AARC President’s Message

It is official! Our division name is now the Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling and our first AARC conference will be in Houston, Texas on September 6th and 7th. We will also hold a pre-conference dissertation boot camp for all of our doctoral student members on September 5th. I hope each of you will consider attending the conference this year. We have some amazing presentations and the networking opportunities are beyond compare. If you have never been to Houston, you can’t miss out on the chance to visit a wonderful city. You can even catch a Houston Astros’ game if you are a baseball fan. The Boston Red Sox will be in town for 7pm games on the 5th, 6th, and 7th. If baseball isn’t your thing, then you can dine at one of the 28 restaurants that the Food Network has visited in the city. How about shopping? The Galleria is only steps from the conference hotel and it is visited by 28 million people a year. Just think, top notch research, networking, professional baseball, amazing dining experiences, and shopping….what is keeping you from registering today?

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As you can see, I am excited about the conference and hope that you are too. However, the conference isn’t all that AARC has going on. We are about to unveil a totally redesigned website. We have contracted with a web design company to develop a state of the art web site with exclusive member only content. Our Research Committee, chaired by Dr. Steven Lenz, is working diligently to develop a range of research resources that will be available to you as members. The site will include video tutorials on various research approaches, step-by-step guides, and numerous other materials related to research and assessment. You will also be able to register for future conferences and webinars through the site. Our goal is to unveil the site in the next month, so be on the look-out for an announcement.

In July, my time as President will come to an end and Casey Barrio Minton will be taking the helm of our association. Casey and I have been working together throughout the year to make sure that we will have consistency and a smooth transition. Casey will announce her goals after the July transition, but I am certain that you will see continuous development of our division and a strong voice for assessment and research. If you don’t know Casey yet, you will discover that she works tirelessly and is an excellent leader. I look forward to working with her as the head of the division. Also, Dr. Shawn Spurgeon became your President-elect-elect in January. He has been working with our current Executive Board to prepare for his role as President-elect. Shawn is also an excellent leader and will continue to make improvements in our division over the next couple of years. I am very excited about the things to come for AARC. I am sure that we will see our initiatives come to fruition because there is a strong sense of camaraderie on the board and among the various committees.

As you know, the success of the initiatives also depends on you as members. We have various committee activities to tackle and need your help. Casey will be making her appointments in the next few months and I encourage you to put your name forward for service. One area that will need help is the world of social media. Jayne Smith has served as Chair for Social Media and we will be looking for groups of bloggers to help get the message out related to research and assessment.

**New Initiatives**

In the fall, I spoke about the AARC initiative related to webinars. We postponed the launch of our webinars to begin after the launch of our new web page. At the ACA conference, our board decided to launch our first webinar this coming summer and to focus on the new DSM-V. Be on the look-out for details about the webinar. It will be announced in Counseling Today and on our website in the coming weeks. Once the site is launched, we will be posting a complete schedule of our presenters, topics, and dates.

**Thank You!**

I want to thank each of you for giving me the opportunity to serve the organization as President. I am humbled to have been given such a privilege and only hope that I have been able to benefit the organization as much as it has benefited me over my career. AARC is my professional home and I care about its continued success. After my tenure ends as President, I will continue to be an active participant on the Board and then look forward to being an active member once again. If any of you are interested in serving as an officer, let’s schedule some time to talk in Houston! Thanks again for all of your support and for the chance to serve you.
2013 National AARC Conference

AARC is excited to announce that our 2013 National Assessment and Research Conference will be held on September 6th and 7th in Houston Texas!

The conference will be held at the Embassy Suites Houston near the Galleria.

To register for the conference and find out more about it, please go to

www.theaaceonline.com/conference

Call for Proposals for the 2013 National AARC Conference

AARC is seeking proposals for the 2013 AARC National Assessment and Research Conference in Houston, Texas. September 6-7, 2013. The call for proposals can be found on:

https://gsueducation.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_4SdaXjHJdWGVBDT

Proposal submission deadline: June 15, 2013 (midnight)
Acceptance/rejection notices emailed: no later than July 15, 2013

Please note the primary presenter must be an AARC member. All session presenters must be registered for the conference.

