



## A look back at the history of clinical psychology and its many approaches

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### **Abstract**

Clinical psychologists are employed in a wide range of contexts, including private practise, hospitals, clinics, and organisations, as well as in research and teaching. Some professionals focus their careers on helping those who are mentally or physically disabled, those who are incarcerated, those who are addicted to drugs or alcohol, or elderly patients. Research for a multidisciplinary team may be overseen by a clinical psychologist who also collaborates with a psychiatrist and a social worker. “This individual may also be in charge of the team's overall investigation. Some clinical psychologists work for the judicial system, evaluating criminals or those who may be eligible for parole. Other clinical psychologists are hired by the military, either to examine or treat service members.

**Key words:** Clinical, psychologists, behavioural, Cognitive, Humanistic etc.

### **Introduction**

The diagnosis and treatment of emotional, mental, and behavioural problems are the primary foci of clinical psychology, which is a subfield of psychology that encompasses a large field. Learning difficulties, drug misuse, eating disorders, depression, and anxiety are just a few of the more frequent problems that may be addressed. The clinical psychologist consults with patients in order to identify difficulties in their life, whether those problems be behavioural, mental, or emotional. The psychologist will determine whether or not there is an actual or possible disorder using a series of tests, interviews, and observations. After that, they work together with the client to develop a treatment plan that is tailored to meet the needs of the client. Clinical psychology is the branch of psychology that consults with organisations and communities on matters pertaining to mental and behavioural health; provides ongoing and comprehensive mental and behavioural health care for individuals and families; provides training, education, and supervision; and bases its practise on research. It is a specialisation that encompasses a wide range of issues, including severe psychopathology, and is distinguished by its comprehensiveness as well as the incorporation of information and expertise gleaned from a diverse range of fields, both inside and beyond the realm of traditional psychology. The field of clinical psychology examines people of various ages, as well as people from a wide range of diverse backgrounds and operating systems.

### **History**

Sigmund Freud, an Austrian psychoanalyst, is credited with having an early effect on the discipline of clinical psychology via his body of work. He was one of the first people to focus on the idea that mental illness was something that could be treated by talking with the patient, and the development of his talk therapy approach is often cited as the first scientific application of clinical psychology. He was one of the first people to focus on the idea that mental illness was something that could be treated by talking with the patient.

In 1896, an American psychologist by the name of Lightner Witmer created the first psychological clinic with the intention of providing assistance to children who suffered from learning impairments. Witmer is also credited as being the one who first used the term clinical psychology in the year 1907. Clinical psychology was first articulated by Wilhelm Wundt's former pupil, Witmer, who described the



field as the study of persons, through observation or experimentation, with the purpose of fostering change.

By the year 1914, the United States had a total of 26 more clinics that were dedicated to the practise of therapeutic psychology. Within the subject of psychology, clinical psychology is now one of the most popular subfields and the one with the single greatest employment area.

- **Evolution During the World Wars**

The practitioners of clinical psychology during World War I revealed the effectiveness of psychological examinations, which contributed to the field's growing legitimacy during this time period. In 1917, the American Association of Clinical Psychology was founded; however, it didn't last long since only two years later, in 1919, the American Psychological Association was created (APA).

During World War II, professional psychologists were sought out to assist in the treatment of what was referred to as shell shock, but is now more often recognised as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (PTSD)''''.

In the United States throughout the 1940s, there were no educational institutions that granted an official degree in clinical psychology. The Veterans Administration of the United States established a number of training programmes at the doctorate level. As a result, by 1950, more than half of all the degrees conferred at the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) level in psychology were conferred in the field of clinical psychology.

- **Changes in Focus**

In the beginning, science and research were the primary focuses of clinical psychology; but, as time went on, graduate schools started placing a greater emphasis on psychotherapy. This method is often referred to as the scientist-practitioner or Boulder Model in clinical psychology Ph.D. programmes in today's academic world. "Later on, the opportunity to get a Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D.) degree came into existence. This programme put more of a focus on professional practise than on research. The practitioner-scholar paradigm, often known as the Vail model, is the name given to this kind of practice-oriented doctoral degree in clinical psychology.

The discipline has continued to expand considerably, and there is still a significant need for clinical psychologists in the modern day.

### **Approaches**

When dealing with clients, clinical psychologists who are also employed in the field of psychotherapy often use a variety of treatment modalities. Many medical practitioners use what is known as a eclectic approach to patient care, in contrast to others who adhere to a more narrow therapeutic perspective. This requires relying on a variety of theoretical approaches in order to build the most effective treatment plan possible for each specific client.

Some of the major theoretical perspectives within clinical psychology include:

- **Psychodynamic approach:** This viewpoint originated as a result of Freud's research; he held the belief that our conduct is significantly influenced by aspects of our unconscious mind. Psychologists that use psychoanalytic treatment may employ methods such as free association in order to analyse a client's underlying, unconscious motives as part of the therapeutic process.
- **Cognitive behavioral perspective:** Both the behavioural and the cognitive schools of thinking contributed to the development of this approach to clinical psychology. Clinical psychologists that take this point of view will investigate the interplay that exists between a patient's emotions, actions, and thoughts. Changing thoughts and actions that lead to psychological discomfort is often the primary focus of cognitive-behavioral therapy (also known as CBT).



