

Slide 1

Psychology of Aging

Roseann Mulligan DDS, MS

Slide 2

Normal CNS Topics

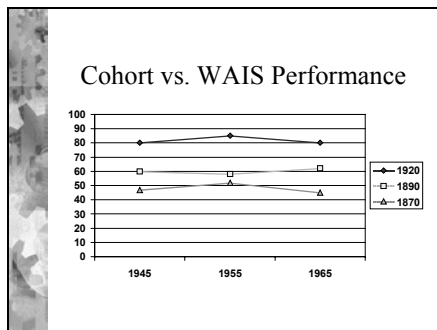
- Intelligence
- Personality
- Pathology

Slide 3

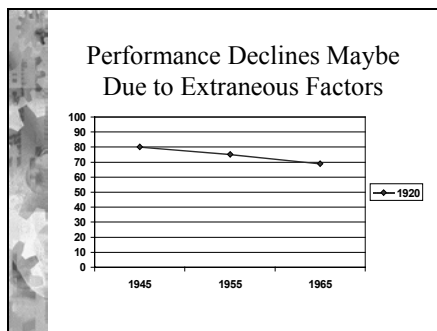
Intelligence (I.Q.)

- A measure of achievement, education ability and stimulation
- Declines with aging are a result of study design
- Longitudinal study – much stability w/i cohort
 - Difference is between cohorts

Slide 4



Slide 5



Slide 6

Cross-sectional Declines in I.Q.

- Test taking sophistication
 - Education
 - Health
 - Life style
- Attention/motivation

Slide 7

Cross-sectional Declines in I.Q.

- Cultural differences
- Environmental effects
- Questions worded differently
- Timed test requiring speed in answering

Slide 8

Types of Intelligence

- Fluid Intelligence
- Crystallized Intelligence

Slide 9

Fluid Intelligence

- Decreases with age
 - Inductive reasoning
 - Deductive reasoning
 - Figural relations
 - Memory span

Slide 10

Crystallized Intelligence

- Increases with age
 - Verbal comprehension
 - Experiential evaluation
 - Mechanical knowledge

Slide 11

Components of Both

- General reasoning (arithmetic)
- Semantic relations (verbal analogies)

Slide 12

Can Intelligence be Improved?

- Fluid intelligence can be improved
 - Through intensive education
 - Through acculturation

Slide 13

Our Concepts of Intelligence

- Predictors of
 - Competence
- Ability to get along in life
- Problems of daily living

Slide 14

Should an Intelligence Test Determine Competence?

- Paper and pencil test
 - Age-biased
 - Culturally biased
 - Time biased
- Relevance to living?

Slide 15

Divided Attention (Multi-tasking)

- Simple stimuli – elderly do as well as young
- Complex stimuli – elderly show a decline
 - Little processing capacity for complex task

Slide 16

Attention – Automatic Processing

- No age differences
- What we are borne with
- Practice cannot improve
 - Obligatory
- Mental state has no effect

Slide 17

Attention – Effortful Processing

- Age differences do occur
 - Starts and stops at will
 - Effected by mental state

Slide 18

Learning

- Conditioning occurs at a slower rate in the elderly
- Extinguishing occurs at a slower rate too.

Slide 19

Learning Slow Downs

- Instrumental
 - Verbal
 - Motor Skills

Slide 20

Instrumental Learning

- Elderly do poorly
- Mazes are examples

Slide 21

Verbal Learning

- Performance favors the young
- Artifact from cautiousness?

Slide 22

Motor Skills Learning

- Slow down in reaction time
- Can improve skill by bettering cognitive aspects

Slide 23

Educational Programs for the Elderly

- Longer time to learn
- Don't use timed tasks to measure learning
 - Reward positive behaviors
- Evaluate progress by evaluating skill
- Typically does not attain skill level of younger

Slide 24

Memory

- Relates to depth of processing
- Related to lack of practice
- Limited disk space theory (capacity of the hard drive)

Slide 25

Personality

- The predictable way in which an individual perceives self and responds to others and the events of life
- Includes ego strength, self-concept, self-esteem and self-acceptance as well as overt behavior

Slide 26

Personality

- Stereotype – more irascible
- Reality – more like themselves

Slide 27

Findings of Change in Individuals

- Related to dimensions not personality
 - Introversion
 - Desurgency
 - Cautiousness
- Conformity, passivity and inaction

Slide 28

Personality Studies Results

- Fairly stable in adulthood
- Dramatic changes in life may be influencing factor
 - Cohort differences in personality
 - Sociocultural trends
 - Gender differences

Slide 29

Woodruff and Birren's USC Study

- Personality tests on USC students – 1944
 - Same people tested again 25 yrs later
- Amazing correlation between two time pts on test
- Amazing divergence in memory of who they were

Slide 30

Reminiscence

- Why?
 - Ego saving function
 - Helps to make sense of life
 - Occurs more at transitional times

Slide 31

Personality Traits

- Important role in longevity
- Certain characteristics related to development of life-shortening diseases

Slide 32

Social Readjustment Scale

- Degree of preparation
- "On timeness" of an event
- Extent to which individual has control
- Previous experience in dealing with life changes
- Resources such as confidante

Slide 33

Psychopathology

- Inability to adapt to life changes, stresses, losses
- 15 % of elderly suffer at least moderately
- Incidence higher where advanced age, poor physical health, or unmarried

Slide 34

Psychopathology

- 30% of public mental health problem
- Only 2% of outpatient population

Slide 35

Little Psychologic Care

- More mental illness tolerated
- Elderly more reluctant to seek care
- Many ignorant of MH services
 - Can't afford to pay
- Get help from family, friends, ministers
 - Health professions
 - Few trained
 - Believe it is not worth their time
 - Have their own fears about aging
 - Want to work with younger patients

Slide 36

Psychiatric Disorders

- Functional Disorders – intact brain function
 - Depression (reversible)
 - Delusions (reversible)
 - Hypochondriasis (reversible)

Slide 37

Delusions

- A false belief that is maintained in spite of obvious proof to the contrary

Slide 38

Hypochondriasis

- A morbid concern about one's own health and exaggerated attention to any unusual bodily or mental sensations

Slide 39

Psychiatric Disorders

- Organic disorders (impaired brain function)
 - Senile dementia (irreversible)
 - Vascular dementia (irreversible)
 - Delirium (reversible)

Slide 40

Delirium
or Acute Confusional State
or Acute Brain Syndrome

- Acute mental syndrome
 - Characterized by:
 - decreased ability to maintain attention to external stimuli
 - Disorganized thinking
- Reduced level of consciousness
