PSY3041: PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING, THEORIES OF ABILITY AND ETHICS

READING NOTES

Content:

1. Ethics: key principles, dilemmas and decision- making procedures
2. Introduction to psychological testing
3. Reliability and validity
4. Test development
5. Theories and measurement of intelligence
6. Group and individual differences in intelligence
7. Educational testing
8. Neuropsychological testing
9. Personality testing
10. Clinical testing
11. Careers and organisational testing
12. Forensic testing and conclusion

PSY3041 Readings

W1 Ethics (pgs. 36-40)

The ethical decision-making manual

Commonsense trap - must know your own 'reality', real objectivity is difficult to achieve
Values trap -
Circumstantiality trap -
Who will benefit trap

The ethical hierarchy

Professional - refrain from behaviour that jeopardizes practicing (and protect of self)
Society - debate around replacing law for ethical principles is wrong; as it will 1) surely cause harm to therapeutic relationship 2) violates principle of putting client first 3) help turn professionals into law enforcers which is not their function.
Individual client - sometimes putting clients interest third is needed

The ethical decision-making process

1. Identify ethical standard involved - consider principles; legal responsibility; opinion of supervisors
2. Determine trap possibilities - commonsense / who will benefit / circumstantiality / values
3. Frame preliminary response
4. Consider consequences
5. Prepare ethical resolution
6. Get feedback
7. Take action

APS code of ethics

Principle A - respect for rights and dignity of people and peoples
Principle B - propriety (decency)
Principle C - integrity

Deep sleep therapy (DST) example

W2 Psychological tests; (pgs. 3-20, 21-27, 33-36, 41-46)

History of psychological testing

Binet – individual tests of ability
WWI – army alpha/beta
Weschler – for inpatient psychiatric settings; better than Stanford-Binet; age appropriate; deviation IQ method (compare to age group) instead of mental age
Woodworth – during WWI he developed first self-report personality test; then **Hathaway and McKinley** developed the MMPI

Projective vs objective tests; Rorschach vs MMPI

Psychological tests

A psychological test is a sample of behaviour that is used to make inferences about the individual in a significant social context

Distinction between a test and assessment is important because a) tester must know whether test is being used as a sample or behaviour, or a sign of an underlying disposition, and **b)** these two differences are interpreted differently; if used as a sample, usually interpreted as 'criterion referencing'; if used as a sign, 'norm referencing' is adopted.

Tests are:
An objective procedure;
Summarised quantitatively in terms of score(s);
Provide an objective reference point for behaviour it ensures

In a criterion referenced test – uses a pre-determined empirical standard as a reference point for evaluating performance of a test taker

In a norm referenced test – uses performance of representative people (i.e. the norm) on test for evaluating performance of a test taker

Limitations of tests
They are only tools
They are often used in an attempt to capture the effects of hypothetical constructs, and thus there is sometimes a gap between what the psychologist intends to measure and what is actually measured
Because of the continual refinement of theories, psychological tests can lose their utility i.e. test obsolescence
Cultural/linguistic limitations

W3 Reliability and validity (pgs. 71-74; 85-150

Reliability – the consistency with which a test measures what it purports to measure *dependability*

Systematic vs **unsystematic** biases;
"Social desirability bias" – when people respond to questions that place them in a favourable or unfavourable light; form of method variance

Domain sampling model – a way of thinking about the composition of a psychological test that sees the test as a representative sample of the larger domain of possible items that could be included in the test

- Test reliability becomes a problem of sampling, not from a population but rather sampling items from a domain of all possible items

To say that a test is not reliable is open to misinterpretation; quantitative indexes provide for a more precise form of communication.

- Standard error measurement (SEM)
  The precision of an individual test score as an estimate of the trait it is measuring
- Reliability coefficient (r)
  An index – often a Pearson product moment correlation coefficient – of the ratio of true score to error score variance in a test

SEM = $\sqrt{(1-r)}$

Validity – the extent to which evidence supports the meaning/use of a test

Construct validity – the meaning of a test score made possible by knowledge of the pattern of relationships it has with other variables and the theoretical interpretations of these relationships

Chronbach and Meehl proposed the multitrait-multimethod (MTMM) to evaluate construct validity:
Idea that variance arises from 3 sources
1) due to the underlying disposition the tester is assessing,
2) arising from the method of measurement used (e.g. self-report or problem solving)
3) random error

Method variance??
Convergent/discrimination validity – multitrait multimethod matrix

Content validity – the meaning that can be attached to a score on a test on the basis of inspection of the material that constitutes the test