**PSYCHOLOGY**

**Why study psychology?**

1. Helps you understand yourself and other people by learning about aspects of human behavior that will help you in daily life including your interactions with others.
2. Complement other learning by combining psychology with other courses.
3. Develop sound analytical states through the application of scientific method.
4. Prepare you for a career as a professional psychologist.
5. Provide excellent job prospects in a wide range of career. Psychologists are employed across several industries including health care and social assistance

**Major goals of psychology**

1. Describe behavior of human animals to be able to understand it and gain a better perspective on what is considered normal or abnormal.
2. Explain: - psychologists are interested in explaining behavior e.g.
* Why do people do the things they do.
* What factors contribute to development, personality, social behavior and mental health problems?
1. Predict: make predictions about how we think and act (how observed behavior might happen in future). Psychologists can then foresee a pattern of behavior, hence can better understand the underlying causes of our actions.
2. Charge/control: psychology aims to change, influence or control behavior to make positive, constructive, meaningful and lasting changes in people’s lives and to influence their behavior for the better.

**Major psychological schools of thought**

* Structuralism
* Functionalism
* Psychoanalysis
* Behaviorism
* Gestalt psychology
* Humanistic psychology
* **Structuralism and functionalism:** widely regarded as the first school of thought in psychology. This outlook focused on breaking down mental processes into the most basic component. Major thinkers associated with structuralism include Wilhelm Wundt and Edward Titchener.
* **Behaviorism (behavioral psychology):** behaviorists believe that our responses to environment shape our actions
* **Psychoanalysis:** defined as a set of psychological theories and therapeutic techniques that have their origins in the work and theories of Sigmund Freud. The core of psychoanalysis is the believe that all people possesses unconscious thoughts, feelings, desires and memories.
* **Gestalt psychology: -** founded in the 20th century that provided the foundation for the modern study of perception.

The word Gestalt is used in modern German to mean the way the thing has been placed or put together.

* **Humanistic psychology: -** psychological perspective that emphasizes the study of the whole person. The psychologists look at human behavior not only through the eyes of observer but through the eyes of the person doing the behavior.

**Methods used in the study of psychology**

1. **Case study:** process or record of research into the development of a particular person, group or situation over a period of time.
2. **Experiment:** involves manipulating one variable to determine if changes in one variable causes changes in another variable.
3. **Observational study:** the technique involves observing. Involves studying the spontaneous behavior of participants in natural surroundings.
4. **Survey:** look closely at or examine someone/something
5. **Content analysis:** a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words, themes or concepts within some given qualitative data.