

CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

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What is Clinical Psychology ?

Clinical Psychology is an important and popular applied branch of Psychology. It is related to the description, classification, diagnosis and prognosis of the mental diseases. The diagnosis and treatment of various mental diseases are based on psychological methods and therapies. Out of the total population of psychologists in America, one-third are the clinical psychologists. The importance of this branch is also clear by the data that out of 49 divisions of psychology of American Psychological Association, the division of Clinical psychology is the largest one.

The official definition of Clinical Psychology by **The Division of Clinical Psychology of American Psychological Association**, as by **Resnick (1991)** is as follows:

“The field of Clinical Psychology involves research, teaching and services relevant to the applications of principles, methods and procedure for understanding, predicting and alleviating intellectual, emotional, biological, psychological, social and behavioural maladjustment, disability and discomfort, applied to a wide range client populations.”

According to Saccuzzo & Kaplan (1994), “Clinical Psychology is an applied branch of psychology devoted to helping adjust, solve problems, change, improve and achieve their highest potential.”

According to Korchin (1986), “Clinical Psychology is most distinctly defined by the clinical attitude, that is, a concern with understanding and helping individuals in psychological distress... Clinical Psychology is concern with generating and utilizing knowledge about the structure and functioning of human personality.”

According to **APA** (American Psychological Association):

“Clinical psychology is the psychological specialty that provides continuing and comprehensive mental and behavioural health care for individuals and families; consultation to agencies and communities; training, education and supervision; and research-based practice.”

Thus, Clinical psychology is the branch of psychology concerned with the assessment and treatment of mental illness, abnormal behaviour, and psychiatric problems.

Clinical Psychology

- **Clinical psychology** includes the study and application of psychology for the purpose of understanding, preventing, and relieving psychologically-based distress/dysfunction to promote subjective well-being and personal development.
- Central to its practice are psychological assessment and psychotherapy, although clinical psychologists may also engage in research, teaching, consultation, forensic testimony, program development and administration.
- Some clinical psychologists focus on the clinical management of patients with brain injury—known as clinical neuropsychology.

Understanding Branches of Psychology

Pure or Basic Branch

Refers to the theories, concepts and principles that are fundamental to human behaviour.

1. General Psychology
2. Abnormal Psychology
3. Social Psychology
4. Child Psychology
5. Physiological Psychology
6. Animal Psychology, etc.

Applied Branch

Refers to the use or application of these theories, concepts and principles and involves experimentations and psychological interventions.

1. Clinical Psychology
2. Educational Psychology
3. Industrial Psychology
4. Military Psychology
5. Psychology of Crime
6. Mental Health, etc.

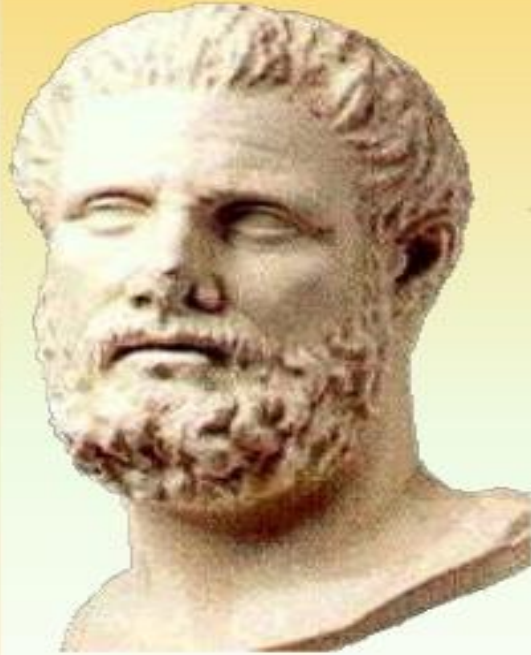
Nature and Characteristics

- Clinical psychology is an applied branch of Psychology.
- It is more popular than other branches of Psychology, such as Industrial Psychology, Educational Psychology, etc.
- There is an emphasis on diagnosis and treatment of behavioural and emotional problems, such as mental illness, juvenile delinquency, mental retardation, marital and family conflicts, drug addiction, criminal behaviour, etc.
- Clinicians have different approach and point of view towards such problems which is called as 'Clinical Attitude' by Korchin (1986).
- To understand the emotional and behavioural problems of the client or patient, there is an emphasis on the study of personality dynamics in this field.
- Sigmund Freud has most concerned with this view.
- Korchin 1986 & Phares (1984) have also emphasised on the study of personality dynamics in Clinical psychology.

