**Psychology**

The word, ‘Psychology’ is derived from two Greek words, ‘Psyche’ and ‘Logos’. Psyche means ‘soul’ and ‘Logos’ means ‘science’. Thus psychology was first defined as the ‘science of soul”.

* William James (1892) defined psychology as the science of mental processes.
* William McDougal (1905) defined psychology as the “Science of Behavior”
* Psychology should, therefore, be defined as a “science of behavior and experiences on human beings” (B.F. Skinner)
* According to Crow and Crow, “Psychology is the study of human behavior and human relationship”

**Definition:**

Psychology is the study of behavior and mental processes.

* + - Behavior: Overt; i.e., can be directly observed (crying)
		- Mental Processes: Covert; i.e., cannot be directly observed (remembering)

Psychology is an objective and systematic study of how people think and behave. Its goals are to describe, explain, predict and control behavior and mental processes.

**Functions of Psychology**

According to earlier psychologists, the function of psychology was to study the nature, origin and destiny of the human soul. But soul is something metaphysical. It cannot be seen, observed and touched and we cannot make scientific experiments on soul.

**What is Educational Psychology?**

Educational psychology is one of the many branches of psychology dealing mainly with the problems, processes and products of education. It is an attempt to apply the knowledge of Psychology in the field of education. It may be defined as the branch of psychology which studies the behavior of the learner his educational needs and his environment. Various psychologists and scholars have defined educational psychology. Educational psychology is that branch of psychology in which the findings of psychology are applied in the field of education. It is the scientific study of human behavior in educational setting. Educational psychology is the study of how humans learn in educational settings, the effectiveness of educational interventions, the psychology of teaching, and the social psychology of schools as organizations. Educational Psychology is concerned with how students learn and develop, often focusing on subgroups such as gifted children and those subject to specific disabilities.

According to **Charles. E. Skinner**, “Educational psychology deals with the behavior of human beings in educational situations”.

According to **Skinner (1958):** Educational psychology is that branch of psychology which deals with teaching and learning.

**Crow and Crow (1973)** defined educational psychology as:

Educational psychology describes and explains the learning experiences of an individual from birth through old age.

Another psychologist named **Peel (1956)** says:

Educational psychology is the science of education.

**Nature of Educational Psychology:**

Educational psychology is an offshoot (outcome) and a part and parcel of psychology, so its nature cannot be different from the main subject. The following points further confirm the nature of educational psychology as scientific.

1. Educational psychology possesses a well-organized systematic body of facts which is

supported by the psychological laws and principles.

2. It is constantly in the search of the truth, which is studying the behavior of the learner in

relation to his educational environment. The results of any study in educational psychology

can be challenged and are modified or altered in terms of the latest explanations and

findings.

3. Educational psychology does not accept hearsay (gossips) and does not take anything for granted. It emphasized that essentially there is some definite cause linked with a behavior. And the causes of this behavior are not related to super natural phenomenon.

4. Educational psychology is mostly concerned with the “what” and “why” of happenings in

the present instead of caring for the past. Therefore, in its study it focuses attention on

problems like the present behavior of the learner, the causes of such behavior, and the

Repercussion if it were to continue unchanged.

5. The generalizations arrived at conclusions reach through the study of educational psychology

are sufficiently reliable and thus like the sciences these can be used for predictions of behavior in similar situations. R.B.Cattell the modern psychologist believed so much in the predictable quality of these studies that he persisted in defining personality as well attribute which permits the prediction of what a person will do in a given situation.

Educational psychology in turn informs a wide range of specialties within educational studies, including instructional design, educational technology, curriculum development, organizational learning, special education and classroom management. Educational psychology both draws from and contributes to cognitive science and the learning sciences.

**Nature of Educational Psychology**

Its nature is scientific as it has been accepted that it is a Science of Education. We can summarize the nature of Educational Psychology in the following ways:

1. Educational Psychology is a science

2. Educational Psychology is a natural science

3. Educational psychology is a social science

4. Educational psychology is a positive science

5. Educational psychology is an applied science

6. Educational psychology is a developing or growing science

**Educational Psychology is a science**

(Science is a branch of study concerned with observation of facts and establishment of verifiable general laws. Science employs certain objective methods for the collection of data. It has its objectives of understanding, explaining, predicting and control of facts.) • Like any other science, educational psychology has also developed objective methods of collection of data. It also aims at understanding, predicting and controlling human behavior.

**Educational Psychology is a natural science**

An educational psychologist conducts his investigations, gathers his data and reaches his conclusions in exactly the same manner as physicist or the biologist.

**Educational psychology is a social science**

Like the sociologist, anthropologist, economist or political scientist, the educational psychologist studies human beings and their sociability.

**Educational psychology is a positive science**

Normative science like Logic or Ethics deals with facts as they ought to be. A positive science deals with facts as they are or as they operate. Educational psychology studies the child’s behavior as it is, not, as it ought to be. So it is a positive science.

