

## Areas of Specialization in Psychology

- o **Clinical Psychology and Psychiatry**

**Clinical psychologists** work on the diagnosis, understanding, and treatment of severe emotional problems, behavioral problems, and mental disorders but don't have a medical degree and don't rely on medicines to treat mental disorders and other conditions.

**Psychiatrists** also focus on the diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders, but they have a medical degree and rely on pharmacotherapy – the use of medicines to cure illnesses.

- o **Developmental Psychology**

Psychologists who are concerned with human development are known as **developmental psychologists**. They study factors that shape human behavior from birth to death.

For instance, a developmental psychologist would be interested in knowing how language ability develops from infancy to preschool years and then to adolescence.

- o **Health Psychology**

**Health psychologists** deal with the impact of emotions, behavior, and events on health. They provide solutions that will help reduce the negative impacts of emotions on health.

For instance, they would advise people on how to reduce stress to improve physical and mental health. They work in academic areas or in hospitals and research labs.

- o **Social Psychology**

Psychologists specializing in areas of social psychology study how people behave and interact in social situations, how friendship develops, what causes aggression, and how prejudices are formed.

- o **Educational and School Psychology**

Educational and school psychologists deal with learning and teaching problems of school children. **Educational psychologists** look at the educational structure and system and suggest ways to improve it.

**School psychologists** look at the progress of students and learning disabilities. For instance, a school psychologist would administer intelligence or aptitude tests, help students with classroom problems, identify students with learning disabilities, and recommend special classes for them.

- o **Cognitive Psychology**

**Cognitive psychologists** specifically study and work with how each individual acquires, stores, transforms, uses, and communicates information.

How do we remember so many things? How do we solve problems? How do we decide? Cognitive psychologists identify the mental process involved in remembering a long list of numbers or words.

- **Neuropsychology**

Neuropsychologists attempt to study the human brain and its impact on behavior. They try to identify which parts of the brain are responsible for various aspects of behavior.

For instance, which chemical or neurotransmitter is important for our emotions and anxiety? Neuropsychologists and cognitive psychologists often work in tandem.

- **Industrial and Organizational Psychology**

Industrial and organizational psychology is a popular branch of psychology. It deals with factors that affect people in organizations. **Industrial and organizational psychologists** work with employee selection, performance appraisal, job analysis, and absenteeism.

Organizational psychologists are more involved with the issue of leadership, motivation, conflict management, training, and development of employee skills. Industrial and organizational psychologists try to improve the performance of the employees of an industry or an organization, respectively by identifying the factors that affect performance.