Be on the look out for registration information. Any questions regarding the conference can be directed to Dr. Catharina Chang at cychang@gsu.edu.
In many doctoral programs, students must formally present their proposed dissertation idea to their dissertation committee members, as well as any other audience members who want to hear the idea, before being able to proceed with their research. Having worked as an academic advisor and staff member at a major research university for half a decade, I have seen my share of dissertation proposals, and I can say that I have been exposed to a broad spectrum of dissertation proposal topics and, frankly, quality. After years of witnessing such a variety of dissertation proposals, and having formally proposed my own dissertation, I have seen the entire process from both sides, and offer students the following tips for a successful dissertation proposal.

1) Know What You Plan to Do... and Why You Plan to Do It

When your dissertation committee includes a seasoned methodologist who has particular experience in your chosen method of data analysis, it can be easy to rely on him or her to answer any questions that might arise about your proposal during presentation. However, I have sat uncomfortably through many awkward silences and bouts of stammering during dissertation proposals when a tricky methodology question is asked, and the methodologist turns to the student expecting an answer. In my experience, students who can confidently answer methodology questions tend to be more Continued on page 5
Student Perspectives Column - continued

successful in dissertation proposals, and I would venture to guess that they go on to be just as successful in their subsequent dissertation defenses and any subsequent job talks. Students gain methodological understanding and confidence by locating quality texts that explain their methodology fully, including works in counseling-related peer reviewed journals. A comprehensive understanding of your methodology, along with confidence in the knowledge that your chosen methodology has been used and published, will help pave the way for a successful dissertation proposal.

2) Love Your Research Idea
I have witnessed many doctoral student colleagues search for or settle on a dissertation topic that appears to be easy, quick, and/or most publishable. However, despite their best efforts and intentions, the road to a completed, defended, and published dissertation can be long and often tedious, regardless of the topic chosen. You will need the passion and drive to push through the days when you feel overwhelmed by it all, or just when you encounter the natural slog of writing a book-length research paper. Or you may need this passion to get you through an uncomfortable debate with a committee member who wants you to do things differently than you would like in your dissertation research—I have seen doctoral students change the mind of experts in the field just with their passion for and knowledge of their research idea. If the passion for the topic is not there to carry you through the dissertation grind, what seemed like a quick idea in the beginning could instead turn into an extended stay in ABD (all but dissertation) limbo.

3) Stack the Deck in Your Favor
Invite experts in your chosen research area to serve on your committee or to participate in the dissertation process. While they may be intimidating at first, experts will quickly be able to fill in any gaps you may have in your literature review and research idea, directing you to the most pertinent citations and resources, and ultimately making your dissertation—and your own knowledgebase—that much stronger. Also, it is not a bad idea to have on your desk at all times a copy of a dissertation that was successfully defended at your university and/or under the direction of your dissertation advisor or chairperson. Ideally you can find a dissertation that has successfully used your chosen methodology, too. These dissertations are models of success that can help you with any formatting and structuring issues, and serve as a guide to necessary dissertation content that you know your chair has looked for in the past.

4) Begin with the End in Mind
While successfully defending your dissertation feels like the end goal, you also likely want your dissertation to be accepted for publication. Before starting the dissertation process, identify target journals where you hope to later see your work in print, and keep their publication guidelines in mind when drafting your dissertation. Yes, there will be some publication requirements that conflict with your dissertation requirements, but knowing those as you go along will make the transition of your dissertation into a publication manuscript that much easier.
Special Editor Column:

Are we ready for an Assessment Credential?

By Gabriel I. Lomas, Ph.D., LPC, NCC, RPT-S

Our parent organization, the American Counseling Association (ACA), defines counseling as “a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals,” (ACA, 2010). Licensed counselors work with clients in a professional relationship to advance various domains of their lives. How we accomplish that is rooted in research and is evident in counselor education programs across the nation. The research that comprises the core of counselor education training has been organized by the Council on the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and forms the standards for the preparation of master’s and doctoral counselors, as well as counselor educators and supervisors. The 2009 CACREP training standards have eight core areas that form counselor professional identity: (1) Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice, (2) Social and Cultural Diversity, (3) Human Growth and Development, (4) Career Development, (5) Helping Relationships, (6) Group Work, (7) Assessment, and (8) Research and Program Evaluation. CACREP accredited counseling programs offer one or more areas of concentration for students

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Special Editor Column - continued

including: (1) Addictions Counseling, (2) Career Counseling, (3) Clinical Mental Health Counseling, (4) Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling, (5) School Counseling, and (6) Student Affairs and College Counseling.

