

Editorial Note on Forensic Psychology

Sowmya Vennam*

Department of Pharmacy, Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University, Hyderabad, Telangana, India

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Editorial

Forensic psychology is a subject that blends psychology and the practise of law. Those who work in this discipline apply psychological knowledge to the criminal justice system. The word forensic comes from the Latin word 'forensis,' which meaning "forum," or Ancient Rome's judicial system.

Overview

This field is defined by the American Board of Forensic Psychology as "the application of psychology to issues involving the law and judicial system."

In recent years, there has been a surge in interest in forensic psychology. A growing number of graduate institutions offer dual degrees in psychology and law, as well as forensic psychology specialty.

Some psychologists have a forensic psychology specialised degree, however the majority are licenced psychologists with a Ph.D. or Psy.D. These lawyers can practise in both criminal and civil law.

History:

The field of forensic psychology is a trendy issue right now. Consider all the books, movies, and TV series about how digging into the brains of criminals may help solve crimes and bring victims justice. Despite its media acclaim, forensic psychology plays a vital role in real life. It entails a psychological evaluation of persons who are involved in the judicial system. Here's a look at how this intriguing branch of psychology came to be.

Wilhelm Wundt, known as the "Father of Psychology," opened his first lab in Germany in 1879, sowing the roots of forensic psychology. Since Wundt, the discipline of forensic psychology has grown exponentially, with contributions from a wide range of specialists.

Some of the first study on the psychology of testifying was done by James McKeen Cattell, for example.

He asked students at Columbia University to respond to a series of questions and assess their level of confidence in their responses.

He discovered a stunning level of error, prompting other psychologists to perform their own eyewitness testimony tests. With even eyewitnesses doubting their own credibility, substantial questions regarding the veracity of their testimony in court arose. Alfred Binet was inspired by Cattell's work and duplicated Cattell's study as well as researching the outcomes of other psychological studies related to law and criminal justice. Many future evaluation techniques were based on his work

in intelligence testing, which was vital to the development of forensic psychology.

Witnesses' capacity to recall facts was also tested by psychologist William Stern. In one of his studies, he asked students to write a summary of a disagreement between two classmates that they saw. Stern observed that witness mistakes were prevalent and that a person's emotions might influence how well he remembered things. Stern continued to research courtroom difficulties and subsequently founded the first academic magazine dedicated to applied psychology.

Forensic psychology in the courts:

Psychologists were beginning to testify as expert witnesses in criminal trials across Europe around this time. Albert von Schrenck-Notzing, a psychologist, testified during a murder trial in 1896 regarding the impact of suggestibility on witness evidence.

Hugo Munsterberg, a German-American psychologist, believed that psychology had practical implications in everyday life, which aided the development of forensic psychology. Munsterberg wrote "On the Witness Stand," a treatise promoting the use of psychology in court proceedings, in 1915.

In 1916, Stanford psychologist Lewis Terman used psychology to law enforcement for the first time. The revised Stanford-Binet exam was used to measure the intellect of job candidates for law enforcement occupations after upgrading Binet's intelligence exam.

In 1917, psychologist William Marston discovered a substantial link between systolic blood pressure and lying. This discovery led to the development of the contemporary polygraph detector.

In the case of *Frye v. the United States*, Marston testified in 1923. This case is notable because it set the standard for the use of expert witnesses in court. In order to be considered as evidence, the Federal Court of Appeals established that a practise, methodology, or evaluation must be widely acknowledged within its area.

Forensic psychology gains traction:

After World War II, the field of forensic psychology in the United States grew significantly. Prior to then, psychologists acted as expert witnesses only in cases where they did not appear to be encroaching on the rights of medical experts, who were viewed as more trustworthy witnesses. The courts concluded in *People v. Hawthorne* in 1940 that the threshold for expert witnesses was determined by how much the witness understood about a subject rather than whether or not the witness had a medical degree.

Several psychologists testified for both the plaintiffs and

defendants in the historic 1954 case of Brown v. Board of Education. In the case of Jenkins v. the United States, the courts later backed psychologists who were functioning as mental disease experts.

The American Psychological Association recognised forensic

psychology as a speciality within psychology in 2001. Over the last three decades, forensic psychology has continued to expand and adapt. A growing number of graduate institutions are offering dual degrees in psychology and law, as well as specialty degrees in forensic psychology.

***Correspondence to:**

Sowmya Vennam
Department of Pharmacy
Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University,
Hyderabad, Telangana, India
E-mail: Sowmya.vennam@gmail.com