



13.1: CHARACTERISTICS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTS

CHARACTERISTICS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTS

- Find out a great deal about a person in a short amount of time.
- Predicting how well one might do in a particular career.
- Assessing an individual's desires, interests, and attitudes.
- Reveal psychological problems.
- Provide comparable data about many individuals.
- Help people understand things about themselves.
- A test's results are only one tool for measuring and predicting human behaviour—can't measure and predict everything.
- A test must be reliable, valid and standard in order to be useful.



TEST RELIABILITY

- Ability of the test to give the same results time after time—Reliability
- Test-retest reliability—ability of a test to produce the same results, time after time.
- Interscorer reliability—achieving the same score no matter who scores it.
- Split-half reliability—randomly divide items in half. Score each half separately. Should be the same score.



TEST VALIDITY

- The ability of a test to measure what it is intended to is validity.
- Predictive validity—how well a test predicts performance.



STANDARDIZATION

- Administered and scored the same way each time.
- Establishes norms or average score from a large group of people.



ESTABLISHING NORMS

- Percentile system places people based on test outcome on continuum.
- 50th percentile means individual scored better than 50% of the population and worse than 50% of the population.
- 90th percentile means individual scored better than 90% of population.
- 10th percentile means individual scored better than 10% of the population.



CRITICISMS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING

- Snapshot in time
- Quantitative rather than qualitative
- Data can be used inappropriately (especially standardized tests).
- Should we compare individuals to the group?
- Should we compare individuals to other individuals?
- Should we compare groups across time?
- Should we compare individuals to themselves?

