

Dr. Yasmeen Kausar
Asst. Professor
Dept. of Psychology
H.D. Jain College, H.S.

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MEMORY

Memory is a type of mental process in which the person brings the prior learnt material in consciousness and tries to recall it. It is necessary for the subject to learn material first in order to retain the material. Retaining is not possible without learning and without retaining retrieval and recollection is not possible.

Regarding the nature of memory some psychologists think that the cause of memory lies in the form of memory traces, therefore it is a physio mental process. Other psychologists too think that memory is a constructive mental process.

Definition of Memory

According to Hilgard and Atkinson (1967), "To remember means to

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Show in present response some signs of earlier learned responses."

According to H.J. Eysenck (1970), "Memory is the ability of an organism to store information from earlier learning processes (experience retention) and reproduce that information in answer to specific stimuli."

On the basis of above given definitions we can say that memory is that ability in which the person retains the material, and reproduces this learnt-material for specific stimuli and recognizes the learnt-material. Memory refers to retaining and recalling information over a period of time, depending upon the nature of cognitive task we are required to perform. It might be necessary to hold an information for a few seconds. For example, we use our

memory to retain an unfamiliar telephone number till we have reached the telephone instrument to dial, or for many years we still remember the techniques of addition and subtraction which we perhaps learned during our early schooling. Memory is conceptualised as a process consisting of three independent, though interrelated stages. These are encoding, storage, and retrieval. Any information received by us necessarily goes through these stages.

a) Encoding is the first stage which refers to a process by which information is recorded and registered for the first time so that it becomes usable by our memory system. Whenever an external stimulus impinges on our sensory organs, it generates neural impulses. These are received in different areas of our brain for further

processing. In encoding, incoming information is received and some meaning is derived. It is then represented in a way so that it can be processed further.

(b) Storage is the second stage of memory. Information which was encoded must also be stored so that it can be put to use later. Storage, therefore, refers to the process through which information is retained and held over a period of time.

(c) Retrieval is the third stage of memory. Information can be used only when one is able to recover it from his memory. Retrieval refers to bringing the stored information to his/ her awareness so that it can be used for performing various cognitive tasks such as problem solving or decision-making. It may be interesting

to note that memory failure can occur at any of these stages. We may fail to recall an information because we did not-encode it properly, or the storage was weak so we could not-access or retrieve it ~~when~~ when required.