Frequently, licensed counselors specialize in one or more of the CACREP core areas. For example, some counselors specialize in counseling children, assessment, group counseling, school counseling, or addictions counseling. Those who specialize in particular areas often join one or more of the ACA divisions which match their area of specialty. Additionally, the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), an independent entity which certifies counselors, offers three specialty certificates: The Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor (CCMHC), the National Certified School Counselor (NCSC), and the Master Addictions Counselor (MAC). These certificates are add-on certificates for individuals who are Nationally Certified Counselors (NCC) through the NBCC.

In the May 2012 issue of Counseling Today, ACA President Don Locke wrote about counselor specialization in his From the President column. While Dr. Locke stressed the importance of unity among counselors, he also challenged “accreditation groups and counselor training institutions to combine efforts to…determine levels of true specialization that exist beyond the existing ‘concentration’ levels,” (p. 53). His column encouraged us to examine what is currently offered to students, and work to grow in specialization. Specializations certainly are growing, as we have recently seen the emergence of two new ACA divisions, bringing the current total number of divisions to 20.

In 2012, our division was renamed from the Association for Assessment in Counseling and Education to the Association for Assessment in Research and Counseling (AARC), reflecting the commitment of this division to scholarship. Members of the AARC tend to value assessment, research, measurement, and statistics. However, for members who use assessment in their practice, there is no credential to identify one as a qualified evaluator. Many of our leaders advocate tirelessly for equity for access to standardized instruments for counselors. A forthcoming study by Peterson, Lomas, Neukrug, and Bonner (in press) reported that counselors are using instruments, usually consistent with their areas of specialty. However, exactly how counselors are using instruments remains unclear. In casual conversations I’ve had with colleagues, it appears that some counselors are using standardized instruments for a variety of reasons such as clinical diagnosis for treatment planning or billing, and high-stakes situations such as child custody and criminal justice. In situations where counselors use their expertise for high-stakes decisions, counselors should have experienced significant training in assessment including administration, interpretation, and reporting. However, credentials such as the LPC, CCMHC, NCC, or other credentials don’t clearly identify this specialty.

Perhaps it is time for us to examine the possibility of developing a credential that identifies one’s specialty in assessment. Identifying counselors who are competent users of standardized instruments, non-standardized instruments, and other assessment techniques may help rectify significant gaps in the field for counselors.

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Test Review Column:

Asian American Values Scales - Multidimensional

By Christie Thanasack, Boston University School of Medicine

General Information

Title: Asian American Values Scale – Multidimensional (AAVS-M)

Authors: Bryan S. K. Kim, Lisa C. Li, and Gladys F. Ng

Publisher: Available from the author Bryan S. K. Kim, Professor and Director, MA Program in Counseling Psychology, Department of Psychology, University of Hawai‘i at Hilo, 200 W. Kawili Street, Hilo, Hawaii 96720-4091. Telephone: (808) 947-7439. Fax: (808) 947-7737. Email: bryankim@hawaii.edu.

Date of publication: 2005

Forms, groups to which applicable: This is the first edition of the AAVS-M. The AAVS-M was based upon the Asian Values Scale (AVS) and the Asian Values Scale – Revised (AVS-R) and expanded upon these earlier scales (Kim, Atkinson, & Yang, 1999; Kim & Hong, 2004). While the AVS and AVS-R are uni-dimensional measures of Asian values that are used to assess the level of enculturation, the AAVS-M is designed as an improvement on these instruments and is applicable to adult men and women who identify as Asian American.

General Type: The instrument is a multidimensional measure of ethnic cultural values in Asian American individuals.

Practical features: The test

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**AAVS-M Review - continued**

instrument is short at 42 items and the scoring can be done by hand. Additionally, the test is free to users. It is a multidimensional measure of five of the six value dimensions found to underlie these scales; consequently the AAVS-M has five subscales.

**Cost**: The test and scoring instructions can be obtained for free from the author, Bryan S. K. Kim. Permission must be obtained before the test is copied or distributed.

**Time required to administer**: This is not a timed test. On average it takes individuals 15 minutes to complete the assessment.

**Purpose and Nature of the Instrument**

**Stated Purpose**: The instrument assesses the adherence to five traditional Asian ethnic values of Collectivism, Conformity to Norms, Emotional Self-Control, Family Recognition, and Humility.

The scale was developed to assess adherence to Asian values, and consequently enculturation, and its relationship with other constructs, such as help-seeking behavior.

