E-411 PRMA

LECTURE 19 CLINICAL AND COUNSELING ASSESSMENTS

Christopher David Desjardins

CLINICAL VS. COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

Both focus on preventing, diagnosising, and treating behavior

clinical - focus on severe pathologies

counseling - focus on "everyday" behaviors (less severe)

Marriage, family, school, career problems

WHAT MIGHT THESE PSYCHOLOGISTS BE INTERESTED IN USING TESTING FOR?

METHODS

Interviews

Tests (any that we've described thus far)

Case histories

WHAT IS ABNORMAL?

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM)

Diagnoses are based on five dimensions

Low inter-clinician reliability

What is a disorder is debatable

Evolutionary view of mental disorder

References to homosexuality as a disorder completely removed in 1986

Culturally-defined

DSM - V

Completed in 2013

Methods to account for culture

Uses continuous (i.e. severity) rather than binary measures (i.e. have the pathology or not)

Some personality disorders still treated categorically

Disorders on the "fence" (e.g. caffeine/internet use disorder)

Much more can be found on their website

Manual provides no advice on treatment

Assessment should be multidisciplinary (biopsychosocial assessment)

INTERVIEWS

HOW DO THEY DIFFER?

Structured/Unstructured

Tone

Content

Interviewer

State of interviewee

Is it a stress, cognitive, collaborative interview?

STANDARD INTERVIEWS

- Demographic data
- Why are you here
- Past and current medical history; family medical history
- Past psychological history
- Past professional advice
- Current psychological state

MENTAL STATUS EXAM

- Appearance, behavior
- Orientation
- Memory
- State of senses and psychomotor abilites
- Sate of consciousness, affect, mood, personality
- Thought control & processes
- Intelligence, insight, judgment

WHAT MIGHT BE SOME PSYCHOMETRIC ISSUES WITH INTERVIEWS?

HOW CAN YOU COMBAT THIS AND WHAT VALIDITY EVIDENCE WOULD YOU PRESENT?

ASSESSMENT OF ADDICTION AND SUBSTANCE ABOUSE

Could assess with a test and/or interviews

MMPI-2-RF has three scale to measure substance abuse

MacAndres Alcoholism Scale, the oldest, distinguishes alcoholics from nonalcoholics

Could use role-play to assess likely behavior

Major ethical issues include consent and paying for research participation

FORENSIC ASSESSMENT

Assessment in a legal context

Often clinician called in to provide evidence about assessee (often a defendent)

Assessee may want to lie

Provide expertise without actually assessing someone (i.e. hypotheticals)

Provide expertise about a test (comment on validity/reliability)

ISSUE #1 - DANGER TO ONESELF OR OTHERS

Clinician may need to comment on whether an asssessee is a danger to others or oneself

Use case history, interview, assessments(?) to understand severity

If deemed dangerous, assessee undergoes treatment to rectify the behavoir

Clinicians have been very inaccurate regarding this

How could we fix this?

ISSUE #2 - COMPETENT TO STAND TRIAL

Does this person understand why they are in the courtroom?

Can this person assist in their defense?

USA states with capital punishment, person must be considered competent

Various assessments exist to determine this

More clearly defined, more objective, the higher the reliability and validity

ISSUE #3 - CRIMINIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Only people that should be blamed should be punished

Do they know right from wrong?

Mentally incompetent and children are generally considered to be not blamable

Assessments also exist for this

Clinicians also used to evaluate parole

OTHER SETTINGS

Assess emotional injury

Profiling

Child custody cases

Child abuse and neglect

Many of these methods have low reliability and low validity

E.T. (p. 520)?

PSYCHOLOGICAL REPORTS

After an assessment, the psychologist must write up a report

Reports are sometimes vague and people willing accept these descriptions (Barnum effect)

Statistical and computerized methods used to assess the report and predict behavioral responses

Computers often do a better job predicting than the clinician

Could be used to improve validity and reliability in clinical settings?