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## Considerations Regarding Psychological Testing

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Psychological testing, even if it represents one of the most commonly known activities of Psychology, is facing a turning point in our times. More precisely, we observe that psychological testing has come to a phase in which it has to prove that it's a trustworthy instrument of knowledge and understanding of the human being.

There are even practitioners divided into two main camps: one which bases it's rationing on including psychological testing results and continuously works on improving this method's reliability and one which includes specialists whose practical experience has lead them to consider that there is no test capable of correctly predicting human behavior, whether we speak of clinical or vocational matters, for instance.

We start our argument by taking both sides into consideration but without generalizing any of them; in other words, we consider that in order to obtain performance in our endeavors, both scientifically and practically, we need to find a balance between highly standardized data and qualitative information extracted from each person we interact with. This is a manner in which scientific rigor can be placed in the beneficiary's context.

Psychological tests have come to a long-term tradition of being utilized for several purposes, starting with Simon-Binet's work (1916) which responded to the need of understanding and answering the need of identifying children who suffered from intellectual delay but had to benefit from education (Urbina, 2014).

As expected, since that moment, psychological testing has greatly evolved and expanded towards all of Psychology's domains of application included in the three main sections of education, health and industry (Kaplan, Saccuzo, 2012) but also research (Urbina, 2014).

As expected, all such domains come with their own specifics regarding the purpose, settings and even perceived effects of the psychological testing (as can be consulted in Kline, 2013). For instance, clinical psychology is associated to several special aspects when it comes to

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psychological testing; as Brown, Ishiyama and Scheibe (1967) show, test barriers may be applied to the patients regularly as a routine or as a result of suspicions regarding the patient, which have to be further explored; the authors also emphasize that psychological tests in the clinical context may have an impact on the patient as one is forced to looking into their own inner world and face content which may have not been previously explored.

If we are to remain in the medical field with our discussion, we should mention that psychological tests have been proven to be as valid as medical investigations (Meyer et al., 2001). The same study also makes several statements which we find to be consistent with our view regarding psychological testing; thus, clinicians should not draw their conclusions solely on interviewing patients as they would be exposed to investigative errors and each available source of information has its own benefits and unrepeatability.

A field highly related to clinical psychology, as they share a strong common ground, is forensic psychology (Otto & Heilbrun, 2002). There are authors claiming that it is critical for lawyers, attorneys and judges to have knowledge and understand the specifics of the scientific principles behind psychological testing (Medoff, 2003) in order to share the same specialized language with expert witnesses.

Such principles regard the test's psychometric characteristics, the validity and falsifiability of the theory it's based on, along with ethical considerations regarding the use and application of the psychological tests and the obtained data (Kaplan & Saccuzo, 2012; Clawson, 2007).

Another major field of applying psychological testing is the industrial one which includes variations regarding vocational aspects, namely deciding whether a person is or isn't fit for being employed in a certain position. Perhaps one of the most popular and intensively researched dimension is the personality, as a wide volume of scientific work has been dedicated to it (see McCrae & Costa, 1987; Cohen & Swerdlik, 2002; Goodstein & Lanyon, 1999; Ott, Longnecker, & Ott, 2001).

Personality, although a complex and fascinating dimension, is not the only one which may be explored through psychological testing within the organizational field and according to its purposes. Thus, specific processes may be efficiently evaluated, such as time of reaction (Aniței, Schuhfried & Chraif, 2011), driving skills (Aniței et al. 2011), modalities of accomplishing memory tasks (Chraif et al, 2014), to name just a few.

Before concluding, we should mention that both professionals and the general public should be able to notice the difference between psychological testing and assessment (Urbina, 2014). While psychological testing is mostly an instrument, namely they contribute to obtaining a result (description) and are separate from the result itself, the psychological assessment is the process of exploring a person's reality (the dimension we are interested in). Assessment includes

both qualitative and quantitative data (Haynes, Richard & Kubany, 1995) and represents the process in which test results are placed into context, correlated – sometimes amplified or settled by information extracted from the person's own experience, together with the psychologist's competences of observation; psychological assessment is an area of activity which blends rigor and personal abilities with the purpose of understanding human behavior (Krefting, 1991; Groth-Marnat, 2009).

We strongly support each Psychology practitioner, regardless of their field of expertise, to come to terms with psychological testing, the principles, guidelines and methodology suitable to its development and applicability. Psychological testing, as shown, can be one of the most powerful ways of completing, finding depth or un-noticed courses needed to be approached by the Psychologist. There is not one method that we should restrain our approach to, as both quantitative and qualitative ways of knowledge are valuable for the practitioner and researcher.

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