

# Abnormal psychology: abnormality

Science



Abnormality is defined from an average where common behaviour is defined as "normal" and rare behaviour is defined as abnormal. These characteristics can be shown and placed on a scale "graph" that would reveal how common their score is in comparison to everyone else. There are problems deciding how rare behaviour has to be to be considered abnormal, phobias could be defined as normal as they affect a lot of the population. Different cultures have different definitions of being abnormal. Something that is rare to use might be defined as normal to a different culture. Statistical infrequency is a way to define events that are more or less common, this frequency is represented with a curve the most common events are the high part of this curve and the less common are the lowest part of the curve. The most infrequent occurrences are considered abnormal and statistically infrequent; these are events that occur rarely. In some situations statistical infrequency is used to define mental retardation, but statistical infrequency doesn't focus on the bad points only, abnormal behaviour isn't always undesirable e. . being better at sports, genius's. Using statistical infrequency means we are unable to distinguish the good and bad abnormalities.

The diagnostic term for the patient is schizophrenia the doctor will evaluate the patient and ask about symptoms, medical history, and see if there's anything physically wrong with the patient. There are no tests to identify mental illnesses, the doctor would send the patient for tests to rule out any other illnesses first. If there's nothing physically wrong and the symptoms persist the doctor may refer the patient to a psychiatrist these people are trained for treating mental illnesses. These trained people use a specially

designed interview to evaluate the person, they also see how the person is within themselves and socially, and watch the person's attitude and behaviour, the doctor would ask if they have Hallucinations, Delusions. If extremely bizarre, they would see if their speech is Disorganised. They can usually diagnose a mental disorder based on these factors. Doctors may misdiagnose patients suffering with schizophrenia symptoms, the patient may be embarrassed about being diagnosed with this condition so may not tell the doctor about hallucinations or any other disturbing behaviour, it's difficult to diagnose schizophrenia with it being a mental disorder and may be diagnosed as another mental condition.

Discuss evidence that schizophrenia has a biological cause. Twin studies show that they have a higher concordance rate than dizygotic twins. The closer the relative the higher the concordance. Biological causes schizophrenia. Our genes are involved with the inheritance or development of schizophrenia, multiple chromosomes are transmitted to people in generations and are later diagnosed with schizophrenia, there is a 70% chance of inheriting schizophrenia. Evidence shows that identical twins do not develop schizophrenia, a recent study shows that 28% of twins have a chance of developing schizophrenia if the other twin already has it. Stress can cause episodes of schizophrenia, there are also other factors like poverty, poor diet, ill health, drug use. Researchers have found that people suffering from schizophrenia tend to have been born in winter. There are no definite causes of schizophrenia. Chemotherapy is used to treat chemical imbalances in the brain, it changes the way the brain and body works.

Discuss the role of the family in the causation of schizophrenia. The double bind theory states that schizophrenia is an abnormal pattern in family communication, a person is given mutually contradictory signals by another person, this places the person in an awkward situation causing conflict. Liem et al compared communication patterns within the family with and without a schizophrenia, there was evidence that families play a role in relapse of schizophrenia patients following stabilisation. Families high in criticism, hostility lead to more relapse, the double bind theory is a distressing communication within the family, the use of confusion makes it difficult to respond or to resist conflict.

Evaluate the effectiveness of cognitive therapy for schizophrenia, and discuss problems in assessing its effectiveness. This treatment is increasingly popular this has good success rates for depression, OCD, eating disorders and anxiety, it's less effective with schizophrenia and bipolar depression. It works by the way we think at attitudes that influence our behaviour, irrational thinking is seen to be the cause of the mental disorders; it also works by changing the way the client thinks. This therapy has fewer side effects than any other treatments, this is a long term strategy but could make the patient worse if it doesn't work and it's not a quick recovery process. People could give up on this treatment feeling it's not working because it takes a long time.