**Description of test items and scoring**: The AAVS-M is a 42-item instrument. Individuals are asked to indicate on a scale of 1 to 7 how much they disagree or agree with a statement, with 1 being “Strongly Disagree” and 7 being “Strongly Agree.” Statements cover the five value dimensions: (1) Collectivism (e.g. “One’s personal needs should be second to the needs of the group.”), (2) Conformity to Norms (e.g. “One should adhere to the values, beliefs, and behaviors that one’s society considers normal and acceptable.”), (3) Emotional Self-Control (e.g. “It is more important to behave appropriately than to act on what one is feeling.”), (4) Family Recognition Through Achievement (e.g. “One’s achievement and status reflect on the whole family.”), and (5) Humility (e.g. “One should not openly talk about one’s accomplishments.”). The five value dimensions constitute the five subscales (Kim, Li, & Ng, 2005).

The instrument is scored using a set of brief instructions. The instructions specify the 13 items that are reverse-scored. Instructions are also given on how to convert raw scores to scale scores. Scale scores are obtained for the total score and for each of the subscales. These scale scores are interpreted by comparing them to Likert-type anchors, so that a higher score indicates that the individual adheres more strongly with the value identified by the subscale, while a lower score indicates that the individual adheres less strongly to that value.

**Practical Evaluation**

**Adequacy of directions, training required to administer**: The directions are concise and direct. No special training is required to administer the instrument, although it is recommended that administrators of the AAVS-M study the article by Kim, Li, and Ng (2005) to become familiar with the process of scale development.

**Technical Considerations**

**Norms and Scoring**: While the instrument was developed using Asian American individuals, normative data is not available for this instrument. The consequence is that an individual’s scores cannot be compared to those of other Asian Americans, for example with a percentile rank, to determine how much they adhere to the traditional values in relation to others. According to the author, the scale was not developed to diagnose or evaluate individuals, and thus such norms are not needed.

**Adequacy of norms**: Although the instrument is not normed, the samples used by the authors to generate the value dimensions and to test reliability and

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validity can be evaluated. An exploratory factor analysis for the AVS found six factors, including the five identified earlier and the additional factor: Filial Piety (Kim, Atkinson, & Yang, 1999). The authors conducted a national survey of Asian American psychologists (identified by their surnames) and received responses from seventy-five individuals, which were then used to generate items in the preliminary instrument. Thus, one may conclude that a strength of the instrument is that the authors consulted with experts in the field to help generate valid statements; yet it is important to note that the authors failed to expand the sample to include the general population that will be assessed with the scale. It is recommended that the authors develop a normative sample with a broader sample of the Asian American population.

Reliability: Three studies were conducted to look at reliability. In Study 1, coefficient alphas for internal reliability were reported for the AAVS-M total score and the subscales of Collectivism, Conformity to Norms, Emotional Self-Control, Family Recognition Through Achievement, and Humility, which ranged from .79 to .90. Study 2 also examined internal reliability and found similar coefficient alphas ranging from .75 to .90. Study 3 examined test-retest reliability by having participants return after two weeks to complete the questionnaire. The authors found that test-retest reliability coefficients for the AAVS-M total and subscales ranged from .76 to .92. Regarding the internal validity reported in Study 3, the authors also found coefficient alphas of .80 to .92 at Time 1. Two weeks later, at Time 2, the authors reported coefficient alphas ranging from .86 to .95. Overall, the total score and subscale scores displayed acceptable to excellent internal reliability.

Validity: Study 1 examined concurrent and discriminant validity. Of notes was was that a positive correlation with the 36 item AVS, upon which the AAVS-M was based, was found by the authors. Significant positive correlations were found between the AAVS-M total score and subscales, and the AVS. The authors predicted and reported a negative correlation with the AAVS-M and the Attitudes Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale – Short Form (ATSPPH-SF), which is based on Kim and Omizo’s (2003) findings that adherence to Asian values is correlated with less positive help-seeking behavior. For discriminant validity, the authors found a lack of a significant relationship between the AAVS-M and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), which was expected, as there should be no relationship between adherence to values and self-esteem. The authors used an alpha level of .0014 and determined correlation coefficients to be statistically significant above .23. Study 2 looked further at concurrent and discriminant validity with a number of other instruments such as the Loss of Face scale (LOF) and the Willingness to See a Counselor (WSC). Here, they used an alpha level of .0004 and determined correlation coefficients above .24 to be statistically significant. Generally, then, the scale has good concurrent and discriminant validity.

Study 2 examined construct validity for the AAVS-M total score and subscale scores by conducting confirmatory factor analyses. They used a hypothesized model and compared it to two other competing models. The authors reported that the hypothesized model, in which the value dimensions constitute a primary Asian cultural values construct, was an acceptable fit for the data.

