Psychology for Professional Groups

Psychology for Physiotherapists

Psychology for Professional Groups

Series Editors: Antony J. Chapman and Anthony Gale

Psychology for Professional Groups is a new series of major textbooks published with the British Psychological Society. Each is edited by a teacher with expertise in the application of psychology to professional practice and covers the key topics in the training syllabus. The editors have drawn upon a series of specially commissioned topic chapters prepared by leading psychologists and have set them within the context of their various professions. A tutor manual is available for each text and includes examination questions, practical exercises and projects, further reading and general guidance for the tutor. Each textbook shows in a fresh, original and authoritative way how psychology may be applied in a variety of professional settings, and how practitioners may improve their skills and gain a deeper understanding of themselves. There is also a general tutorial text incorporating the complete set of specialist chapters and their associated teaching materials.

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and Anthony Gale

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Psychology for Physiotherapists

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Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 1981

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First published 1981 by THE BRITISH PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY and THE MACMILLAN PRESS LTD.

ISBN 978-0-333-31884-3 ISBN 978-1-349-16600-8 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-1-349-16600-8

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Note: throughout these texts, the masculine pronouns have been used for succinctness and are intended to refer to both females and males.

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Preface

Throughout their training and professional life, physiotherapists spend a great deal of time trying specifically to influence other people's behaviour, with the underlying intention of improving the quality of the life of their patients. Physiotherapists work with patients to help them make the best use of their personal resources for recovery. This book shares that principle of encouraging people, in this case physiotherapists, so that they make the best possible use of the accumulated observations of human reactions, which are the foundation of psychology, and achieve the ultimate aim of the training and practice of physiotherapy more easily and rapidly. In moving towards that goal, the book has three subordinate aims: (i) to deal with the immediate needs of the student meeting psychology for the first time; (ii) to continue discussion of some of the major issues in psychology to a depth that will be enough to whet the appetite of the reader for even more information; and (iii) to apply some of the accumulated information of psychology to illustrate the relevance of psychology to the successful treatment of patients.

The relatively limited aim of helping students to prepare for taking their qualifying examinations is only part of the story, although information about the ways in which human beings learn and under what conditions they make the best job of doing this would certainly not come amiss: it could be a first step towards reaching confidence in the factual background and special techniques used in physiotherapy. A broader aim is that of assisting the reader to gain an accurate insight into the information that has been accumulating and building the substance of psychology over the centuries. The book introduces the commonly shared structural and descriptive methods of psychologists, the way they approach the involved problem of observing and analysing human behaviour, and the language they have developed to explain what they have found.

Not all the areas of psychological enquiry are equally applicable to the practice of physiotherapy, but a great deal of what is known about the processes that are peculiar to the individual, and that go on between individuals, are particularly apposite: these have been teased out from the general fund of information and are discussed in greater detail. Given these two types of data, some of a general

nature and others related to the individual, the final goal of the book is to apply them to the sort of problems that physiotherapists and their patients deal with from day to day.

This gives an outline of the purpose of the book but it would not, on its own, be a sufficient reason for the exercise of writing it unless it were coupled with an explanation of how the book expects to carry out its purposes. If it has no pretensions of being an exhaustive and definitive textbook, covering all aspects of psychology from its inception to the present day, what does it offer and how does it set about its task? The general idea is that the reader should take an active part in achieving the aims of the book: questions are asked, to stimulate the reader who will, it is hoped, be obliged to:

- * discuss these questions with other people;
- * search the literature for answers.

At the same time, it is hoped that these two activities will induce further questions, further debate, and the formation of a personal evaluation of the course in psychology that forms part of the physiotherapist's training. In short, the book is seen as the centre of a 'snowball effect' which will promote interest that will remain active long after the final page has been read.

To gain maximum benefit from this book, be prepared to discuss the issues it raises with your fellow students or colleagues (psychologists call them your 'peers'), follow up the references for further reading to satisfy your curiosity about human behaviour, and do not expect to find all the answers here or in any other single textbook.

If the book uses unfamiliar words, pick up a dictionary and find out their exact meaning rather than guess the meaning from the context. This will have two advantages: you will have an easier time understanding the text, and your own vocabulary will increase, making it considerably easier to express and maintain your opinions in a discussion.

Acknowledgement

I am glad to have this opportunity of thanking Miss Jennifer Lee, Principal of the South Teeside School of Physiotherapy, and Mr David Hill, Reader, The School of Health Science at Ulster Polytechnic, for their help and advice in assembling the content of the book. I am most grateful for their willingness to act as consultants at all stages of the preparation of the manuscript, despite their own heavily committed advisory and teaching programmes.

Foreword

This book is one of a series, the principal aims of which are to illustrate how psychology can be applied in particular professional contexts, how it can improve the skills of practitioners, and how it can increase the practitioners' and students' understanding of themselves.

Psychology is taught to many groups of students and is now integrated within prescribed syllabuses for an increasing number of professions. The existing texts which teachers have been obliged to recommend are typically designed for broad and disparate purposes, and consequently they fail to reflect the special needs of students in professional training. The starting point for the series was the systematic distillation of views expressed in professional journals by those psychologists whose teaching specialisms relate to the applications of psychology. It soon became apparent that many fundamental topics were common to a number of syllabuses and courses; yet in general introductory textbooks these topics tend to be embedded amongst much superfluous material. Therefore, from within the British Psychological Society, we invited experienced teachers and authorities in their field to write review chapters on key topics. Forty-seven chapters covering 23 topics were then available for selection by the series' Volume Editors. The Volume Editors are also psychologists and they have had many years of involvement with their respective professions. In preparing their books, they have consulted formally with colleagues in those professions. Each of their books has its own combination of the specially-prepared chapters, set in the context of the specific professional practice.

Because psychology is only one component of the various training curricula, and because students generally have limited access to learned journals and specialist texts, our contributors to the series have restricted their use of references, while at the same time providing short lists of annotated readings. In addition, they have provided review questions to help students organize their learning and prepare for examinations. Further teaching materials, in the form of additional references, projects, exercises and class notes, are available in Tutor Manuals prepared for each book. A comprehensive tutorial text ('Psychology and People'), prepared by the Series Editors, combines in a

single volume all the key topics, together with their associated teaching materials.

It is intended that new titles will be added to the series and that existing titles will be revised in the light of changing requirements. Evaluative and constructive comments, bearing on any aspect of the series, are most welcome and should be addressed to us at the BPS in Leicester.

In devising and developing the series we have had the good fortune to benefit from the advice and support of Dr Halla Beloff, Professor Philip Levy, Mr Allan Sakne and Mr John Winckler. A great burden has been borne by Mrs Gail Sheffield, who with skill, tact and courtesy, has managed the production of the series: to her and her colleagues at the BPS headquarters and at the Macmillan Press, we express our thanks.

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May 1981