

—Robert J. Drummond—

APPRAISAL PROCEDURES

for
Counselors
and
Helping Professionals



—Third Edition—

Appraisal Procedures for Counselors and Helping Professionals

THIRD EDITION

Robert J. Drummond

University of North Florida



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To those who have inspired and guided me:

my mother

my father

my wife, Gloria

my daughters, Robin and Heather

my brother, Paul

my doctoral advisor, Robert L. Thorndike

Preface

The purpose of this text is to help current and future workers in the helping professions to become better consumers of psychological and educational tests and assessment procedures. First of all, users need to know the philosophical and ethical principles that relate to the field of testing. Second, they need to know when tests should be used and why. Third, they need to know how to locate and select the most valid and reliable instruments to aid in their decision making. Fourth, they need to know how to interpret and report test and assessment results. They need to be alert to the standards developed by various professional organizations and designed as guidelines for test authors and test users.

A systems approach was used to organize the knowledge base and the basic skills and competencies needed by test users. The book focuses on seven components.

1. Models for test use and selection. The first chapter presents a framework for conceptualizing when to use tests and why. It includes some dimensions of the historical, philosophical, and social backgrounds of the testing movement. It also introduces accountability and the competency-based movement, as well as the basic skills and competencies that test administrators and examiners must master.
2. Basic competencies needed. Chapters 2 through 6 identify the basic measurement, statistical, and research skills needed to select, administer, and interpret tests and assessment information.
3. Types of tests and assessment procedures. Chapters 7 through 15 introduce the different types of tests and assessment techniques that are commonly used in the helping professions. This portion of the text covers the assessment of learn-

ing and cognitive styles and the testing of intelligence, aptitude, interest, and personality. Assessment of the environment and development of the test taker are also discussed. The traditional pencil-and-paper tests and inventories are discussed, as are projective tests, situational tests, and the use of behavioral observation.

4. Alternate measurement and appraisal techniques. Chapter 16 focuses on computer-assisted and adaptive testing. Chapter 17 concerns the movement toward alternate and authentic assessment.
5. Testing special populations. Chapters 18 through 21 focus on appraisal procedures and techniques, as well as issues, for working with different special populations, such as clients with disabilities, multicultural groups, test clients with anxiety, and school systems.
6. Communicating test results. Chapter 22 presents strategies for communicating test results to clients, parents, and other professionals, and Chapter 23 looks at guidelines for writing test reports.
7. Current issues and trends. Chapter 24 presents the legal and ethical standards concerned with testing that helping professionals need to know. The final chapter, Chapter 25, recapitulates some of the major trends and issues introduced in the text and predicts some future directions.

CHANGES IN THE THIRD EDITION

Since the second edition was published, there have been major revisions of some tests, such as the Millon, Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, and WPPSI, and some major new tests have been published. There are many new sources of information available on testing. Many computer versions of tests and interpretative reports are now available to test users. Also, professional organizations have looked more closely at the qualifications and competencies needed by test users. This new edition provides an update on current issues and thinking on testing.

Three chapters have been added to expand the scope of the text: Chapter 24 deals with the legal and ethical issues in testing, Chapter 17 considers alternate and authentic assessment, and Chapter 19 covers working with multicultural groups. Additional issues, such as those raised by the Commission on Fair Testing Practices, are discussed in the relevant chapters. New reference sources have been added to guide further study on the topics, and case studies on the issues are presented in each chapter.

The chapters on disseminating test results and consulting with parents, teachers, and professionals have been combined into one chapter, Chapter 22. The chapter on interviewing and observational techniques has been expanded to include alternate and authentic assessment. Material on employment testing is now included in Chapter 10. Information on mental health testing is now included in Chapter 12. The order of the chapters has been changed so that statistical concepts are presented

before measurement concepts, and test administration is discussed before test interpretation.

STRUCTURE OF THE TEXT

Each chapter has a similar format. A chapter overview is followed by learning objectives and a discussion of the topics related to those objectives. A brief summary is included in each chapter, in addition to discussion questions, suggested activities, case studies, and additional readings. Publishers whose tests are cited in the text are listed in Appendix B, and key terms are defined in the Glossary. Separate indexes are provided for topics, tests, and authors.

I have avoided evaluative critiques of most of the tests cited. Most are widely used and accepted in the field. The reader is encouraged to consider the critical reviews of the tests in the *Mental Measurements Yearbooks*, *Test Critiques*, or professional journals. Selection decisions should be situationally specific rather than generalized; tests should have demonstrated validity for the proposed use. A myriad of tests are available in almost all areas. The annotated lists included in the text are not exhaustive, nor do they represent all the exemplary tests in the field. Their purpose is to indicate the range and scope of tests in each area. The text attempts to encourage the reader's curiosity and interest and stimulate further investigation, research, reading, and experimentation to broaden knowledge, skills, and competencies in measurement and evaluation.

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Robert J. Drummond

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CHAPTER 1

Models for Test Use and Selection

Overview

Decision makers want to use their best judgment and appropriate information that is both relevant and accurate. Sometimes certain tests can be identified that will provide this information. Most standardized tests require objective observation and assessment of behavior under controlled conditions. Standards guide the selection, administration, and interpretation of tests.

Objectives

The chapter should enable the reader to

- discuss the steps in a decision-making model
- identify the purposes for giving tests
- list the competencies required of test users
- explain the social, philosophical, and historical foundations of the testing movement as well as some of the current issues

DECISION-MAKING MODEL

In a three-step decision-making model the first step is preparation, which involves

1. specifying the judgments and decisions to be made

2. describing the information needed
3. locating the information already available in files or records
4. deciding what information is needed and when and how this information can be obtained
5. selecting data-gathering instruments and tests to be used and reviewing the instruments for validity, reliability, usability, and interpretability

The second step of the decision-making process is data collection, which involves

1. securing the information needed through testing, observation, and other appropriate methods
2. recording, analyzing, and interpreting the information

The third step of the decision-making process is evaluation, which involves

1. forming hypotheses
2. making decisions or judgments
3. reporting decisions and judgments

Tests are just one source of information; they provide a measure of an individual's behavior at a given moment. Tests only sample the domain being measured. If the limitations of the testing process are recognized, test information can be a valuable tool in decision making.

VALUE OF TESTING

Test information can be valuable to the test taker. It can improve one's self-understanding and reinforce an individual's learning. Test information can also be valuable to society. Many professions now require certification tests to screen incompetent professionals in a given field. Counselors and psychologists, for example, are required to take licensing examinations in many states. Testing programs are also designed to identify or discover talent. This was one of the purposes of the National Defense Education Act several decades ago. A fourth value of testing is that test information can help us learn more about human behavior. If the information is used properly, it can help us to make more efficient use of our social resources. For example, knowing the work values of employees aids in developing an environment that fosters job satisfaction and productivity.

Test information can be especially valuable in educational decision making because it enhances placement decisions. Public Law 94-142 requires exceptional students to be placed in the least restrictive environment, and test information helps educational personnel place these individuals in environments that will best facilitate their learning. Test data are utilized with different criteria in the selection of students for gifted programs, for admission to colleges and universities, and for admission to vocational and technical programs. Advanced Placement Examinations and College Level Examination Programs (CLEP) are examples of widely used placement pro-