

Psychometric Assessments & Psychological Tests

A psychometric test or assessment is essentially an objective and standardised measure of a sample of behaviour.

Like many other tests in science, psychological tests are trying to sample a small but important and carefully chosen sample of behaviour, which can then be used to predict a broad and significant area of behaviour.

As an analogy, in the case of a scientific blood test there is a small sample of blood taken and tested. The test results then are used to predict the blood profile in all of the body, not just the sample.

Similarly, in psychological testing a small sample of behaviours are measured, and this is then used to predict likely behaviours in other situations.

Psychometric Assessments (also referred to as psychological tests and assessments) broadly fall into the following categories:

- ◆ Ability Tests
- ◆ Personality Assessments
- ◆ Integrity Tests
- ◆ Values and Motives Assessments
- ◆ Interest Inventories
- ◆ Behavioural Exercises

There are two things all psychometric tests and psychological assessments have in common. These are:

Standardisation

- ◆ This means there is **uniformity** (or standardisation) of the testing procedure in its administration, marking and interpretation. This ensures:
 - Administration conditions are in the same conditions by trained administrators – read more...
 - The tests is marked in a standardised way – each person is compared to the same scoring key and marking guidelines
 - The scores from two people are comparable as the testing conditions and test items are the same for all those who take the test.
 - The interpretation is standardised for the same scores on assessments
- ◆ The use of **norms** is another aspect of standardisation – read more...
 - The number correct on an ability test is meaningless unless we know how it compares to others who take the test.
 - We need to know what is “normal” or the average performance on the test, and this is where norms come in.
 - Comparing scores to norms allows us to standardise the interpretation to how a person’s result compare to an appropriate norm group’s average.

Objective Measurement

- ◆ Psychometric tests are objective in that they should be independent of subjective judgement of the administrator or interpreter of the data.
 - This means that theoretically any one individual should obtain the identical score on a test, regardless of who administers, marks, and interprets the results.
 - As humans we all have biases, likes and dislikes, which can affect how objective we can be in most situations.
 - However, psychometric tests endeavour to reduce the subjectivity and bias, by adhering to standard interpretations of scores which are objectively measured.

Robust Psychometric assessments also have gone through significant scientific research and need to meet the reliability and validity standards of test construction. Read more....

