiple explanations before reaching a conclusion/accepting an argument
- Involves being objective, open minded and sceptical
- Avoid being dogmatic (one view)

### **Objectivity**

- Ignoring personal view and emotional reactions
- Judging arguments or conclusions according to their logic, and their supporting evidence
- We don't think logically when emotions come into the picture ie politics on boat people
- Avoiding trying to find specific evidence

### **Open mindlessness**

- Consider all sides of argument despite personal opinion
- Never ignore possible explanations/interpretations
- Prepare to accept evidence that conflicts with your own personal experience
- Confirmation bias

### **Skepticism**

- Never taking anything for granted, looking for evidence and willingness to say I don't know
- Questioning assumptions and conclusions