

Faculty of Human and Social Sciences

Department of Psychology

Level: 2nd year LMD Psychology

Instructor: Ms. Saci Meriem

Module: English Language

Lesson n°4: Abnormal Psychology

I. Meaning of Abnormal Psychology

Abnormal psychology is the branch of psychology that studies unusual patterns of behavior, emotion, and thought, which may be indicative of mental disorders. This field seeks to understand the nature, causes, and treatment of these conditions.

II. Key Concepts in Abnormal Psychology

1. Definition of Abnormality: Abnormal behavior is often characterized by statistical rarity, deviation from social norms, personal distress, and dysfunction in daily life. Different models (medical, psychological, and sociocultural) define abnormality through various lenses.

2. Classification of Mental Disorders: The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), published by the American Psychiatric Association, provides a standardized classification system for mental health disorders. It includes various categories such as mood disorders, anxiety disorders, personality disorders, and psychotic disorders.

3. Causes of Mental Disorders: The etiology of mental disorders is multifaceted, often involving biological, psychological, and environmental factors. Genetic predisposition, brain chemistry, trauma, and socio-cultural influences play significant roles.

4. Assessment and Diagnosis: Mental health professionals utilize various methods to assess and diagnose disorders, including clinical interviews, psychological testing, and observation. Accurate diagnosis is crucial for effective treatment planning.

Faculty of Human and Social Sciences

Department of Psychology

Level: 2nd year LMD Psychology

Instructor: Ms. Saci Meriem

Module: English Language

III. Common Types of Mental Disorder

- ❖ **Anxiety Disorders:** These include generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and social anxiety disorder, characterized by excessive fear or worry.
- ❖ **Mood Disorders:** Conditions such as depression and bipolar disorder involve significant disturbances in mood and affect.
- ❖ **Schizophrenia and Psychotic Disorders:** Schizophrenia is marked by distorted thinking, hallucinations, and delusions, impacting a person's perception of reality.
- ❖ **Personality Disorders:** These involve enduring patterns of behavior and inner experiences that deviate from cultural expectations, such as borderline personality disorder and antisocial personality disorder.

IV. Treatment Approaches

- 1. Psychotherapy:** Various therapeutic approaches, including cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), psychodynamic therapy, and humanistic therapy, are used to address mental health issues.
- 2. Pharmacotherapy:** Medications such as antidepressants, antipsychotics, and anxiolytics are commonly prescribed to manage symptoms of mental disorders.
- 3. Alternative Therapies:** Approaches like mindfulness, yoga, and art therapy can complement traditional treatments and support mental well-being.