

Psychological Disorder Assessment on Antisocial Personality Disorder and Borderline
Personality Disorder and The Most Appropriate Assessment Tests

Elizabeth Anne Ruiz

University of Houston Downtown

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Psychological disorders stem from the behavioral patterns of an individual with regards to their interaction with the social environment (Ullrich, Farrington, & Coid, 2008). In most cases, individuals who have a psychological disorder may not present a danger to the members of the social environment in which they live, but they are more likely to cause harm to themselves. This being the case, psychological disorder assessment is usually important, and it helps in the establishment of the available interventions which prevent, or rather, reduce the likelihood of an individual causing harm to themselves or other people. The objective of this paper is to identify two prevalent disorders, discuss them as well as two assessments for each disorder. To achieve this objective, the paper has been divided into two sections. Each of the two sections will address a disorder as well as discuss the various assessments for each disorder. It has been hypothesized that, from the research, a deeper understanding of the various methods of identifying and assessing the disorders will be gained.

Antisocial Personality Disorder

Antisocial Personality Disorder is a psychological disorder which manifests through a persistent violation of the rights of other members of the social environment. A person suffering from the disorder will exhibit largely a lack of morality or ethics. While these are normally perceptible symptoms, more physical symptoms include frequent conflict with the law and aggression towards other individuals the person may meet. The person may also exhibit similar symptoms as with psychopathy or sociopathy. In general, a person suffering from the disorder will be socially deviant regarding the cultural principles of the society in which they live in. This makes it difficult for the person to interact with other members of the community and because of

the lack of morals or ethics may end up harming the people around them. While the disorder is normally more easily assessed in adulthood, it is known that an individual often starts exhibiting the symptoms through conduct disorder by the age of five years old. The causes of the disorder may either be genetic, environmental or both. The genetic causes refer to the genetic temperaments of the individual obtained through genetic inheritance. The environmental causes are those factors that affect the person's behavior during their childhood. The determination of the cause of the disorder is important as it would help a psychologist approach the situation with the best plausible intervention. There are two tests which can be used to assess Antisocial Personality Disorder as shall be described in the succeeding paragraphs.

The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – Fourth Edition (WAIS-IV) was first developed by David Wechsler in 1955. The test measures the intelligence quotient of adults as well as their cognitive abilities (Ullrich, Farrington, & Coid, 2008). While there have been controversies over the use of the test when assessing personality disorder, the striking relationship between emotional and cognitive intelligence with Antisocial Personality Disorders necessitates the use of the test. The test has several subtests which when combined are used to determine the causes and the symptoms of psychological disorders. The importance of this instrument is that it determines the cause, which is normally more important when identifying and assessing for psychological disorders. Interpersonal characteristics are the basis of the foundation of psychopathy constructs. There are several interpersonal relationship traits which manifest in persons suffering from Antisocial Personality Disorder (Vitacco & Kosson, 2010). These include grandiosity, lack of remorse, impulsions, and superficiality. These characteristics, coupled with other social norm deviations could be assessed and identified as a symptom of the Antisocial Personality Disorder. Using a combination of some of the primary subtests of the

Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – Fourth Edition (WAIS-IV), the identified interpersonal characteristics could be used to assess a person's vulnerability to Antisocial Personality Disorder (Vitacco & Kosson, 2010). Research indicates that the combination of adverse interpersonal character traits and deviant social traits results in violent recidivism among individuals previously incarcerated. This is a clear indication of sociopathy. Additionally, the usefulness of the WAIS-IV (Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-Fourth Edition) in determining the emotional intelligence of a person as noted by the tests ability to assess the symptomatology in children suffering from autism (Benning, Patrick, Hicks, Blonigen, & Krueger, 2013), presents a unique way of determining the psychological influences of attention deficiency which is also a causative factor of Antisocial Personality Disorder.

The determination of symptomatology is normally with regards to an individual's adherence to generally applied theories (Mihura, Meyer, Dumitrascu, & Bombel, 2013). This theory, with regards to Antisocial Personality Disorder, include symptoms which would make a person exhibit deviant social behavior. The Rorschach Test is more interested in the establishment between the application of the deviant social theories and the prevalence of the condition (Mihura, Meyer, Dumitrascu, & Bombel, 2013). The Rorschach Test determines a person's perception and outlook on the world. These perceptions are normally because of cognitive interpretations as well as general interpretations of the information which come from the social environment. The Rorschach Test is appropriate for assessing Antisocial Personality Disorder because it provides the inferences and perceptions of the patient (Mihura, Meyer, Dumitrascu, & Bombel, 2013). In this way, the test indicates how the person views the external environment and how they would react when faced with social, environmental factors. The characteristics which are tested through the Rorschach Test include superficiality, grandiosity,

aggressiveness, impulsions, narcissism, and defensiveness. The Rorschach Test is also appropriate because studies indicate that the results of the test are usually more consistent with regards to identifying deviant character traits. In this way, it becomes easy and effective to diagnose and assess the extent of a patient's psychopathy.