**Educational psychology is an applied science**

It is the application of psychological principles in the field of education. By applying the principles and techniques of psychology, it tries to study the behavior and experiences of the pupils. As a branch of psychology it is parallel to any other applied psychology. For example, educational psychology draws heavily facts from such areas as developmental psychology, clinical psychology, abnormal psychology and social psychology.

**Educational psychology is a developing or growing science**

It is concerned with new and ever new researches. As research findings accumulate, educational psychologists get better insight into the child’s nature and behaviour.

**The Role of Educational Psychology:**

For as long as educational psychology has existed, about 90 years, there have been debates about

What it really is? Some people believe educational psychology is simply knowledge gained from

psychology and applied to the activities of the classroom. Others believe it involves applying the

methods of psychology to study classroom and school life.

The view generally accepted today is that educational psychology is a distinct discipline with its own theories, research methods, problems and techniques, "educational psychology is distinct (separate/different) from other branches of psychology because it has the understanding and improvement of education as its primary goal". Both in the past and today, educational psychologists study learning and teaching and at the same time, strive (struggle) to improve educational practice.

**Scope of Educational Psychology**Educational Psychology is a scientific discipline that addresses two Core Questions:

* “Why do some individual learn more than others?” And
* “What can be done to improve that learning?”

The scope of educational psychology is ever-growing due to constantly researches in this field. The following factors will indicate the scope of educational psychology:

* **The Learner.**The subject-matter of educational psychology is knitted (join/prevail) around the learner. Therefore, the need of knowing the learner and the techniques of knowing him well. The topics include – the innate abilities and capacities of the individuals, individual differences and their measurements, the overt, covert, conscious as well as unconscious behaviour of the learner, the characteristics of his growth and development and each stage beginning from childhood to adulthood.
* **The Learning Experiences.**Educational Psychology helps in deciding what learning experiences are desirable, at what stage of the growth and development of the learner, so that these experiences can be acquired with a greater ease and satisfaction.
* **Learning process:** After knowing the learner and deciding what learning experiences are to be provided, Educational Psychology moves on to the laws, principles and theories of learning. Other items in the learning process are remembering and forgetting, perceiving, concept formation, thinking and reasoning, problem solving, transfer of learning, ways and means of effective learning etc.
* **Learning Situation or Environment.** Here we deal with the environmental factors and learning situations which come midway between the learner and the teacher. Topics like classroom climate and group dynamics, techniques and aids that facilitate learning and evaluation, techniques and practices, guidance and counselling etc. For the smooth functioning of the teaching-learning process.
* **The Teacher:** The teacher is a potent (strong) force in any scheme of teaching and learning process. It discusses the role of the teacher. It emphasizes the need of **‘knowing thyself’** for a teacher to play his role properly in the process of education. His conflicts, motivation. Anxiety, adjustment, level of aspiration etc. It throws light on the essential personality traits, interests, aptitudes, the characteristics of effective teaching etc so as to inspire him for becoming a successful teacher.

Though the entire scope of Educational Psychology is included in the above mentioned five key-factors, it may be further expanded by adding the following:

* It studies**Human Behaviour**in educational situations. Psychology is the study of behaviour, and education deals with the modification of behaviour; hence, educational psychology pervades the whole field of education.
* It studies the**Growth and Development** of the child. How a child passes through the various stages of growth and what are the characteristics of each stage are included in the study of educational psychology.
* To what extent **Heredity and Environment** contribute towards the growth of the individual, and how this knowledge can be made use of for bringing about the optimum (best) development of the child; form a salient feature of the scope of educational psychology.
* Educational psychology deals with the N**ature and Development of the Personality** of an individual. In fact, education has been defined as the all-round development of the personality of an individual; personality development also implies a well-adjusted personality.
* It studies**Individual Difference**: Every individual differs from every other individual. It is one of the fundamental facts of human nature which have been brought to light by educational psychology. This one fact has revolutionalised (innovative) the concept and process of education.
* It studies the nature**Intelligence and its Measurement.** This is of utmost (greatest) importance for a teacher.
* It Provides**Guidance and Counselling**: Education is nothing but providing guidance to the growing child. We can conclude by saying that Educational Psychology is narrower in scope than general psychology. While general psychology deals with the behaviour of the individual in a general way, educational psychology in concerned with the behaviour of the learner in an educational setting.

**“Why should Educational Psychology be taught to teachers”**

**Contribution to Theory of Education**

* To Understand Development Characteristics
* To Understand the Nature of Classroom Learning
* To Understand Individual Differences
* To Understand Effective Teaching Methods
* To Understand Problems of Children
* Knowledge of Mental Health
* Curriculum Construction
* Measurement of Learning Outcomes
* Research
* Guidance for Education of Exceptional Children
* Helps to develop positive attitude
* Understanding of Group Dynamics

**Contribution to Practice of Education**

* Problem of Discipline
* Use of Audio-Visual Aids
* School and Classroom Administration
* Time Table
* Co-curricular Activities
* Use of Innovations
* Production of Text Books