Abstract

Intelligence tests such as Wechsler scales, Woodcock-Johnson, and Stanford-Binet are some of the most frequently used tests in clinical assessment; and Wechsler scales, in particular, have been translated, adapted, and normed for use in many different countries with different languages and cultures (Georgas, van de Vijver, Weiss, & Saklofske, 2003). Technical and interpretation manuals for these tests and clinical guidebooks recommend and promote numerous interpretation methods for provided scores and numerous and ever-increasing score comparisons. However, what empirical evidence is offered in these manuals or books to justify the suggested interpretations and recommendations? Unfortunately, many intelligence test technical manuals, popular test interpretation guidebooks, and textbooks neglect many critically important psychometric research methods and published studies necessary to judge the adequacy of the different test scores (Full Scale, Broad Factor, subtests, etc.) and comparisons they promote. This presentation examines the intersection of professional ethics, theory, and psychometrics as they impact tests of intelligence or cognitive ability. Independent intelligence test research using standardization sample data and studies examining independent samples have frequently contradicted results presented in technical manuals and there are substantial implications for test interpretation based on such results. Independent research has also produced results challenging the theoretical foundation of contemporary intelligence tests which also has implications for interpretation practices. Psychometric methods that provide reliability and validity evidence of intelligence test scores in general and Wechsler scales and the WJ IV specifically are illustrated.