- **Humanistic perspective:** The work of humanist intellectuals like Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers led to the development of this approach to clinical psychology. This viewpoint takes a more holistic approach to the client and places an emphasis on factors like the client's capacity for self-actualization.

### Opportunities

Clinical psychologists are employed in a wide range of organisations, including hospitals, clinics, private practises, universities, and schools, among other places, and in a number of roles. Every one of them necessitates that these experts rely on their experience in specific ways and for a variety of distinct reasons.

Those who work in clinical psychology may have a variety of employment responsibilities, including the following:

Evaluation and diagnosis of mental illnesses, often carried out in a clinical or hospital environment

The treatment of mental illnesses, including dependence on alcohol and drugs

Providing statements or testimonies in legal proceedings

Educating, most often at higher education institutions

Researching and investigating

Developing and managing initiatives to both cure existing social issues and prevent new ones

Some clinical psychologists choose to specialise in one of these areas, while others may provide more than one of these services. For instance, a person may work directly with clients who are admitted to a hospital for psychological disorders, while also running a private therapeutic office that offers short-term and long-term outpatient services to those who require assistance in coping with psychological distress. In this scenario, the individual would provide both direct and indirect services to clients who were experiencing psychological distress.

### Role of the clinical psychologists in workplace

Some information on the tasks or duties that clinical psychologists do, the many different settings in which they are employed, the diverse clientele and issues on which they concentrate their attention, as well as the benefits that come along with this line of work. Assessment, treatment, research, teaching (including supervision), consulting, and administration are the six areas in which about 95 percent of all clinical psychologists spend the majority of their professional life engaged in some combination of these areas of practise.

#### ➤ Provision of Assessment.

Clinical psychologists assess patients using a variety of method to collect information about people. This information may be used to diagnose problematic behaviour, to guide a client toward an optimal vocational choice, to facilitate selection of job candidates, to describe a client's personality characteristics, to select treatment techniques, to guide legal decisions regarding the commitment of individuals to institutions, to provide a more complete picture of a client's problem, to screen potential participants in psychological research projects, to establish pre-treatment baseline levels of behaviour against which to measure post-treatment, and for literally hundreds of other purposes.

#### ➤ Provision of Treatment.

Clinical psychologists offer treatments designed to help people better understand and solve distressing psychological problems. These interventions are known as psychotherapy, behaviour modification, psychological counselling, or other terms, depending on the theoretical orientation of the clinician.

#### ➤ Conducting Research.



By training and by tradition, clinical psychologists are research oriented. For most of the first half of its existence, the field was strongly dominated by research rather than by application. Although that balance has changed, research continues to play a vital role in clinical psychology. Examples of their research activities include, the development and standardization of clinical tools for diagnostic assessment tests and examination of their reliability and validity, adapting and testing the efficacy of both psychological and biological interventions to promote health and overcome disorders, studies to reveal the cultural and cross-cultural aspects of psychological abnormalities, ascertaining the impact of both positive and negative human behaviour on the physical health, and supervising projects, thesis and dissertations of candidates whose researchers have psychological components.

➤ **Provision of Teaching**

A considerable portion of many clinical psychologists' time is spent in educational activities. Clinicians who hold full-or part-time academic positions typically teach undergraduate and graduate courses in areas such as personality, abnormal psychology, introductory clinical psychology, psychotherapy, behaviour modification, interviewing, psychological testing, research design, and clinical assessment. Clinical psychologists also do a lot of teaching in the context of in-service (on-the-job) training of psychological, medical, or other interns, social workers, nurses, institutional aides, ministers, police officers, teachers, administrators, and many other groups whose vocational skills might be enhanced by increased psychological sophistication.

➤ **Consultation**

Clinical psychologists often provide advice to organizations about a variety of problems. These activities, known as consultation, combines aspects of research, assessment, treatment, and teaching. Organizations that benefit from consultants' expertise range in size and scope from one-person medical or law practices to huge government agencies and multinational corporations.

➤ **Administration**

Many clinical psychologists find themselves engaged in managing or running the daily operations of organizations. For examples of the administrative posts held by clinical psychologists include the head of a college or university psychology department, director of a graduate training program in clinical psychology.

## **Conclusion**

Although clinical psychology can trace its origins back to Hellenistic philosophers and certain psychological processes, evaluations, methods, and theories still require further investigation, contemporary clinical psychologists and researchers use the scientific method to investigate psychological principles and theories. This is despite the fact that clinical psychology can be traced back to its earliest roots in ancient Greece. The area of clinical psychology incorporates a wide range of previously formulated ideas that cover a variety of subfields within the study of psychology". On the other hand, clinical psychology would not be a thing if it weren't for the important function that dependable research and statistical validity play in the field. When psychological research and statistics point to the possibility of more effective techniques of evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment, clinical psychology is forced to undergo a necessary evolution. This is because it is only beneficial to the patients if it advances. Clinical psychologists are required to constantly reevaluate their approaches and update their knowledge in order to maintain their relevance in the field and provide the highest possible level of service. This includes the elimination of older, less efficient approaches in favour of more successful alternatives. The most recent discoveries have been made in the fields of epidemiology,



social shifts, the growth of technology, biology, neurochemistry, and mind-body holistic ideas. There are numerous other fields within clinical psychology that do not need a doctorate or a licence to practise, despite the fact that the majority of clinical psychologists have one of these degrees.

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