

AS PSYCHOLOGY METHODOLOGY

AN INTRODUCTION

APPROACHES

- **Social**: social context, influence of others
- **Cognitive**: internal processes in brain
- **Developmental**: changes in behaviour & thinking over lifespan
- **Physiological**: how biology impacts on behaviour
- **Individual Differences**: differences between people (abnormality, personality, etc)
- **PERSPECTIVES**:~
- **Behaviourist**: behaviour due to learning
- **Psychodynamic**: unconscious influences and innate instincts.

METHODS:

HOW DO WE INVESTIGATE PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES?

- Q; Does watching violent TV programmes make children more aggressive?
- How could you investigate this ?
- Experiment (laboratory/field)
- Observation
- Questionnaire, interview, diary (self-reports)
- Case Study
- Correlational study
- Neurophysiological measurement

VARIABLES

- A **variable** in psychology is any factor that can change or vary in some way. Eg; intelligence, aggression, time, driving ability.
- **Operationalisation**: this is the process of making variables measurable or testable. Some aspect of observable behaviour is recorded. Eg;
 - Aggression;
 - Intelligence;
 - Memory;

Variables 2

- **Observations, Case Studies, Self-reports:** in these methods variables are measured in varying degrees of detail. (eg; helping behaviour).
- **Experiments:** This is the only method to have;
Independent Variable: the variable that is controlled by the experimenter.
- **Dependent Variable:** measured outcome of the experiment.
- Eg; Effect of alcohol on driving ability
- **Correlations:** Variables are compared to see how they co-vary. Eg; age & IQ

SAMPLING

- **Sampling** is the process of selecting subjects to study from the **target population** & should aim to be as **representative** as possible.
- How do psychologists select their subjects? How would you?
- **Random**: where every member of the target population has an equal chance of selection.
- **Opportunity**: selecting subjects who are around & available at the time.
- **Self-selecting**: subjects who determine their involvement. (eg; volunteers)
- **Stratified**; Dividing pop. into categories (eg; males, females) & selecting subjects in proportion that they occur in that pop.

ETHICS

Guidelines in psychology which state what is acceptable & unacceptable in research.

- **Consent:** researchers are obliged to obtain informed consent or agreement from participants.
- **Deception:** participants should not be deliberately misled where possible.
- **Welfare:** participants should not experience any physical or psychological pain or distress.
- **Withdrawal:** p's should be allowed to withdraw at any time.
- **Debriefing:** Post -study discussion.