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Attitudes of Psychologists to Tests and Testing Across Europe: Findings and Perspectives From EFPA Board of Assessment Survey 2020–21

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IS9-11-LN

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The main goal of the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (EFPA) Board of Assessment (BoA) is the improvement of testing practices across Europe. In order to reach this goal, the BoA carries out various actions and projects to raise standards. To better inform its work, BoA decided to survey attitudes of professional psychologists on tests and testing practices during 2020-21 across a number of European countries. The emphasis in this symposium will be on the latest survey data, with some key comparisons to the results from previous surveys (conducted in 2000, 2010). Five main dimensions were distinguished in the survey: concern over incorrect test use; regulations on tests and testing; online testing; appreciation of tests; and training relating to competent test use. Important differences between countries were found on these five dimensions. In addition, the most commonly used tests were questioned in terms of appropriateness for use in certain countries. Finally, some future perspectives and actions for EFPA BoA will be discussed.

Guiding European Testing Practice by Understanding Attitudes Toward Tests and Testing

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Tests are an important tool for psychologists in all areas. Therefore, it is important to know about the testing practices and the attitudes towards tests and testing. A survey on the opinions of professional psychologists on testing practices was carried out in 2000 (in six countries) and 2009 (in 17 countries, N > 12000) and now in 2020/21 as a third wave. The current sample includes approx. 12000 persons from 20 countries. The same questionnaire as in 2009 was used to allow comparisons. It contained 24 attitude items, one item about test-use problems (8 subitems) and one open question about the most frequently used tests. The survey was conducted in each country on its own, partly additional items and research questions were added. An overview of the sample and first results in general will be presented. The data will guide the actions and measures taken by EFPA, but also ITC and other stakeholders and contribute to training and awareness campaigns to improve psychologists' use of tests across Europe.

Test Use and Attitudes Towards Testing in Flanders/Belgium

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On behalf of the Board of Assessment of the EFPA a survey on the opinions of professional psychologists on testing practices was carried out in 2000 (in six countries) and 2009 (in 17 countries, N > 12000). In 2020-21 a third wave of this survey was directed in Flanders to professionals working with tests. From the 726 respondents we looked in particular at the 400 psychologists that participated. First result will be presented of this new wave of the EFPA survey supplemented with results from a broader survey within the assessment context (with also COVID-19 related topics). The aim for all these surveys was to gather information about test attitudes and usage that could later contribute to improvement of test practices in Flanders and lead to awareness campaigns to improve psychologists' use of tests. In particular testing practices, e.g. on information on test quality, were analyzed, knowing the large amount of tests in use that were not fit for local use. Further, stability with findings on test attitudes of previous survey waves was striking. The most common tests in Flanders are the classic psychometric tests of intelligence and personality: WISC, WAIS, MMPI... Finally, some future perspectives are analyzed and discussed.

Improving Tests and Testing Practices: The Case of Spain

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Psychological tests are essential tools that help psychologists to make decisions about people. Therefore, inappropriate tests or improper use of tests can cause serious harm to the persons assessed. The Spanish Test Commission, aligned with the EFPA Board of Assessment (BoA) has been taking different actions and projects for improving tests and testing practices in Spain. In this presentation we analyze the impact of two main projects: a) the evaluation of the quality of the tests published in Spain and the subsequent dissemination of results, and b) the BoA survey on psychologists' attitudes to tests and testing practices. The main results show that: 1) the nine editions of the test review process carried out to date, with a total of 89 tests reviewed, have contributed to improve tests and testing practices in different ways. 2) Relatedly, the dissemination of the test review results has

had a positive impact on the use of tests. Specifically, in the last survey of psychologists' opinion on tests and testing practices, most of the professionals who were aware of the test reviews consulted the reports and found them useful to make a test choice. However, only 22.5% of participants were aware of these reviews, which makes it necessary to improve the dissemination of this project. 3) Spanish psychologists show favorable attitudes to the use of tests, although they recognize some problems, such as the improper use of photocopies, or professionals not being up to date with tests. 4) Spanish psychologists are generally in favor of increasing the control and regulation of tests and their use, but tend to be skeptical about the incorporation of new technologies in testing practices. 5) There are some differences in attitudes and opinions depending on specialty fields, age, gender, and job sector. Future actions based on these results are discussed.

Test Use and Quality Awareness Among Norwegian Psychologists: The EFPA 2020 Questionnaire on Test Attitudes

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We report results from the Norwegian part of The European Federation for Psychologists' Associations (EFPA) 2020 decennial survey of psychologists' attitudes towards tests and test use. The results from 1523 respondents show that they were generally satisfied with student training and that they valued tests as a source of clinical information. However, they were unsatisfied with the lack of information about test quality. Regulation of tests and test use was a major priority, in terms of both general regulatory frameworks and restrictions on test use dependent on test user qualifications. Respondents reported that the most frequently encountered problem with test use was photocopying copyrighted materials. Test use showed that cognitive measures were the most widespread, although the respondents listed a large variety of tests used including diagnostics interviews, clinical symptom scales and neuropsychological measures. The implications for quality improvement in the test field will be discussed.

Calls for Improvement Despite Positive Attitudes to Testing: UK Survey Findings

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The European Federation of Psychologists' Association (EFPA) study on Tests and Test Attitudes included the UK within the 20 participating countries. The methodology and results of the UK survey responses, co-ordinated by the British Psychological Society (BPS), are summarised. The survey ran in Spring 2021 and was disseminated to the BPS membership through various internal and external communication channels. A total of 351 respondents completed the survey, with a high representation of work and organisational psychologists in the sample. The results generally show a positive attitude of the participants towards the use of tests to benefit their practice. However, respondents reported seeing frequent instances of bad test practice, including some in breach of legal and contractual obligations when using tests. Respondents are calling for more legislation to stop the abuses of testing, along with wanting the BPS, as the UK's National Psychology Association, to do more to improve test use. Implications of the survey findings for users, test providers, clients, alongside wider stakeholders are discussed.