Summary of Reliability and Validity: Participants used to test reliability and validity were diverse in terms of ethnicity, gender, level of education, generation since immigration, languages, religions, socioeconomic status, and geographic residence. Ethnicities included Asian Indian, Korean, Chinese, Filipino, multiracial, Taiwanese, Vietnamese, Japanese, Cambodian, Indonesian, Laotian, Pakistani, and others. 

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AAVS-M Review - continued

Despite these diverse samples, several limitations exist. One limitation is that for some ethnicities, such as Laotian, there was only one participant. A second limitation is that the samples were drawn from East and West coast college populations. A third limitation is that the samples used in the studies were small with N=163, N=189, and N=38 for studies 1, 2, and 3, respectively. Therefore, the results may not generalize well to the non-college populations or to ethnicities that had less representation in the samples. Therefore, results should be interpreted with caution, as not all Asian ethnic groups may share the values identified, place the same level of importance on these values, or even conceptualize these values in the same manner. Nonetheless, in the counseling setting this scale can be used as a starting point from which to conceptualize an Asian American individual’s worldview.

Cross-cultural fairness: The scale was also developed to assess the values of a variety of Asian ethnic groups with different experiences and therefore may be considered cross-cultural in that regard. However, this instrument was developed specifically for the U.S. Asian American population, so it may not be suited for use with other populations or in non-U.S. countries. Nevertheless, this test may be applicable to Asian populations in other Western countries, due to shared cultural heritages, yet further studies are needed to evaluate if this scale can be used in these settings.

Evaluation

Practicality: The AAVS-M comprises two pages, contains clear and concise directions, and provides one page of simple scoring instructions. The brevity of the instrument and its free cost make it a practical instrument to use when working with Asian American individuals. It is important to note that currently the only way to obtain the AAVS-M is by contacting the authors. An important limitation of the AAVS-M is that the instrument has not yet been normed with children or adolescents, so caution is advised when using the measure with these populations. Additionally, so far the instrument is available only in English. This lack of language diversity could be a concern as individuals in the Asian American population have varying levels of English proficiency. Care is advised when using the measure with first generation Asian Americans or with individuals not fluent in English.

Aids to user: At this time, no test manual is available for this instrument. Users are referred to the Kim, Li, & Ng (2005) article for information on psychometrics. However, the author, Bryan S. K. Kim, was available by email to answer questions pertaining to the instrument. The ability to contact the author directly is very useful and is the most important aid available.

The AAVS-M is a useful instrument for identifying the Asian ethnic values held by Asian American individuals and the extent to which they adhere to these values. In an increasingly multicultural and multiethnic society, multiculturally competent counselors should strongly consider this tool in understanding their clients and to help clients gain insights into themselves.

References

AARC at 2013 ACA Conference!!

Another successful annual conference was held in Cincinnati! We hope to see you next year if you missed it!
Test Review Column:

State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) - Form X

By Caitlin Orfeo, The Ohio State University

General Information

Title: State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) Form X

Authors: Charles D. Spielberger, Richard L. Gorsuch, and Robert E. Lushene

Publisher: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc.

Date of Publication: 1970

Forms: The STAI is a paper-and-pencil self reports for state anxiety (A-state) and trait anxiety (A-Trait). It may be administered to individuals or groups and is appropriate for: adults; high school and college students; and neuropsychiatric, medical, and surgical patients. No specific age ranges for appropriate examinees are provided.

General Type: The STAI was originally designed for research purposes, but is also appropriate for use in clinical settings. It provides individuals with a score for anxiety responses to specific situations and also measures anxiety proneness as a stable personality trait.

Practical features: The test is short and should be self-administered. Instructions are printed at the top of the form, and are clear and easy to follow. Test administrators are advised to also read the instructions aloud, and to allow participants to ask questions before beginning.

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STAI Review - continued

Cost: The manual can be purchased from various websites for $40.00 USD, and the license to use can be purchased in chunks of 50 administrations, ranging from $100.00 for 50 administrations to $360.00 for 500 administrations (mindgarden.com/products/staisad.htm#ms). Alternatively, the manual can be purchased with 25 questionnaires for $95.00 (Multi-Health Systems).

Time required to administer: There is no time limit, although the manual indicates that most individuals will complete both questionnaires in approximately 15 to 20 minutes, depending on level of education and emotional wellbeing.