A brief History of Clinical Psychology

- A History of Psychology “**Roots from ancient Greece**” More than 2000 years ago, Plato a student of Socrates in ancient Greece, recorded his teacher’s advice “Know Thyself”. This phrase has remained as a principle for psychological study. Socrates suggested that we can learn much about ourselves by carefully examining our thoughts and feelings. Psychologists called this method of learning ‘Introspection’.
- Another Greek philosopher Aristotle, raised many questions about behaviour. One of Aristotle’s work was the “Peri Psyche”, which means about the mind. Peri Psyche explores topics such as sensation, perception, thought, intelligence, needs, motives, feelings, emotions and memory.
- The ancient Greeks also theorized about psychological problems such as confusion and strange behaviour, they attributed these disorders to supernatural forces, they believed that the gods punished people for their wrongdoing by causing them confusion and madness. However a Greek physician Hippocrates (c.460-c. 377B.C.), suggested that such problems were caused by abnormalities in the brain, this idea that biological factors can affect our thoughts, feelings and behaviour influenced thinking about psychology ever since.

Key Players in the History of Psychology:



- Roots of psychology can be traced back 2000 years ago to the early philosophers, biologists, and physiologists of ancient Greece.
- **Hippocrates** – Greek Physiologist that thought the mind or soul resided in the brain.
- He believed that it was not composed of a physical substance.
- This is called **mind-body-dualism** – seeing mind and body as two different things that interact.

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The influence of Medicine on Psychology

- To speak of “clinical” psychology is to invoke the medical metaphor of care at the bedside of the individual (the Greek word ‘klinein’ refers to a couch or bed). In naming clinical psychology, Lightner Witmer thus alluded to the tradition of Hippocrates.
- Many of the founders and influential researchers in the modern academic discipline of psychology, including Wilhelm Wundt, William James, Hermann Helmholtz, and Ivan Pavlov, were physicians by education.
- Another example of the influence of medicine on general psychology is provided by the work of Hermann Helmholtz. In terms of contributions to psychology and what is now called neuroscience, Helmholtz was the first to actually measure the speed of the nerve routh 25 impulse in several different species. Some of his best-known scientific work on vision and hearing.
- The influence of medicine on general psychology is provided by the career of the Russian scientist, Ivan Pavlov, who received the Nobel Prize for Medicine or Physiology in 1904, for his work on digestive processes.

Role of Antecedent factors in the Emergence and Growth of Clinical Psychology

- Psychology was born as a modern science, when psychologists opened psychological laboratories. In the year 1879 Wilhelm Wundt created the first psychology lab, and established psychology as a science.
- Wilhelm Wundt and his students, founded a field of psychology that came to be known as “Structuralism”, they were concerned with studying the basic elements of consciousness.
- The term “Clinical psychology” was first used in an article by Lightner Witmer (1867–1956), a psychology professor at the University of Pennsylvania.
- William James (1842-1910) was one of the founders of the school of Functionalism, they were concerned with how mental processes help organisms adapt to their environment. They believed behaviours were adaptive because they were successful, less adaptive behaviours were dropped or discontinued.

- Stanley Hall established the second American psychology lab at John Hopkins University in 1883, while James McKeen Cattell established the third American lab in 1888. Hall established the first independent psychology department at Clark University in 1887.
- In 1892, the American Psychological Association (APA) was founded and Stanley Hall was elected its first president. Until that time, psychology departments were dependent to Philosophy.
- John B. Watson (1878- 1958) Behaviourists believe behaviour can be studied in a methodical and recognizable manner with no consideration of internal mental states. Watson believed that it was unscientific to study consciousness as a private event, he asserted that if psychology was to be a natural science, it must be observable and measured.
- Skinner (1904-1990) he added to the behaviourist tradition reinforcement.. Skinner showed that when an animal is reinforced, or rewarded, for performing an action, it is more likely to perform the action in the future

- The psychology of Gestalt which means shape or form in German, is based on the idea that perceptions are more than the sums of their parts, rather they are wholes that give shape or meaning.
- Sigmund Freud and the School of Psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), was one of the most famous of the early psychologists. The school of thought that he founded was called “Psychoanalysis”, it emphasizes the importance of unconscious motives and internal conflicts and how they can influence behaviour.
- Alfred Binet, a French scientist, founded the first psychology laboratory in France, in 1885. Binet was interested in developing tests to investigate mental abilities in children. In 1904, a French commission invited Binet and Theodore Simon, to develop a method to assist in providing mentally disabled children with appropriate educational services. Binet and Simon intelligence test was developed.
- Freud proposed that unconscious conflicts and emotional influences could cause mental and physical illness. Freud’s publication of The Interpretation of Dreams, published in 1900 resulted in acceptance of the psychoanalytic perspective.

