

Psychological Testing and Clinical Diagnosis

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Introduction

Post-traumatic stress disorder is a type of psychological disorder that affects people exposed to traumatic situations. These include witnessing, learning about, or experiencing events that are seriously injured, or that threaten one's safety. Individuals encounter various obstacles that can have a significant impact on their mental health. Throughout their lives, people may experience trauma due to certain events or experiences. Some of these include wars, natural disasters, accidents, and domestic violence. In addition, they can result in sexual offenses and imprisonment. When it comes to treating people suffering from PTSD or other mental health disorders, it is important that the professionals handling the case are skilled and trained (Cohen et al.,2022). These experiences can trigger a traumatizing reaction in people, which can then lead to PTSD. The DSM provides a variety of tools and resources that can help people with PTSD and other mental health disorders. These include psychological tests, tools for utilization, and personality assessments. Having the proper understanding of these resources can help a client develop a treatment plan. This paper aims to inform about the training and experience professionals should have when treating individuals suffering from PTSD. Also how to utilize psychological assessments and tests, as well as the necessary tools and resources, to diagnose and create treatment plans for clients.

Summary of PTSD

The latest version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V) provides various criteria that can help medical professionals diagnose people with PTSD. The DSM-V has changed the criteria used to diagnose PTSD. These new criteria emphasize the significance of traumatic events in defining the condition. The DSM-V also focuses on the behavioral symptoms of people with PTSD (Weathers et al.,2017). Instead of having three distinct clusters, it now has four. These include avoidance, arousal, negative cognitions, and

re-experiencing. Re-experiencing refers to the recalling of traumatic events. For people aged 6 and above, there are also eight conditions that must be met to be diagnosed with PTSD. One of the conditions that must be met is exposure to either sexual violence or actual or threatened death.

Resources

Counselors should take advantage of every resource they can find, especially when it can help their clients. There are various resources counselors can use, such as the Code of Ethics, the DSM-5, and state guidelines. The utilization of these resources can help guide the treatment of clients and counselors. For instance, the most up-to-date version of the DSM-5 should be utilized during the intake process. This helps counselors identify their clients' conditions based on their symptoms and signs (Foa & Capaldi, 2013). If a counselor believes a person is suffering from anxiety, they can outline the symptoms and signs of this condition and explain the various measurement methods needed.

Test

The precise diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) requires training and a sensitive approach from counselors. Through interviews, one can gain a deeper understanding of a client's condition and reveal why they seek help. They can also learn more about their cultural influences and non-verbal cues. Reliving the event triggers various types of physical and emotional reactions. Those suffering from cognitive difficulties may find it hard to concentrate, keep track of vital details, or have negative thoughts about themselves or the world. Symptoms of physical ailments include abdominal pain, headaches, or other such discomfort. Individuals with PTSD may experience changes in their behavior. They may feel detached or stay busy. The first step in treating PTSD is to use the Treatment-Outcome PTSD Scale, which consists of eight

interview-focused elements. This is a modified version of the SI-PTSD scale, which has a high reliability. The scale was created by considering various symptoms of PTSD, such as re-experiencing, avoidance, and hyperarousal (Davidson et al.,2017). It can be administered by individuals or groups using only a pen and paper. The psychometric capabilities of this assessment tool provide reliable results when dealing with traumatic incidents. Although it has some limitations, the TOP-8 can be used to screen individuals for PTSD. Its precision and brevity make it an ideal choice when time is limited. One of its features is its capability to assess the severity of the symptoms. Another assessment tool that can be used is SI-PTSD, which was the basis for the initial TOP-8. The evaluation considers the different symptoms of PTSD and includes survival strategies and behavioral guilt (Davidson et al.,2017). The severity ratings of the item are based on the frequency and intensity of the symptoms. They are scored on a scale of 0 to 4, and a score of 2 indicates that a symptom is present. The APA has endorsed these two assessments for their reliability and validity. A personality assessment can be used to diagnose PTSD. It has a notable correlation with other validated psychological health assessments, such as the TOP-8 (Davidson et al.,2017). Although PTSD is dependent on an individual's response, it is crucial for medical professionals administering the test to accurately interpret non-verbal cues.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there are numerous tools that can be used to diagnose mental disorders. These tools require counselors to be trained in interpreting the non-verbal and verbal responses. In order to accurately diagnose and treat post-traumatic stress disorder, it is crucial to employ psychological evaluations that are based on sound scientific evidence. DSM-IV-TR defines PTSD as a condition that occurs when the re-experiencing of a traumatic event triggers an increase in the arousal level and avoidance of certain stimuli. The diagnostic criteria for PTSD

have changed since the DSM-IV was issued. The latest version focuses more on the symptoms that are associated with PTSD. Instead of three distinct clusters, it has four. Individuals suffering from PTSD are turning to mental health services for assistance.

References

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