Purpose and Nature of the Instrument
Stated Purpose: To evaluate anxiety-responsiveness to certain situations, and anxiety-proneness as an enduring trait.

Description of test items and scoring: A-Trait scale: 20 statements describing how the individual feels generally. A-State scale: 20 statements describing “how they feel at a particular moment in time.” Individuals are asked to rate each statement on a scale of 1-4 indicating their level of agreement with the statement.

Practical evaluation
Adequacy of directions, training required to administer: Directions are provided mostly in the form of suggestions, not requirements, which could lead to inconsistencies in administration methods. However, the exam is fairly simple and straightforward to complete, with participants rating each statement on a scale of 1 to 4. There is no training or educational requirements dictating who is qualified to administer the exam.

Technical Considerations

Norms and Scoring: The norming groups consisted of college and high school students, male psychiatric patients, general medical and surgical patients, and young prisoners. Possible scores for both the A-State and A-Trait subscales range from 20 to 80, with a higher score indicating higher anxiety. Of the total items, 10 items on the A-State scale and 7 items on the A-Trait scale are reverse-scored. Scoring can be done by hand with a template for adding point values or by recording answers on an IBM answer sheet and using a computer program to score.

Adequacy of norms: The manual states, “while the STAI norms are not based on representative or stratified samples, the information that is provided makes it possible to compare scores obtained by selected experimental groups and by individual clients or patients with important reference groups.” Given the extremely specific nature of norming groups used, this conclusion seems questionable. Still, the STAI is a well-established test of anxiety and has, in fact, been supported by numerous research studies.

Reliability: Test-retest reliability for Form X of the STAI is listed for the A-Trait scale as ranging from .73 or .86, which demonstrates fairly strong reliability. Test-retest reliability for the A-State scale is listed as ranging from .16 to .54, with a median $r$ of .32. This low correlation reflects the highly variable nature of state anxiety, as subjects experienced either stress-inducing or stress-reducing stimuli in between test administrations. The KR-20 was also used to provide Alpha coefficients for internal reliability, with reliability coefficients ranging from .83 to .92 for both A-State and A-Trait.

Validity: The manual provides a comprehensive description of state and trait anxiety, and the questionnaires intuitively measure each of these. Scores on the STAI were compared with scores on the IPAT Anxiety Scale, the Taylor Manifest Anxiety

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Test Review Column:

Review of the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – Fourth Edition

By Anna Robinson, Boston University

General Information

Title: Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – Fourth Edition (WAIS-IV)

Author: David Wechsler

Publisher: Pearson

Date of publication: 1939-1997; 2008

Forms, groups to which applicable: The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS) has been revised many times since its origin as the Wechsler-Bellvue Intelligence Scale in 1939 (Coalson & Weiss, 2002). In 1955, the test became known as the WAIS and the WAIS-revised came out in 1981, followed by the WAIS-III in 1997, and finally the WAIS-IV in 2008 (Glass, Ryan & Charter, 2010). The current version is used to assess cognitive ability in individuals between the ages of 16 and 90 (Pearson).

Practical features: The WAIS-IV is a paper-and-pencil test consisting of 10 core subtests and five supplemental subtests divided into four cognitive skills categories: Verbal Comprehension, Perceptual reasoning, Working Memory, and Processing Speed (Schraw, 2010). The subtests are administered in a prescribed order described clearly in the 258-page administration and scoring manual.

General type: The WAIS-IV is an intelligence test comprised of 15

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WAIS Review - continued

subtests, ten of which combine to yield a full IQ score (Glass, et. al., 2010).

Cost: The most basic WAIS-IV kit costs $1,145.00. It includes the administration and scoring manual, technical manual, two stimulus books, 25 record forms, 25 copies each of response booklets #1 and #2, symbol search scoring key, coding scoring key, cancellation scoring templates, and nine block design cubes (Pearson, 2012).

Scoring services available and cost: Scoring can be done by hand or through the WAIS-IV Scoring Assistant and WAIS-IV Report Writer, with a cost of $289.00 and $489.00 respectively (Pearson, 2012).

Time required: According to the Pearson website product information, administration of the test takes 60-90 minutes for core subtests (Pearson, 2012).

Purpose and Nature of the Instrument

Stated purpose: The WAIS-IV is designed to assess the cognitive ability of adult and teenage populations. It is often used as a means for educational planning and placement, but it can also be used to assess intellectual functioning in individuals with known or suspected brain damage or cognitive impairment.

