

Why is psychology  
considered to be a  
science?



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## **History**

The word “ psychology” comes from the Greek words “ psyche, meaning “ soul” and “ logos” meaning “ study. Psychology is known as the study of the mind. In the modern language the suffix “ ology” is referred to a “ science”. Before psychology was established as a science, it was associated with extra sensory perception (ESP) and other paranormal phenomena (beyond the laws of science. Hence, psychology studies human behavior in a scientific approach, such behaviors are, speaking, eating, and the mental activities such as memory and imaging. (2009. Advameg. Inc.) Psychology tries to understand the reason a person behaves the way they and tries to predict how they will behave in the future. Psychology was a branch of philosophy for many years. Philosophy is the study and exploration of the basic truth ruling the universe, nature, life and morals. In 1879, the first formal laboratory of psychology was established at the University of Leipzig in Germany the German physiologist, Wilhelm Wundt. Wundt’s work looked at thought in simpler processes such as, perception, sensation, emotion and association. His approach to thought structure has come to be known as “ structuralism”

## **G. Stanley Hall**

G. Stanley Hall was a student of Wundt for a brief time and he gave many “ firsts” to psychology in America. In 1883, the first psychological lab was established by Hall at John Hopkins University. He was the first president of the American Psychological Association; he also published the first psychological journal. Psychologists are convinced that mind and the ways man behave needs to be studied by using statistics and scientific methods.

They study other important and sensitive topics as well, such as; the differences or similarities between men and women, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, marriage and divorce, intelligence testing, and the effects of psychoactive drugs, among other topics. There are 7 contemporary approaches to psychology: behaviorism, cognitive, functionalism, gestalt, humanistic, neuropsychology, and psychoanalysis. Most of the contemporary research has taken place in cognitive psychology. Cognitive psychology's main focus is how people perceive, store and interpret information and studying memory, language, and problem solving. Cognitive psychology believes it is important to look at the mental process in order for behavior to be understood. In the late twentieth century there have been many advances in the knowledge of the brain and nerve cells chemistry, having a big influence in psychology. With new technologies, producing images of the working human brain has allowed psychologists to study specific types of mental processes that occur. This new emerging field is called "neuropsychology or neuroscience".