

Book Review

Title: Clinical Psychology: An Introduction

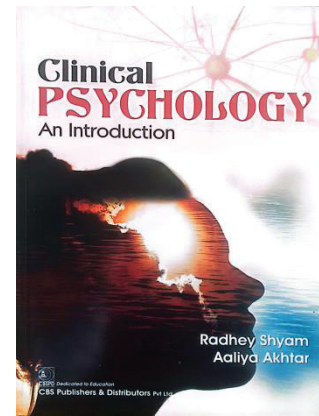
Authors: Radhey Shyam and Aaliya Akhtar

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Reviewing the text “**Clinical Psychology: An Introduction**” by Radhey Shyam and Aaliya Akhtar turned out to be gratifying experience. Being a Professor of Clinical Psychology with years spent in hospitals and classrooms, I undertook this task with the great sense of responsibility. This book comes at a time when discipline of mental health education and practice is undergoing transformation both in terms of expectations and practice in Indian context. I feel pleased to report that this book gives an invaluable contribution to the contemporary psychology education as a comprehensive and contextually relevant resource for all learners in psychology. It is a meaningful addition to the bibliography of psychology.

The book is divided into two main sections, particularly, one on Basics of Clinical Psychology and second on Intervention Approaches. Section I lays a firm conceptual foundation through its seven chapters, moving from the *Nature and Scope of Clinical Psychology* to the *Principles of Clinical Assessment*. Section II then transitions into the intervention domain, spanning across biological and pharmacological, as well as psychotherapeutic, encompassing behavioural, cognitive, humanistic, and existential approaches. This logical and didactic structure makes the book not just a reference source, but also a dynamic teaching tool.

Each chapter is written in clear and relevant explanation without oversimplification suitable for learners at various stages of training. The book excels in grounding the student in the historical and theoretical roots of the profession, from Lightner Witmer’s first clinic to the modern “Boulder Model”. It effectively bridges the gap between research and practice, ensuring students understand that clinical psychology is, at its core, the scientific study of behaviour applied to human distress. The explanations move from broad

population-based principles to the “idiographic” understanding of the unique individual in the clinical setup.

Similarly, the chapters on contemporary intervention strategies, particularly the integration of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, Dialectical and Humanistic approaches, reflect the authors’ incorporation of current clinical trends in evidence-based therapies. The authors do not shy away from the complexities of treatment as they detail the “nature, process, and goals” of intervention, hence, serving also as a vital manual for clinicians to refine their therapeutic techniques. Whether it is the application of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) or the nuanced “talk therapy” methods rooted in psychodynamic theory, the text provides a solid theoretical anchor for clinical work. I particularly appreciate the book’s emphasis on clinical assessment which is not treated as a one-time event, but as a continuous, goal-oriented process that informs every stage of therapy. The detailed sections on the clinical interview and mental state examination (MSE) are essential refreshers for even seasoned practitioners.

The chapters on *Research Methods*, *Models of Clinical Intervention*, and *Professional Ethics* are especially commendable for blending conceptual insight with methodological precision. They reflect a rigorous understanding of both scientific and applied aspects of clinical psychology, encouraging learners to view the discipline as an integration of science, theory, and practice, as emphasized by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2012). The inclusion of the *APA’s Ethical Principles (2017)* and their relevance to Indian practice forms a solid ethical framework for students entering professional roles.

In terms of the contextual grounding, this book stands out. As many of the classic texts in clinical

psychology are western in orientation, there has long been a need for scholarship that reflects the realities of psychological practice and training in India. The authors bridge this gap thoughtfully, addressing the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) guidelines, National Education Policy (NEP 2020) implications, and the evolving framework of clinical training. This book aligns exceptionally well with modular course structures, and could easily serve as the core textbook for undergraduate papers such as *Introduction to Clinical Psychology* or for postgraduate courses on *Clinical and Health Psychology* as well as *Counselling Psychology* across Indian universities and allied health institutions. The discussion of professional issues, such as licencing, ethics, and the future of M.Phil. Clinical Psychology, is timely and particularly useful for both faculty members and students navigating the shifting regulatory and educational focus of contemporary India.

While the book is commendable on all major fronts the future editions can add visual aids, such as flow charts for diagnostic models or assessment pro-

ocols for enhanced comprehension. Given the rapid digitalization of mental health, a future chapter on telepsychology, AI-assisted diagnosis, and online therapy ethics would make the text even more contemporary. However, these are minor suggestions rather than criticisms, given the book's broad coverage and depth.

In summation, Radhey Shyam and Aaliya Akhtar's *Clinical Psychology: An Introduction* is a seminal contribution to the teaching and practice of psychology in India. It successfully balances academic rigor with applied wisdom, and local relevance with international standards. Its comprehensive yet concise format makes it an excellent reference for faculty members designing syllabi, exam setters, and research supervisors seeking Indian-context readings that complement international texts. For students, it offers a readable and authoritative text, and for clinical trainees, it serves as a ready reference that bridges theory and field practice.

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