

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY, PATNA UNIVERSITY
M.A SEMESTER-4, CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY, EC 1
TOPIC: CLINICAL ASSESSMENT

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CLINICAL ASSESSMENT

- Clinical psychology is that branch of psychology that has as its primary focus the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of abnormal behavior. Clinical psychologists receive training in psychological assessment and psychotherapy and are employed in hospitals, public and private mental health centers, independent practice, and academics. Clinical assessment involves an evaluation of an individual's or family's strengths and weaknesses, a conceptualization of the problem at hand, and some prescription for alleviating the problem; all of these lead us to a better understanding of the client. Assessment is closely and uniquely associated with the identity of clinical psychology. Clinical Psychologists use many techniques for assessment including an interview, a test, and case history data.



PHASES IN CLINICAL ASSESSMENT

1. Evaluating the Referral Question- Clinicians may need to uncover hidden agendas, unspoken expectations, and complex interpersonal relationships, as well as explain the specific limitations of psychological tests. One of the most important general requirements is that clinicians understand the vocabulary, conceptual model, dynamics, and expectations of the referral setting in which they will be working. Therefore, it is sometimes helpful to contact the referral source at different stages in the assessment process.



2. Acquiring Knowledge Relating to the Content of the

Problem- Before beginning the actual testing procedure, examiners should carefully consider the problem, the adequacy of the tests they will use, and the specific applicability of that test to an individual's unique situation. Clinicians should be familiar with operational definitions for problems such as anxiety disorders, psychoses, personality disorders etc so that they can be alert to their possible expression during the assessment procedure.



3. Data Collection- After clarifying the referral question and obtaining knowledge relating to the problem, clinicians can then proceed with the actual collection of information. This may come from a wide variety of sources, the most frequent of which are test scores, personal history, behavioral observations, and interview data. Clinicians may also find it useful to obtain school records, previous psychological observations, medical records, police reports, or discuss the client with parents or teachers.

4. Interpreting the Data- The end product of assessment should be a description of the client's present level of functioning, considerations relating to etiology, prognosis, and treatment recommendations.

