

Workshop: Cross-cultural neuropsychological assessment

Presenter(s):



T. Rune Nielsen, Senior Researcher, Danish Dementia Research Centre

Short bio: T. Rune Nielsen has been involved in research on cross-cultural neuropsychology and dementia in minority ethnic groups for more than a decade and has several years of clinical experience from the memory clinics setting. His research has mainly focused on challenges and possible solutions in cross-cultural neuropsychological assessment, and more recently post-diagnostic dementia care in minority ethnic groups. He is cofounder of Nordic and European research networks on dementia in minority ethnic groups and cross-cultural neuropsychology, has published more than 40 scientific papers on the topics, and has presented his research at several national and international seminars and conferences.

Abstract: Although a certain degree of diversity has always been present in the Nordic countries, diversity levels have increased greatly over the last decades, starting with the immigration of labor workers from countries outside Europe in the 1960s and 1970s, followed by the influx of asylum seekers and refugees in more recent years. Several minority ethnic groups are at an increased risk of medical conditions that are associated with cognitive impairment, such as stroke, diabetes mellitus, and dementia. As a result, neuropsychologists in the Nordic countries will increasingly encounter patients from minority ethnic groups in their daily practice.

Several characteristics of minority ethnic groups may pose unique challenges to neuropsychologists. First, limited proficiency in the host country language is widespread among recently arrived immigrants and older people in some minority ethnic groups. Second, neuropsychologists may encounter substantial cultural barriers in their clinical practice. Third, low education levels or illiteracy are common among (older) people in various minority ethnic groups. Taking these barriers into consideration, administering a cross-cultural neuropsychological assessment requires neuropsychologists to acquire culture-competent skills and knowledge.

This workshop will present and discuss how language, (quality of) education, literacy, and culture may influence neuropsychological assessment based on recent research and clinical examples from the Nordic countries. Further, several newly developed cross-cultural neuropsychological tests for minority ethnic groups in Europe will be presented.

Learning goals

- Increased awareness about language, cultural and educational influences on cognition and neuropsychological test performance.
- Attained knowledge allowing for critical reflection and interpretation of neuropsychological test results in cross-cultural assessments.
- Learnt about available cross-cultural neuropsychological tests.