

Challenges in classifying normal and abnormal behavior



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

When defining and classifying normal and abnormal behavior in psychology, culture is one of the challenges that a therapist faces when assessing a client (Nairne, 2008). This is because a certain disorder is classified differently by people from different cultures. There are cultures that allow a broad diversity of behaviors than others and some behaviors. In addition, in such cultures some behaviors are not classified as abnormal but unique or just extraordinary. The presence of diverse cultures with different perspective on daily life makes it difficult to have fix standards which can be used to define and classify normal and abnormal behaviors.

Every society has its cultural standards that define a normal and an abnormal behavior. In some culture an individual is considered to have a psychological disorder only when he violates the social norm of the society (Haviland, Walrath & Prins, 2007). This makes it difficult for some individuals to access attention from a therapist for example those who suffer from anxiety disorders that are characterized by social withdrawal. Such individuals do not violate or affect directly the norms of a society and thus such disorders may be disregarded.

Cultural deviance makes it difficult to identify and classify normal and abnormal because behaviors are classified not on the effects they have on the individual but on the effect the behavior has in the society (Haviland, Walrath & Prins, 2007). A behavior that violates the welfare of the society is the one regarded as abnormal while that which does not is normal. Most of the psychological disorders affect the individual and not the society especially when the disorder is at early stages. When the disorder is at its

severity that is when the individual's behavior may be noticeable by the society.

These facts have made it impossible to use cultural deviance alone to classify what is normal or abnormal behavior (Nairne, 2008). The Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorder is a manual with standardized classification and definition of behaviors. However, culture may be used to assess a patient by considering how the individual relates with the society. Some culture aspects considered when assessing the client include involvement in social work and productivity. If reported that there is reduced social interaction for quite some time, this is a feature important in diagnosing mental disorders.

Are some anxiety disorders more difficult to treat than others? What are some treatment options?

Depending on the level of severity, there are anxiety disorders that are easier to treat than others (Evans, 2007). There are those which are approached while at their early stages and while in mild state, these are easier to treat and the method of treatment may involve use of one treatment option such as relaxation technique and may take short time, like two months, for the patient to recover. Those which are treated when at severe state such as the generalized anxiety disorder which is a chronic anxiety disorder may require use of complex treatment methods and one method is not sufficient. They require a combination of therapy, medication and complementary treatment methods and the patients take a long time, like years, to recover .

Treatment of anxiety disorders vary both in the method of approach and in the period taken to treat. This is because some individuals may have a combination of anxiety disorders while others may have only one kind (Evans, 2007). In addition, it may take one month to treat some of these disorders while it may take even more than one year for some others.

Treatment of anxiety disorders vary with patients however, there are several standard methods for approaching each type of the disorder. Medication alone is rarely provided to treat but it is given as a follow up of therapy.

During treatment, several treatment options are put in place. This is because when only one option is utilized, the method may be very slow or may not be effective.

The treatment options that are usually used include cognitive therapy, behavioral therapy, relaxation techniques and medication. cognitive and behavioral therapies are used at the same time. They are considered to be the most effective of the options since they do not only aim to treat the symptoms of the disorder but aims to treat the disorder from its root cause. While behavioral therapy aims to change the abnormal actions in an anxiety disorder patient, cognitive-behavioral therapy aims to help the patient learn to identify and avoid thoughts that objects one to anxiety disorders (Evans, 2007). Medication is usually given during psychotherapy in order to keep the patient under control. Anti-depressants and anti-anxiety are the commonly used type of medication.

Treatment that involves combination of medication and therapy has been studied to be the most effective since it reduces the symptoms and reduces the chances of relapse (Glynn, 2001). Anxiety disorders such as social
<https://assignbuster.com/challenges-in-classifying-normal-and-abnormal-behavior/>

anxiety disorder and phobias require use of medicine from time to time such as when facing the situation that brings about the disorder. Other disorders such as generalized anxiety disorder and obsessive compulsive disorder require treatment using medicines for a longer time. There are other treatments options that are used either as complements for therapy and medication or in treating anxiety disorders that are at mild state. When the anxiety disorder is at mild state, these forms of treatment alone are sufficient. They include relaxation techniques, exercises, and hypnosis (Glynn, 2001).