Description of test items and scoring: The WAIS-IV consists of 10 core subtests (similarities, vocabulary, information, block design, matrix reasoning, visual puzzles, digit span, arithmetic, coding, and symbol search) divided into four indexes: Verbal Comprehension, Perceptual Reasoning, Working Memory, and Processing Speed. The test also contains five supplemental subtests (comprehension, figure weights, picture completion, letter-number sequencing, and cancellation) that can be administered to provide additional information, and can be substituted for one of the ten core subtests, in accordance with instructions in the Administration and Scoring Manual (Glass, et. al., 2010). The ten core subtests are used to produce The Full Scale IQ (FSIQ). The General Ability Index (GAI) is calculated from the six subtests in the verbal comprehension and perceptual reasoning indexes. Index scores and subtest level scaled scores are also available (Canivez, 2010).

Adequacy of directions, training required to administer: The WAIS-IV requires C-level training to administer. Part of the revision process of the WAIS-IV was to decrease administration time, revise instructions and redesign record forms to increase the ease-of-use (Pearson, 2012). Administration guidelines and detailed scoring rules are stated clearly in the Administration and Scoring Manual (Schraw).

Practical Evaluation

Practicality: The WAIS-IV is considered time and labour intensive to administer, score, and interpret. For this reason, Schraw recommends its use in situations where high-stakes decisions need to be made. However, if the time is taken to administer the test, modifications such as additional demonstration and teaching items to ensure understanding of tasks, as well as reduced vocabulary level for verbal instructions, renders the test easier to administer and more developmentally appropriate across all potential populations.

Technical Considerations

Norms and Scoring: Scoring can be done by hand using the scoring keys provided, the WAIS-IV Scoring Assistant, or the WAIS-IV Report Writer software at an additional cost. Subtest scaled scores for 13 age groupings were obtained using a “method of inferential norming” in which means, standard deviations, and skewness were examined (Canivez). The norming group for the current revision of the Continued on page 17
The WAIS was selected to be sensitive to changing cultural demographics, including an aging and increasingly diverse population (Pearson). However, according to Canivez, the norming tables for computing factor index and FISQ scores when supplemental subscales are used in place of core subtests were missing from the statistical report of the revision.

Adequacy of norms: The extensive norming data provided, as well as the large and nationally representative standardization sample, is one of the notable strengths of the WAIS-IV. It was normed with a sample of 2200 individuals and stratified proportionally to the US population (using the October 2005 U.S. Census) according to age, sex, race/ethnicity, education level, and geographic region (Canivez). When norming the WAIS-IV, 200 examinees were used for all age bands between the ages of 16 and 69, while 100 examinees were used for each group between the ages of 70 and 90. Currently, exclusionary criteria are provided for individuals in regards to language, sensory impairments and communication limitations, decreased motor performance, and current medications or physical illnesses that may affect cognitive performance.

Reliability: There are three types of reliability estimates reported in the WAIS-IV technical and interpretive manual: internal consistency, test-retest reliability, and inter-scorer reliability. Internal consistency estimates ranged from .97-.98 for the FSIQ, from .87-.98 for the factor index scores, and from .71-.96 for individual subtests (Canivez). Test-retest reliability for 298 individuals across four age groups was examined through retest intervals ranging between 8-82 days. Coefficients were considered good in all cases, ranging from .70 to close to 0.90 (Schraw). Inter-scorer agreement was tested by comparing the standardization record forms of two independent scorers. Agreement was excellent, ranging from .98-.99. Additional examination was done for tests where scorer judgement was involved and used 60 randomly selected cases. Independent scores from three examiners were compared for four subtests and resultant correlation coefficients were in the .91-.97 range. In general, across all areas, reliability for the WAIS-IV was excellent.

Validity: Validity for the WAIS-IV was determined using several methods. To test for construct validity, a variety of confirmatory factor analyses compared six different structural models. Results supported the current four-factor model with verbal comprehension, perceptual reasoning, working memory, and processing speed subscores (Schraw). A criticism of this analysis, however, is that while the Technical and Interpretive Manual presents confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), it fails to include explanatory factor analysis (EFA), which is contrary to recommended procedure (Canivez). In regards to criterion-related validity, the WAIS-IV subscales have been correlated with several other tests, including the WAIS-III, the Wechsler Intelligence scale for Children-Fourth Edition (WISC-IV), and Brown Attention Deficit Disorder Test (Brown ADD). Correlation with the WAIS-III and the WISC-IV ranged around .80, which indicated convergent validity. In contrast, WAIS-IV scores were negatively correlated with Brown ADD scales, which provided evidence of discriminant validity (Schraw). High correlations with the Weschler Individual Achievement Test-Second Edition (WAIT-II) indicated strong concurrent relationships with academic achievement measure. Test content validity was also evidenced by increased correlation between subtests within the same domain when compared with other subtests from a different domain (Canivez).

