Revision Notes

Chapter 7: Human Memory

- Memory is seen as consisting of three interrelated processes of encoding, storage and retrieval.
- While encoding is registering the incoming information in a way that it becomes compatible to the memory system, storage and retrieval refers to holding the information over a period of time and bringing the information back to one's awareness, respectively.
- The Stage Model of Memory compares memory processes with the working of a computer and suggests that incoming information is processed through three distinct stages of sensory memory, short-term memory and long-term memory.
- Levels of processing view of memory contends that the information can be encoded at any of the three levels, namely, the structural, the phonetic and the semantic. If an information is analysed and encoded semantically, which is the deepest level of processing, then it leads to better retention.
- Long-term memory has been classified in many ways. One major classification is that of declarative and procedural memory and another is that of episodic and semantic memory.
- Contents of long-term memory get represented in terms of concepts, categories and images and are organised hierarchically.
- Forgetting refers to loss of stored information over a period of time. After a material is learnt, there is a sharp drop in its memory and then the decline is very gradual.
- Forgetting has been explained as resulting from trace decay and interference. It may also be caused due to absence of appropriate cues at the time of retrieval.
- Memory is not only a reproductive but also a constructive process. What we store undergoes change and modification within one's past knowledge and schema.
- Mnemonics are strategies for improving memory. While some mnemonics use images, other emphasise organisation of the learnt material.