Borderline Personality Disorder

Disregarding the obviously misleading term, Borderline Personality Disorder is a mental disorder that causes the sufferer to have acute and intense behavioral and psychological instabilities which manifest in the form of unstable moods, functionality, self-image, and behavior (Tomko, Trull, Wood, & Sher, 2014). The resultant effect of this instability is the imbalanced relationships and impulsions. Additionally, the person may indulge in self-harming behavior such as substance abuse and dependency, anxiety, depression, and possibly suicide. It is on account of this fatality of the disorder that proper assessment, diagnoses, and treatment must be administered, and early enough. The exhibited symptoms often include avoidance of abandonment, delusive self-image, unstable relationships with partners and family members, dissociation, depression related delusions and paranoia, unwarranted anger towards trivial and delusional attachments, and frequent suicidal intent, either actual or threatened (Tomko, Trull, Wood, & Sher, 2014). While most of the symptoms can quickly be identified, the fact that most of the symptoms resemble the symptoms of other psychological disorders has often led to underdiagnoses and misdiagnoses of the disorder. It is, therefore, prudent to identify the most appropriate instrument for assessing the disorder as shall be discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

While there have been controversies as to whether Borderline Personality Disorder is a clinical disorder or a psychiatric disorder, there has been strong indications that, due to the

emotional characteristics which denote the disorder, the use of clinical personality tests can be more efficient and appropriate for the assessment of the disorder. Therefore, the Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory (MCMI-III) is appropriate in the assessment of Borderline Personality Disorder (Choca & Grossman, 2015). The assessment test is aligned to the Theodore Millon evolutionary theoretical frameworks. The scale measures the behavioral and personality characteristics of an individual (Choca & Grossman, 2015). Additionally, the scales can be used to determine the indices which help in assessing the severity of a clinical condition. The inventory consists of a mixture of causative exposure questions as well as behavioral and personality effect questions. This makes a practitioner able to determine the causes of the personality disorder and hence provide an appropriate intervention for the patient (Newman, Larsen, Cunningham, & Burkhart, 2015). The validity of the assessment tool plays in three ways, it is theoretically substantive in that the questions asked can help a practitioner to deduce the theoretical perspective of the disorder actively, and its internal structure of the process of tests along with the resultant values of the test have a coherent structure which can enable the practitioner to assess a person suffering from the disorder in a structured manner (Newman, Larsen, Cunningham, & Burkhart, 2015). It is also externally valid due to the fact that the application of the test can be in both the clinically disordered population as well as the general population with a conclusive outcome denoting the differences in personality between the persons with and the persons without the disorder (Newman, Larsen, Cunningham, & Burkhart, 2015).

The Mental Status Examination (MSE) is also appropriate for the assessment of Borderline Personality Disorder. The appropriateness stems from the fact that Borderline Personality Disorder while being clinical, has a high tendency towards psychiatric disorders.

This is because of the depressive and suicidal moods that arise on account of the disorder. The Mental Status Examination (MSE) is the equivalent of a physical examination, and its objective is to determine the psychological and behavioral conditions of an individual (Tombaugh & McIntyre, 2012). The appropriateness of the assessment method is that it factors in the historical causative factors which may influence the behavioral patterns of an individual (Bakkour, et al., 2014). The historical inferences include the cultural, educational, and social factors which may result in the behavioral changes or define the personality patterns of an individual. The results of a Mental Status Examination (MSE) can easily be transferred to a different practitioner, and this voids the need for reassessment every time a person is transferred from one practitioner to another (Bakkour, et al., 2014). The Mental Status Examination (MSE) also considers certain external attributes which may be contributed to the internal and psychological status of a person. The test includes an observatory part where the psychiatrist can observe the physical appearance of an individual such as appearance, behavior, and general hygiene (Bakkour, et al., 2014). This helps in the determination of the severity of the effects of the personality disorder. The last sign of appropriateness of the assessment tool is that, due to its observatory aspect, it can be used to determine the progress of recovery once intervention starts.

Conclusion

The objective of this paper was to identify two psychological disorders, discuss them, and select two appropriate assessment instruments. Various scholarly articles were identified from the internet, and an analysis of the most appropriate assessment instruments was done.

Antisocial Personality Disorder and Borderline Personality Disorder were identified. From the evaluation, it was determined that the most appropriate assessment tools for Antisocial Personality Disorder were the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – Fourth Edition (WAIS-IV)

and the Rorschach Test. With regards to the Borderline Personality Disorder, it was determined that the most appropriate assessment tools were the Mental Status Examination (MSE) and the Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory (MCMI-III). In conclusion, the most appropriate assessment instrument is determined by the historical background of the patient as well as the exhibited symptoms. Where none of these is known, the likelihood of misdiagnosis or underdiagnosis is normally high. It is, therefore, prudent for a practitioner to be familiar with all the available assessment tools.

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