Evaluation
Cross-Cultural Fairness: With a large norming population, evidence of good reliability and validity, exclusionary criteria for some populations, and a
WAIS Review - continued

sample reflective of the U.S. population, the WAIS-IV appears to be cross-culturally fair.

Comments of reviewer: The WAIS-IV seems to be well researched and possess strong evidence for its efficacy, and that it is the most frequently administered intelligence test for adolescents and adults adds to its high status in the mental health community. However, there are areas that could use improvement in future revisions.

There is an apparent absence of critical analysis and data to guide the interpretation of different available scores. For instance, the information that is given (common strengths and weaknesses in normal subjects, information guiding clinicians to an inference about profile differences, and a recommendation for outside corroboration) has been shown to be invalid and unreliable in several research studies (Canivez). More background information, rationale, and evidence needs to be provided for each recommended interpretation and use of test scores. A possible solution for this would be to make all data available to independent researchers, who could then conduct a more comprehensive analysis of scores and interpretations.

Another criticism of the WAIS-IV is that it measures primarily academic or “left-brain” intelligences. The test focuses on traditional cognitive abilities, but fails to include areas of social, kinesthetic, interpersonal, and emotional intelligence. It is advisable that clinicians be mindful of the limitations of these limitations of the WAIS-IV and make recommendations based on its results accordingly.

References


A Review of the AA VS-M - continued

A Review of the STAI - continued
Scale, and the Zuckerman Affect Adjective Checklist, General Form. Correlation for these comparisons ranged from .41 to .84, with significantly less correlation with the Affect Adjective Checklist, General Form, than with the other three tests. Multiple studies also demonstrated that scores on the state anxiety questionnaire vary as expected between control conditions and those exposed either to stressful stimuli or relaxing stimuli.

Cross-cultural fairness: The STAI was normed on the very specific populations of: high school and college students; male psychiatric patients; general medical and surgical patients; and young prisoners. No racial, cultural, or socioeconomic information is provided for any of these norming samples, nor is it included in any of the follow-up research discussed. There is no discussion of how culture could impact the interpretation and experiencing of anxiety.

Evaluation
Practicality: The State-Trait Anxiety Inventory is short and a straightforward way for individuals to self-report on their anxiety. The questionnaires for state anxiety and trait anxiety may be used together or separately.

Aids to use: The STAI manual provides a fairly comprehensive discussion of what exactly is meant by state and trait anxiety, and the questionnaires clearly examine how an individual experiences anxiety in a given situation (state anxiety) or in general (trait anxiety).

Reference

Student Perspectives Column - continued

Special Editor Column - continued
For example, counselors with this credential might be sought out by counselor education programs to teach courses in assessment. Those with an assessment credential might enjoy easier access to instruments which are currently difficult to obtain by counselors. Finally, counselors with an assessment credential might be recognized as experts in settings where we have struggled for recognition, such as civil and criminal courts across our country. I believe it is time we heed the call of Past-President Don Locke and develop “true” specialization in assessment for counselors.

References
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The mission of AARC is to promote and recognize scholarship, professionalism, leadership, and excellence in the development and use of assessment and diagnostic techniques in counseling.

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Call for Submissions

If you have any information related to the activities of AARC members that you think should be highlighted, we want to hear from you! Please submit a Microsoft Word file with a writing style that is consistent with the APA 6th edition style.

Student Perspectives Section

Submissions should highlight issues related to the process of research proposal development; topics related to research design, dissertation writing, and presentation of research; perspectives on assessment use among counselors, particularly related to training and professional development in using assessment measures; experiences with finding funding support and writing small grants; as well as locating and participating in professional development activities related to the AARC mission. Submissions should range between 500-800 words and clearly indicate a student-based perspective on the topic featured. Feel free to contact Caroline O’Hara with questions.

Test Review Section

Submissions should highlight an assessment instrument that would be useful to counselors or counselor educators. Submissions should range between 2 to 4 pages. Feel free to contact Jeffrey Sullivan with questions.

AARC Newsnotes

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