

Quadrant II – Transcript and Related Materials

Programme: Bachelor of Arts (Third Year)

Subject: Psychology

Paper Code: PSC106

Paper Title: Psychological Testing

Unit: 01 (Nature, Concepts and Principles of Psychological Testing)

Module Name: Computerized Test Administration and Scoring and Reference Sources of Tests

Module No: 05

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Notes

Computerized test administration, scoring, and interpretation

Computer-assisted psychological assessment (CAPA) has become more the norm than the exception. An ever-growing number of psychological tests can be purchased on disc or administered and scored online. In many respects, the relative simplicity, convenience, and range of potential testing activities that computer technology brings to the testing industry have been a great boon. Of course, every rose has its thorns.

For assessment professionals, some major issues with regard to CAPA are as follows.

■ **Access to test administration, scoring, and interpretation software.** Despite purchase restrictions on software and technological safeguards to guard against unauthorized copying, software may still be copied.

■ **Comparability of pencil-and-paper and computerized versions of tests.** Many tests once available only in a paper-and-pencil format are now available in computerized form as well.

In many instances the comparability of the traditional and the computerized forms of the test has not been researched or has only insufficiently been researched.

■ **The value of computerized test interpretations.** Many tests available for computerized administration also come with computerized scoring and interpretation procedures. Thousands of words are spewed out every day in the form of test interpretation results, but the value of these words in many cases is questionable.

■ **Unprofessional, unregulated “psychological testing” online.** A growing number of Internet sites purport to provide, usually for a fee, online psychological tests. Yet the vast majority of the tests offered would not meet a psychologist’s standards. Assessment professionals wonder about the long-term effect of these largely unprofessional and unregulated “psychological testing” sites.

Imagine being administered what has been represented to you as a “psychological test,” only to find that the test is not bona fide. The online availability of myriad tests of uncertain quality that purport to measure psychological variables increases the possibility of this happening. To help remedy such potential problems, a Florida-based organization called the International Test Commission developed the “International Guidelines on Computer-Based and Internet-Delivered Testing”. These guidelines address technical, quality, security, and related issues. Although not without limitations, these guidelines clearly are a step forward in nongovernmental regulation. Other guidelines are written to inform the rendering of professional services to members of certain

Reference Sources: Many reference sources exist for learning more about published tests and assessment-related issues. These sources vary with respect to detail. Some merely provide descriptions of tests, others provide detailed information on technical aspects, and still others provide critical reviews complete with discussion of the pros and cons of usage.

Test catalogues: Perhaps one of the most readily accessible sources of information is a catalogue distributed by the publisher of the test. Because most test publishers make available catalogues of their offerings, this source of test information can be tapped by a simple telephone call, e-mail, or note. However, publishers’ catalogues usually contain only

a brief description of the test and seldom contain the kind of detailed technical information that a prospective user might require. Moreover, the catalogue's objective is to sell the test. For this reason, highly critical reviews of a test are seldom, if ever, found in a publisher's test catalogue.

Test manuals Detailed information concerning the development of a particular test and technical information relating to it should be found in the test manual, which usually can be purchased from the test publisher. However, for security purposes the test publisher will typically require documentation of professional training before filling an order for a test manual.

Professional books Many books written for an audience of assessment professionals are available to supplement, re-organize, or enhance the information typically found in the manual of a very widely used psychological test. So, for example, a book that focuses on a particular test may contain useful information about the content and structure of the test, and how and why that content and structure is superior to a previous version or edition of the test. The book might shed new light on how or why the test may be used for a particular. Books devoted to an in-depth discussion of a particular test can systematically provide students of assessment, as well as assessment professionals, with the thoughtful insights and actionable knowledge of more experienced practitioners and test users.

Reference volumes The Buros Center for Testing provides "one-stop shopping" for a great deal of test-related information. The initial version of what would evolve into the *Mental Measurements Yearbook* series was compiled by Oscar Buros in 1938. This authoritative compilation of test reviews is currently updated about every three years. The Buros Center also publishes *Tests in Print*, which lists all commercially available English-language tests in print. This volume, which is also updated periodically, provides detailed information for each test listed, including test publisher, test author, test purpose, intended test population, and test administration time.

Journal articles Articles in current journals may contain reviews of the test, updated or independent studies of its psychometric soundness, or examples of how the instrument was used in either research or an applied context. Such articles may appear in a wide array of

behavioral science journals, such as *Psychological Bulletin*, *Psychological Review*, *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *Psychology & Marketing*, *Psychology in the Schools*, *School Psychology Quarterly*, and *School Psychology Review*. There are also journals that focus more specifically on matters related to testing and assessment. For example, *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, *Psychological Assessment*, *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, *Applied Measurement in Education*, and the *Journal of Personality Assessment*. Journals such as *Psychology*, *Public Policy*, and *Law and Law and Human Behavior* frequently contain highly informative articles on legal and ethical issues and controversies as they relate to psychological testing and assessment. Journals such as *Computers & Education*, *Computers in Human Behavior*, and *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking* frequently contain insightful articles on computer and Internet-related measurement.

Online databases One of the most widely used bibliographic databases for test-related publications is that maintained by the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC). Funded by the U.S. Department of Education and operated out of the University of Maryland, the ERIC website at www.eric.ed.gov contains a wealth of resources and news about tests, testing, and assessment. There are abstracts of articles, original articles, and links to other useful websites. ERIC strives to provide balanced information concerning educational assessment and to provide resources that encourage responsible test use.

The American Psychological Association (APA) maintains a number of databases useful in locating psychology-related information in journal articles, book chapters, and doctoral dissertations. PsycINFO is a database of abstracts dating back to 1887. ClinPSYC is a database derived from PsycINFO that focuses on abstracts of a clinical nature. PsycSCAN: Psychopharmacology contains abstracts of articles concerning psychopharmacology. PsycARTICLES is a database of full-length articles dating back to 1894. Health and Psychosocial Instruments (HAPI) contains a listing of measures created or modified for specific research studies but not commercially available; it is available at many college libraries through BRS Information Technologies and also on CD-ROM (updated twice a year). PsycLAW is a free database, available to everyone, that contains discussions of selected

topics involving psychology and law. It can be accessed at www.apa.org/psyclaw. For more information on any of these databases, visit APA's website at www.apa.org.

Other sources A source for exploring the world of unpublished tests and measures is the *Directory of Unpublished Experimental Mental Measures* (Goldman & Mitchell, 2008). Also, as a service to psychologists and other test users, ETS maintains a list of unpublished tests. This list can be accessed at <http://www.ets.org/testcoll/>.

Many university libraries also provide access to online databases, such as PsycINFO, and electronic journals. Most scientific papers can be downloaded straight to one's computer using such an online service. This is an extremely valuable resource to students, as non-subscribers to such databases may be charged hefty access fees for such access.

Reference:

Cohen, J. R. & Swerdlik, M. E. (2018). *Psychological Testing and Assessment: An Introduction to Tests and Measurement*. (9thed.). New Delhi: McGraw-Hill Education.