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2 Preliminary International Clinical Neuropsychology Competency Guidelines

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Objective: The prevalence of significant brain disorders and their economic burden are projected to continually increase as populations age longer. This review aims to analyze the barriers to international collaboration and propose preliminary international competency guidelines for the advancement of the neuropsychology field. Moreover, these guidelines can aid the field in advocating for international development and collaboration. Specifically, these guidelines may lead to clarity of services, culturally informed norms, cross-cultural research opportunities, and improving accessibility globally (Chan et al., 2016; Hessen et al. 2017).

Participants and Methods: Literature between 2002 and 2022 was obtained by searching the Google Scholar and PubMed databases. Keywords such as guidelines, international, and neuropsychology were used. Articles were selected on the criterion of relevance to the objective, international perspectives, and current national guidelines. The remaining articles were reviewed, and themes were clustered to identify overlapping international competencies within the literature. The findings were utilized to create preliminary competency guidelines and discuss their future implications.

Results: Covid-19 unveiled the feasibility of health service fields collaborating internationally to solve global problems (Bump et al. 2021). The pandemic is a call to action for the neuropsychology field to improve global health equity and collaboration to address international challenges (Obschonka et al., 2021). However, one barrier is the lack of globally accepted definitions of neuropsychology and what a neuropsychologist does (Grote et al., 2016). Yet, a way to address this is for international organizations to propose international competency guidelines. This may allow countries with less developed neuropsychology

fields to advocate for legislation and services (Chan et al., 2016; Hessen et al., 2017). In addition, countries reported the need for competencies to advocate for advancing current practices (Chan et al., 2016; Hokkanen et al., 2020; Janzen & Guger, 2016). Notably, by developing guidelines, public understanding and competent practices of neuropsychology can be strengthened (Grote et al., 2016; Hessen et al., 2017). Temple and colleagues (2006) discovered the two largest barriers for physicians referring to neuropsychologists were a lack of familiarity with the field and geographical limitations. Therefore, international competency guidelines present a serendipitous opportunity to benefit clients, physicians, and neuropsychologists.

Therefore, the current study presents 10 international neuropsychology practice competencies and their elements. Foundational competencies include: (1)Scientific knowledge, methods, and evidence-based practice; (2)Individual and community diversity; (3)Ethics, legal standards, and policy; (4)Interdisciplinary systems; (5)Reflective practice; (6)Therapeutic relationships. Functional competencies include: (7)Assessment; (8)Intervention; (9)Consultation; (10)Advocacy.

Conclusions: Although training and regulations may differ internationally, emerging literature supports the establishment of global competencies. Despite data on competencies in many countries being unavailable, the need for services in many locations suggests that using the available data to implement guidelines may allow for the growth of consistently competent neuropsychologists to serve the many underserved populations around the world (Hessen et al., 2017). Fortunately, Covid-19 exposed the need for increased health equity and mental health services globally (Jensen et al., 2021). Ultimately, the international competencies presented should be investigated further to improve international neuropsychology research, practice, advocacy, and legislation to abate global disparities.

Categories: Career Development/Education/Training

Keyword 1: cross-cultural issues

Keyword 2: diversity

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