

Psychological Tests & Their Use

Psychological tests
are systematic procedures
Characterized by planning, uniformity, thoroughness
for obtaining samples of behavior
Small subsets of a larger whole
relevant to cognitive / affective functioning
Samples are selected for empirical significance
and for scoring and evaluating those samples
Using pre-established rules and norms
according to standards based on empirical data.

Other Definitions
Measurement is as a set of rules for assigning numbers to represent objects, traits, attributes, or behaviors
Reliability refers to the stability, accuracy, or consistency of the test scores
Validity refers to the appropriateness or accuracy of the interpretations of test scores

Testing Standards

The American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, and National Council on Measurement in Education released *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* in 1999

This is *the* source for criteria on evaluating and selecting tests, testing practices, and effects of test use

Tools & Products

Tests are *tools*, in that they are developed to perform a specific task

They are also *products*, developed and marketed for a specific purpose / user

Many persons play a role in testing process (developers, publishers, users, takers, etc.)

Modern Test Uses

Decision making

Selecting, organizing, diagnosing, placing, or "dealing with" persons

Psychological research

Studying the nature, development, or relationships of cognitions, affect, or behavior

Self-understanding

Provide information to aid in personal growth

Testing vs. Assessment

Not the same thing at all

Assessment is an idiographic, longer, more complex process involving multiple informants and conducted by highly trained persons who must exercise subjective judgments

Testing is a nomothetic, shorter, simpler process involving one information and can be conducted by minimally trained persons due to its objective nature

User Qualifications

Most publishers require certain levels of training and expertise to purchase tests

Level A – Bachelor’s level

Need no specialized training, just the manual

Level B – Master’s level

Specialized knowledge of test construction and use

Level C – Doctoral level / specialized licensure

Extensive training in test administration and interpretation
