Exercise walk-through

8.1 Diagnostic systems and disorder classification: evidence and transfer

GRE · GRE Subject Test · GRE Psychology

How classification works

- The current US system is DSM-5-TR (2022). The World Health Organization's ICD-11 is used in much of the world.
- A diagnosis describes a pattern. It does not by itself explain the cause.
- Explicit criteria improve **diagnostic reliability** , the agreement between clinicians. Reliable classification is not automatically valid.
- GRE practice items were written for an earlier edition, so check which version a question assumes.

The parts of a criterion

- Symptoms: what is experienced and observed.
- Duration: how long it has lasted. For example, a major depressive episode needs at least two weeks; acute stress disorder covers three days to one month after a trauma, and PTSD lasts more than a month.
- Clinically significant distress or impairment in daily life.
- Exclusions: the pattern is not better explained by a substance, a medical condition or another disorder.

Key terms

- **diagnostic criteria**: The required symptoms, duration, impairment and exclusions for a classification.
- **diagnostic reliability**: The degree to which different clinicians give the same diagnosis to the same person.
- **diathesis–stress model**: The idea that a vulnerability and stress together shape the risk of a disorder.

Exercises 2.1·2.2

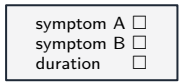
2.1 A classroom vignette gives two symptoms and a duration, but omits impairment and exclusions. Which conclusion is justified? [1]

A. A diagnosis is established B. Duration alone selects a different diagnosis C. Further criterion evidence is needed D. The cause is established E. A treatment can be selected



2.2 In the diathesis-stress model, a family history of schizophrenia together with a recent bereavement maps onto: [1]

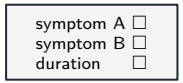
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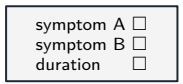
A. A diagnosis is established B. Duration alone selects a different diagnosis C. Further criterion evidence is needed D. The cause is established E. A treatment can be selected



2.1 Answer: C. The missing criterion domains prevent a complete classification; duration alone is insufficient. The other options do not satisfy the stated defining conditions.

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2.2 Answer: B. The pre-existing vulnerability is the diathesis; the later trigger is the stress. Compare the exact process, design or evidence, rather than an associated keyword.

Exercise 2.3

2.3 Revisit the worked case. State one conclusion its evidence supports and one stronger conclusion it does not support. Explain the difference. [2]



Exercise 2.3

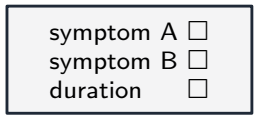
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2.3 Use the worked case evidence to support a bounded claim and explain why a causal, universal or stronger claim needs additional evidence. The claim must fit the specific design and observed process.

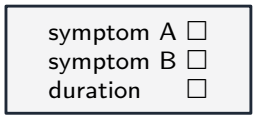
Exercise 3.1

3.1 Two fictional people share a family risk factor; only one has a later stressor and difficulty. Explain the diathesis-stress interpretation and its limit. Give the interpretation, supporting reasoning, a relevant alternative or limitation, and an appropriate check. [4]



Exercise 3.1

3.1 Two fictional people share a family risk factor; only one has a later stressor and difficulty. Explain the diathesis-stress interpretation and its limit. Give the interpretation, supporting reasoning, a relevant alternative or limitation, and an appropriate check. [4]



3.1 The shared factor represents a possible vulnerability; the later event represents possible stress. An interaction account proposes that vulnerability and environment jointly affect risk. This comparison is consistent with the model, but cannot prove causation, necessity or sufficiency. Other exposures and protective factors may differ. Award B1 each (authored) for the interpretation, its reasoning, a relevant limitation/alternative and an appropriate check, up to four points. Accept a different justified answer satisfying these demands.