

# Abnormal Psychology Overview, Perspective and Various Approaches

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## Introduction

Abnormal psychology is a discipline of psychology that focuses on psychopathology and abnormal behaviour in therapeutic settings. From depression to obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) to personality problems, the word encompasses a wide spectrum of diseases. This field frequently employs counsellors, clinical psychologists, and psychotherapists.

The term "abnormal" is controversial in and of itself. Who gets to judge what is "normal"? The social norms that are frequently used to judge what are normal vs. abnormal might alter throughout time, making it difficult to come up with a uniform definition.

## What is abnormal psychology?

Abnormal psychology examines the emotional, cognitive, and behavioural tendencies that can indicate a mental health problem. Rather than focusing on the difference between normal and abnormal, psychologists in this field look at how much distress behaviours, ideas, or feelings can cause.

An "abnormal" conduct is one that causes problems in a person's life or is disruptive to others. In such instances, the behaviour may necessitate some form of mental health treatment [1].

## Perspectives on abnormal psychology

In abnormal psychology, there are a variety of viewpoints to consider. While some psychologists and psychiatrists specialize in a particular subject, many mental health professionals combine components from several disciplines to better understand and treat psychological illnesses.

## Psychoanalytic approach

This point of view is based on Sigmund Freud's views. Many deviant behaviours, according to psychoanalysis, are the result of unconscious thoughts, desires, and memories [2].

People can identify and deal with some of the feelings that have been leading to maladaptive behaviours and discomfort, according to therapists who use this technique, by evaluating memories, behaviours, thoughts, and even dreams.

## Behavioral approach

This abnormal psychology method focuses on observable behaviours. The goal of behavioural therapy is to reinforce positive behaviours rather than maladaptive behaviours.

The behavioural approach focuses solely on the behaviour itself, rather than the root causes. A behavioural therapist might use tactics like classical conditioning and operant conditioning to assist eradicate unwanted behaviours and teach new ones while dealing with abnormal behavior [3].

## Medical approach

This approach to abnormal psychology emphasises on the biological roots of mental illness, which may include genetic inheritance, linked physical ailments, infections, and chemical abnormalities. The majority of medical therapies are pharmacological in origin, while medicine is frequently used in conjunction with psychotherapy.

## Cognitive approach

Internal ideas, perceptions, and reasoning all have a role in psychological illnesses, according to the cognitive approach to abnormal psychology. The goal of most cognitive therapy is to assist the patient change their thoughts or reactions.

## Topics in abnormal psychology

The study, comprehension, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of psychological diseases are the core issues in abnormal psychology. Patterns of behavioural or psychological symptoms that affect numerous aspects of life are referred to as psychological illnesses. The person who is suffering symptoms is distressed by these conditions.

The American Psychiatric Association (APA) publishes the "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders," which is utilised by mental health professionals for a number of purposes. A list of psychiatric disorders, diagnostic codes, information on the prevalence of each disease, and diagnostic criteria are all included in the guidebook. The following are some examples of psychological disorders:

Mood disorders, such as depression and bipolar disorder; Neurodevelopmental disorders, such as intellectual disability or autism spectrum disorder; Neurocognitive disorders, such as delirium; Personality disorders, such as borderline personality disorder, avoidant personality disorder, and obsessive-compulsive personality disorder; Substance use disorders [4].

## Criticism

The field of abnormal psychology has its detractors. Aside from disagreements over the definition of "abnormal," some say this field has a number of flaws [5].

Some believe that this region stigmatises vulnerable and marginalised people in particular.

It also ignores the reality that there are significant cultural variances in what is considered normal and deviant.

Critics also claim that abnormal psychology has a tendency to pathologize typical human behaviour variances.

Some argue that medical treatment of mental illness often focuses solely on biological and genetic factors of discomfort rather than taking a more holistic approach.

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