The influence of World War

When the USA entered the war in 1917, a large number of recruits needed to be classified based on their intellectual and psychological functioning. The U.S. Army asked from the APA an appropriate test for the military recruits. During World War I, Army Alfa Test (a verbal test) and Army Beta Test (a non-verbal test) were developed. These tests could be administered to very large groups of people and both literate and non literate adults.

Clinical Psychology between World War I and II

Then after, a testing development explosion occurred and over 500 psychological tests had been produced. These tests included both verbal and nonverbal intelligence tests, personality and psychological functioning tests, and career interest and vocational skill tests. Various types of tests were developed, some of which are as follow:

- The Rorschach Inkblot Test (1921), Hermann Rorschach published one of the most famous Psycho diagnostic test.

- The Goodenough Draw- A-Man Test (1926),
- The Thematic Apperception Test (1935)
- The Wechsler-Bellevue Intelligence Scale (1939) - In 1939 David Wechsler developed the first comprehensive and individually administered intelligence test for adults. The Wechsler-Bellevue - WAIS
- Murray & Morgan developed the Thematic Apperception Test (1935)
- The Bender Gestalt Test (1938)- test of personality and brain damage
- The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory or MMPI (1943)
- The Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children or WISC (1949)

The humanitarian viewpoints of Paracelsus, Johann Weyer, Reginald Scott & Phillippe Pinel, etc. towards mentally ill people was also important for the emergence of Clinical Psychology.

The Mental Hygiene Movement also influenced the emergence of Clinical Psychology. Dorothea Dix (1802-1887) worked actively for 40 years for mentally ill people, Sweetser gave the term Mental Hygiene in 1843.

Scope and Functions

- **Psychotherapy**- According to Rotter (1971), “Psychotherapy...is a planned activity of the psychologists, the purpose of which is to accomplish changes in the individual that make his life adjustment potentially happier, more constructive or both.”

Clinical psychologists who work as psychotherapists often utilize different treatment approaches when working with clients.

- **Diagnosis and treatment**- Various types of diagnostic tools, such as observation, interview, psychological tests, etc. are used for assessment of psychological disorder and treatment is done using various therapies.
- **Teaching**- Clinical psychologists usually have a doctorate in psychology and also have receive training in clinical settings. Many psychologists engage in teaching often at the university level.
- **Research**- There is always scope of conducting more researches to gain more information and utilizing the gained knowledge for the welfare of the needy.
- **Consultation**- To strengthening the client’s motivation to do the right things and help in reducing emotional pressure as well as to facilitate in decision making.
- **Administration and management**- One of the scope and function of clinical psychology is also to administer and manage to treat and prevent social problems.

Types of Therapists

- **Clinical psychologist:** has doctoral degree in clinical psychology; provides therapy for people with mental disorders
- **Counseling psychologist:** has doctoral degree in psychological or educational counseling; counsels people with milder problems
- **Psychiatrist:** has medical degree with residency in mental health, provides therapy for people with mental disorders and is only type of therapist who can prescribe drugs or other biomedical treatment
- **Psychoanalyst:** Any of the above types of credential, but with training in psychoanalysis from a psychoanalytic institute
- **Clinical social worker:** has master's or doctoral degree in social work with specialized training in counseling; provides help with social problems, such as family problems.

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Who is a Clinical Psychologist ?



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WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A PSYCHOLOGIST AND A PSYCHIATRIST?



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Clinical Psychologist

- With clients- clinical psychologists usually do not just adopt one single approach. Instead they draw on elements from a **number of different approaches (Eclectic approach)**.
- Most important tool – **Clinical Interview** (Listening skills)
- Trained in the use and analysis of **psychometric tests**
- **Psychometric tests** are not just questionnaires but **carefully developed questions or tasks which give an insight into particular psychological issues.**
- Each item has been through a **rigorous process of development**, being tested, retested, standardised on different populations, and carefully balanced with the other test items to produce an **exact result.**

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