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# DEFINITION AND NATURE OF ABNORMAL BEHAVIOUR

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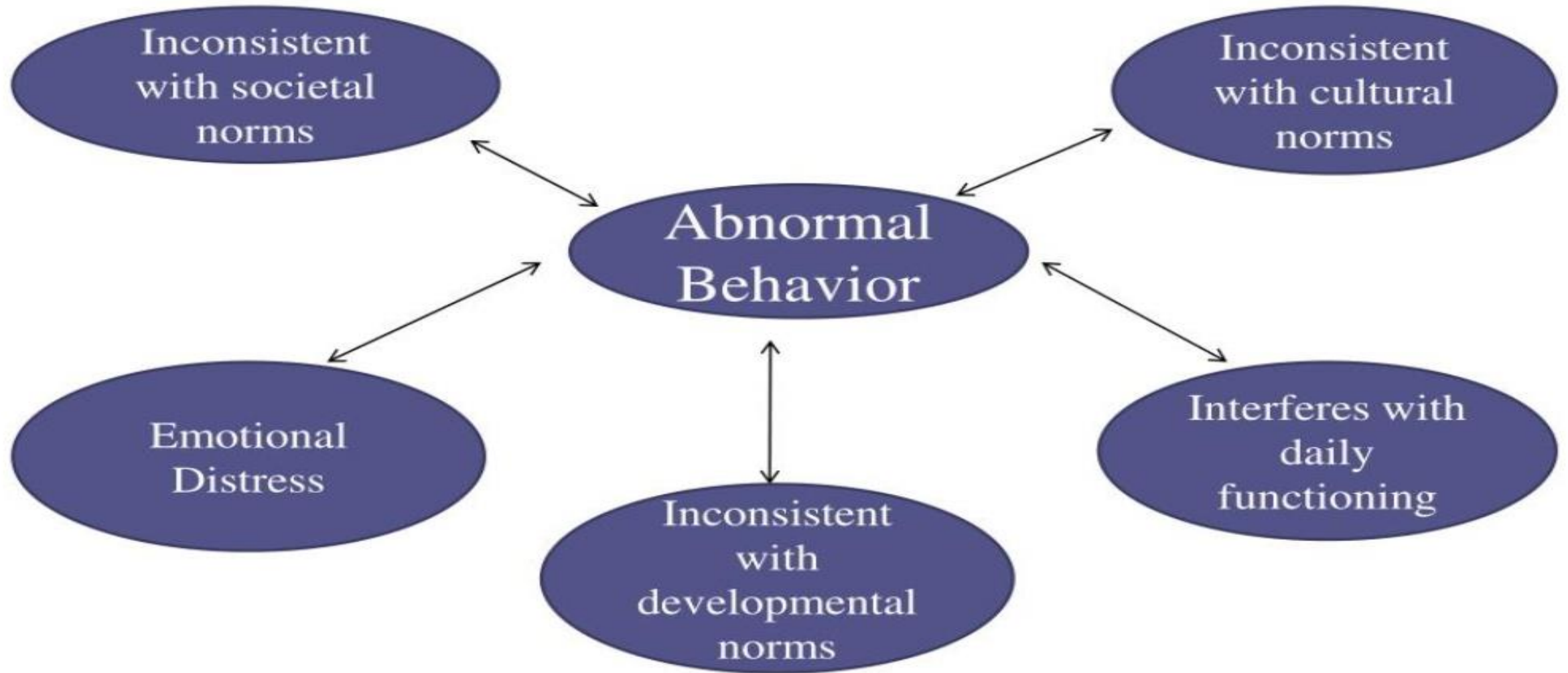
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

# DEFINITION

- **Normality** - The term “**normality**” describes actions that are common or expected in a group of people. It is the condition of falling within the range of what is normal or expected. Being adaptable, practical, and socially acceptable are characteristics of normal behaviour. It is behaviour that enables people to successfully interact with their surroundings and meet their daily needs.
- On the other hand, **abnormality** describes behaviour that differs from what is normal or expected within a particular group of people. It is abnormal, dysfunctional, and socially unacceptable behaviour. When a person behaves abnormally, it usually results in distress for them or others inhibits their capacity to operate effectively in their surroundings, and makes it difficult for them to cope with everyday responsibilities. For instance, people aren't expected to wish for their own death, cry themselves to sleep each night, or listen to voices that no one else can hear.


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- Abnormal psychology is a branch of psychology that studies, diagnoses, and treats unusual patterns of behavior, emotions, and thoughts that could signify a mental disorder.
  - Remember, “abnormal” in this context does not necessarily imply “negative” or “bad.” It is a term used to describe behaviors and mental processes that significantly deviate from statistical or societal norms.

# Definition of Abnormal Behavior



# PSYCHOLOGICALLY ABNORMAL

- The Four D's of abnormality are
- Deviance
- Distress
- Dysfunction
- Danger
- **Deviance-** Deviance from or violation of a society's ideas about proper function. • Norms- a society's explicit and implicit rules for proper conduct. • Culture- a society's shared rules that govern the behavior of its members, common history, values, beliefs, habits, skills, technology, and arts. • Includes a valuation aspect which varies from culture to culture
- **Distress-** If behaviors cause the pain or discomfort (psychological or physical), then they are abnormal

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- **Dysfunction** -Patterns of behavior which interfere with normal daily routines, such as one's social, occupational, and emotional functioning causing significant distress • Inability/loss of ability to perform one's normal roles. • Compare performance with requirements for a role • Compare performance with potential.
  - **Dangerous** - Behavior that becomes dangerous to self or others. • Result from intense emotional states or may signal the presence of a psychological disorder
  - **Definition of Abnormal Behavior-** Inconsistent with societal norms Inconsistent with cultural norms  
Abnormal Behavior Emotional Distress Interferes with daily functioning Inconsistent with developmental norms.