

## Chapter 1:

- **Psychology is the scientific study of:**

- Behaviour (observable actions and responses)
- mind (unobservable thoughts and feelings)

- It relies on scientific methods to gain empirical evidence and achieve four central goals:

1. Describe how people behave, think and feel
2. Understand and explain why people act the way they do
3. Exert control by designing research to test whether explanations are accurate
4. Apply psychological knowledge to enhance human welfare and experience

- Empirical evidence is evidence gained through experience and observation, including evidence obtained from manipulating with things and then observing what happens. These observations need to be systematic, i.e. conducted according to a system of rules or conditions so that they will be as unbiased and precise as possible.

- **Subfields of psychology:**

1. **Biopsychology or behavioural neuroscience** – focuses on the biological influences on behaviour. It looks at how the brain processes information, and how genes and hormones influence our actions, thoughts and feelings.
2. **Developmental psychology** – focuses on human physical, psychological and social development across your lifetime.
3. **Experimental psychology** – focuses on basic processes like learning, sensory systems (e.g. hearing, vision), perception and motivational states (e.g. sexual motivation, hunger, thirst).

4. **Industrial-organisational** (I/O) psychology – looks at people's behaviour at the workplace.
5. **Personality psychology** – focuses on the study of human personality. Tries to determine core personality traits and the way different traits relate to one another and influence behaviour.
6. **Social psychology** – looks at people's thoughts, feelings and behaviour related to society, i.e. how people influence one another, how they behave in groups and form attitudes and impressions. It also involves studying social relationships like love and prejudice.

### **Types of Research in Psychology:**

1. **Basic** – 'basic research' examines how and why people behave, think and feel the way they do. Basic research can be carried out in labs or in real life settings, with human participants or other species.
2. **Applied** – 'Applied research' involves psychologists designing interventions using basic scientific knowledge. E.g. designing and implementing HIV/AIDs prevention programs based on research findings.